

Another farmer dies by suicide in Adilabad; sixth death in 20 days

Adilabad: Another farmer died by suicide after being distressed over poor yield at Guda village in Bhoraj mandal on Monday. The district saw six farmer deaths in a span of 20 days.

Police said that Padhane Ravi (52) from the village attempted to kill himself on Saturday. He was shifted to RIMS-Adilabad. He breathed his last during treatment in the afternoon.

Ravi raised cotton, soybean and other crops on his four-acre landholding and eight acres of leased land. He was reportedly depressed over the poor growth of the cotton crop caused by adverse climatic conditions. He was distressed about whether he would be able to get a high yield, his wife alleged.

TAUK celebrates Chenetha Bathukamma in London

Hyderabad: Drawing inspiration from former Chief Minister K Chandrashekhra Rao, who extended his support to the weaving community in Telangana during his tenure, the Telangana Association of United Kingdom (TAUK) celebrated Bathukamma as "Chenetha Bathukamma" in London and other parts of the UK on Sunday. Around 2,000 Telangana people participated in the celebrations organised in London. Most participants attended the festivities wearing handwoven scarves and clothes made by Telangana weavers. Speaking on the occasion, TAUK president Rathnakar Kadudula said the association had continued its commitment to promoting handloom products, inspired by the initiatives undertaken by former Chief Minister Chandrashekhra Rao and former Telangana Minister KT Rama Rao to support the weaving community.

KCR extends Dasara greetings to Telangana people

Hyderabad: BRS president and former Chief Minister K Chandrashekhra Rao on Monday extended Dasara greetings to the people of Telangana, remembering the festival's significance in the State's culture and traditions.

In a statement, Chandrashekhra Rao said Dasara was celebrated to remember the triumph of good over evil. He said the festival reflected Telangana's rich customs, including worshipping the Jammi (Shami) tree, sighting the auspicious palapitta (Indian roller), exchanging Jammi leaves as gold, greeting one another through Alai-Balai and seeking elders' blessings.



Telangana CM orders expediting construction of Young India Skills University

Hyderabad, Oct 19 (IANS) Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Monday directed officials to expedite the construction of Young India Skills University.

During a visit to 'Bharat Future City', the Chief Minister inspected the progress of the construction work of Young India Skills University.

He instructed that the pace of construction be accelerated to ensure completion as soon as possible and suggested increasing the workforce if necessary.

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy issued key directives regarding the arrangements for the 'Invest Telangana Global Summit 2026,' which is set to take place at 'Bharat Future City' from December 7 to 9.

As the summit, themed around the assurance, "Your investments are safe with us", will be held on the premises of the 'Young India Skills University,' the Chief Minister emphasised the need to expedite the university's construction and focus on the summit's preparations.

He directed officials to ensure that the Global Summit is organised on an international scale.

CM Revanth Reddy further ordered that all preparations for the event be finalised by the end of November.

He urged officials to ensure that the summit is organised at a level

capable of attracting entrepreneurs from both within the country and abroad. Instructions were given to ensure that the work on the open premises is completed by November 15.

The Chief Minister stated that the 'Invest Telangana Global Summit 2026' is not merely a business conference, but a historic platform destined to transform the political and economic landscape of Telangana.

He emphasised the need for a well-planned approach toward the summit preparations, starting immediately. He further directed officials to form a committee to oversee the arrangements for the Global Summit on an ongoing basis.

Before visiting the Bharat Future City, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy inaugurated the newly constructed Future City Police Commissionerate in Ibrahimpatnam.

He opened the Commissioner of Police's office within the building and extended his best wishes to Commissioner Tarun Joshi.

Subsequently, the CM visited the Young India Skills University at Bharat Future City and laid the foundation stone for the National Institute of Urban Management (NIUM) campus on the premises of the FCDA (Future City Development Authority) office. He also examined the model of the proposed campus.

Telangana asks govt offices to use electricity economically

Hyderabad, Oct 19 (IANS) In view of the rise in electricity demand in Telangana and not-so-encouraging generation due to the impact of El Nino, the state government has asked government offices to use electricity economically.

Chief Secretary Sanjay Jaju said on Monday that instructions have been issued to all government offices that air conditioners should be operated at a temperature setting of 25 degrees Celsius only when necessary during the daytime, while their use should be significantly reduced after 6 p.m.

He said although electricity generation in the state has not been encouraging, the government is continuing to supply power for agricultural and domestic requirements.

He stated that no power cuts were being imposed on industries in the state and that industrial management need not worry about electricity supply.

He directed officials to take all necessary measures to ensure maximum electricity generation at all thermal power stations in the state. He also instructed the five special officers specifically assigned to the Yadadri Thermal Power Station to take dedicated measures to maximise electricity production at the facility.

The Chief Secretary also directed officials to prepare micro-level contingency plans to prevent drinking

water and electricity shortages due to the effects of El Nino.

He conducted a video conference with senior officials appointed by the government to oversee the situation in the erstwhile districts and reviewed the prevailing conditions in view of El Nino. During the meeting, the Chief Secretary stated that the state government had already prepared department-wise contingency plans to address the severe conditions expected due to El Nino and was issuing appropriate instructions from time to time. He emphasised that similar plans should also be prepared at the grassroots level. He said that an all-party meeting would soon be held to explain the impact of El Nino. A Cabinet Sub-Committee meeting would also be convened shortly. Officials from the Energy Department explained that water was being illegally drawn from local water sources for agricultural purposes using dedicated motor pumps. This excessive withdrawal was increasing the electrical load and causing local transformers to burn out. As water supplies from the Manjeera and Singur reservoirs were unavailable, officials said that the 110 million gallons per day (MGD) normally supplied from these reservoirs was being supplemented through alternative sources.



BRS serves legal notices to Congress leaders over allegations against KCR

Hyderabad, Oct 19 (IANS) Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) has served legal notices to Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee President, Mahesh Kumar Goud, Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy, and MP Vamsi Krishna Gaddam for allegations made regarding the diversion of Kondapochamma Sagar water to the farmhouse of BRS President and former Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhra Rao.

BRS General Secretary and Legal Cell In-charge, Soma Bharat Kumar, issued notices to the Congress leaders, demanding them to unconditionally delete social media posts and retract the 'false propaganda'.

The Congress leaders had alleged that water from the Kondapochamma Sagar project was diverted to the farmhouse of K. Chandrashekar Rao (KCR).

According to the notice, the allegations are intended to damage KCR's reputation.

The notices to Congress leaders were issued a day after a similar notice was issued to the management and editor of the Telugu daily 'Velugu' on the same issue.

The BRS Legal Cell has demanded that they immediately and unconditionally delete the relevant posts from their social media accounts and retract the allegedly false campaign.

The Congress leaders were told that if they fail to respond to the notices issued, further legal action—in-

cluding proceedings for defamation—will be initiated in accordance with the relevant laws.

Earlier, the BRS strongly condemned a report published by 'Velugu' and alleged that it was politically motivated and intended to tarnish the reputation of KCR while creating misconceptions among the public about irrigation projects built by the BRS government.

Demanding the immediate withdrawal of the report that was on the front page on October 17, the party has called for an unconditional apology. Bharat Kumar served legal notices on the management and editor of the newspaper.

Questioning the basis of the report, which allegedly linked the irrigation needs of Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district and the Kondapochamma Sagar project and its canal network to KCR's agricultural land, the BRS sought clarification on the official records and evidence relied upon by the newspaper.

The party questioned whether the Irrigation Department's records had been examined, the actual routes of the canals had been verified, and explanations had been obtained from the officials concerned.

Publishing allegations with sensational headlines without addressing these questions, it said, was contrary to established journalistic standards.

The party stated that people were closely observing attempts to create controversies by invoking KCR's name, target the BRS, and discredit irrigation projects undertaken by the previous government for alleged political gains. It warned that it would not remain a silent spectator if a newspaper were turned into a platform for political propaganda under the guise of press freedom, with allegations published without substantiated evidence.



Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Stampede deaths— a familiar saga of apathy

Stampedes at religious gatherings in India are not random acts of fate. They are the result of repeated failures of crowd management strategies. The death of 19 devotees at a Durga puja pandal in Kolkata came as yet another grim reminder of the serious gaps in our crowd management system, safety protocols, and emergency preparedness. The tragedy could have been prevented if the authorities had adhered to safety standards, especially when considering the anticipated increase in the number of devotees. The disaster took place at the Chorbagan Sarbojanin Durga Puja pandal in north Kolkata when the rain prompted people waiting outside to surge towards the pandal, while an announcement over the public-address system appears to have added to the commotion. The sequence fits into a familiar template—a combination of excessive density, constrained movement, poor anticipation, inadequate infrastructure and a failure to intervene before the crowd becomes unstable. The disturbing part is that India has known this for decades. The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has detailed guidelines for mass gatherings, while the Home Ministry has repeatedly advised States to prepare crowd-management SOPs and checklists. Yet the same failures recur. The pattern of stampede incidents is disturbingly familiar. So are the responses that follow. Compensation is announced, a probe is ordered, and a few officials are suspended amid a political blame game. And no lessons are learnt from past mistakes. It's business as usual till the next tragedy strikes. This has been the story of all recent stampede cases.

Time and again, India's administrators have failed to learn from past tragedies — from religious stampedes to election rallies. More than a decade ago, the NDMA released a guide on managing crowds at big events and mass gathering venues. The document emphasised capacity planning, crowd control, risk assessment, and real-time surveillance to prevent any mishaps. Inadequate infrastructure, disregard for scientific protocols, absence of accountability and a reactive approach to disasters continue to be significant obstacles. The Kolkata incident is the latest in a series of such stampede deaths. In 2005, over 265 people died in a stampede at Mandhardevi temple in Maharashtra; 145 devotees in Himachal Pradesh's Naina Devi temple in 2008; over 250 worshippers in Rajasthan's Chamunda Devi temple in 2008; over 115 in Madhya Pradesh's Ratangarh temple in 2013 and at least 30 devotees at Prayag Kumbh Mela in January 2025, the sixth stampede during the Kumbh Mela in 70 years. Every stampede is a stark reminder that it is not miracles but proper planning and crowd management protocols that will save us. Repeated temple stampedes should be viewed not as unavoidable accidents or acts of fate, but primarily as failures of risk assessment. The lesson from the Kolkata incident, like many such tragedies in the past, is that the country needs a more dynamic and adaptive approach to crowd management.

Kuchipudi Dance Performances Enthrall Audience at Uppal Mini Shilparamam



“UPPAL, OCTOBER 19 (Indian Chronicle):“As part of the cultural programmes held at Uppal Mini Shilparamam, the Kuchipudi dance performances presented by the students of renowned Kuchipudi dance teacher Pratibha Raj Goud captivated the audience and received widespread appreciation.”The students showcased their artistic excellence through a series of classical dance performances, reflecting the richness of Indian cultural and traditional heritage.”The performances featured several devotional and classical compositions, including Mooshika Vahana, Sowbhagya Lakshmi, Annamacharya Keerthana, Ashtalakshmi, Brahmanjali, Akhilandeshwari, Ambashtakam, Devi Stuthi, Mahishasura Mardini and Mangala Harathi.”Artists Hema, Puneetha, Neha, Aaradhya, Vaishnavi, Keerthika, Namashwitha, Tanwitha, Sudheeksha, Amulya, Lekshana, Manwitha, Kundane and Yodhiitha, among others, demonstrated their talent and dedication through their graceful performances.”The programme highlighted the beauty of Indian classical dance and its devotional significance, leaving the audience thoroughly impressed.

Telangana Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla Calls for aGreener Telangana, Urges Water Conservation at Bathukamma Celebrations



“Hyderabad, October 19(Indian Chronicle)Telangana Governor Shri Shiv Pratap Shukla called upon citizens to make environmental protection and water conservation a collective responsibility, emphasising that safeguarding natural resources is essential for building a sustainable future for coming generations.”“Addressing the vibrant Saddula Bathukamma celebrations at Tank Bund in Hyderabad, the Governor highlighted the importance of preserving Telangana's natural wealth and adopting sustainable practices to address growing environmental

challenges.”“Expressing concern over the low rainfall recorded in the State this year, he stressed the urgent need to promote rainwater harvesting, protect lakes and strengthen groundwater recharge initiatives. He urged citizens to actively participate in conservation efforts and ensure responsible utilisation of water resources.”“The Governor observed that Bathukamma, Telangana's iconic floral festival, beautifully reflects the deep connection between nature, culture and community. He emphasised that the festival's message of harmony with nature should inspire people to protect the environment throughout the year.”“The celebrations witnessed enthusiastic participation, reflecting the rich cultural heritage and festive spirit of Telangana.”“Smt. Janaki Shukla, wife of the Governor, Tourism and Culture Minister Shri Jupally Krishna Rao, Minister Smt. Danasari Seethakka and other dignitaries attended the celebrations.”“Extending his heartfelt greetings to the people of Telangana on the auspicious occasions of Bathukamma, Navaratri and Vijayadashami, Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla wished for peace, prosperity, happiness and well-being across the State.”“The Governor's message highlighted the importance of combining traditional cultural celebrations with environ-

mental responsibility, encouraging citizens to contribute towards a greener, cleaner and water-secure Telangana.

5.232 Kg of Ganja Seized at Kagaznagar X Road



“Two Arrested; Ganja Worth Approximately 2.70 Lakh, Two Mobile Phones and a Scooty Seized”“Kumrambheem, Asifabad, District.Reporter "Indian Chronicle"October. 20.”“Rebbena:Rebbena police seized 5.232 kg of dry ganja during vehicle inspections at Kagaznagar X Road and arrested two persons in connection with the case. The seized ganja is estimated to be worth approximately 2.70 lakh, Kumuram Bheem Asifabad District Superintendent of Police (SP) Nitika Pant, IPS, disclosed.The arrested persons were identified as Jumur Gain (33) and her husband, Suranjan Gain (46). Police seized 5.232 kg of dry ganja, two mobile phones and a scooter from them.”Details of the Case”“According to the preliminary investigation, Jumur Gain travelled to Odisha on October 14, 2026, and allegedly purchased 5.232 kg of ganja from a person identified as Pintu (A3) for 15,000. She subsequently returned towards Kagaznagar with the contraband.”Police investigation revealed that her husband, Suranjan Gain, was allegedly waiting on a scooter to receive the ganja and transport it to their residence in Kagaznagar.”Acting on credible information, Rebbena police conducted vehicle checks at Kagaznagar X Road, detained the two suspects and seized the ganja during the search.”Seized Property”“Dry ganja: 5.232 kg, valued at approximately ?2.70 lakh.”“Mobile phones: Two.”“Scooty: Registration No. TG20 A 1148.”Investigation Underway”Police have registered a case at Rebbena Police Station vide Crime No. 353/2026 under Sections 8(c) read with 20(B)(ii)(A) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act.”Investigations are underway to establish the alleged involvement of other persons, including Pintu from Odisha, Munni from Mancherla, and Chandrasekhar and Raju from Jaipur. Police are also investigating the source of the ganja, its intended recipients and the possible involvement of others in the alleged illegal trafficking network.

“SP Nitika Pant, IPS, appreciated Asifabad DSP B. Ashok, Wankidi Circle Inspector (In-charge) Venugopal, Rebbena Sub-Inspector Venkata Krishna and the police personnel involved in the operation.”The SP stated that police would continue to maintain strict surveillance against the illegal transportation, sale and consumption of ganja and other narcotic substances in the district. She warned that strict legal action would be taken against those involved in such illegal activities.

Manikonda Blossoms with Festive Spirit as Saddula Bathukamma Celebrations Illuminate Mahatma Gandhi Park

“Manikonda, October 19(Indian Chronicle) Mahatma Gandhi Park at Alkapoor Township locality in Manikonda came alive with vibrant colours, traditional songs and festive enthusiasm as women and families gathered to celebrate Saddula Bathukamma, one of Telangana's most cherished cultural festivals.”“The park witnessed a beautiful display of floral arrangements as women dressed in colourful traditional sarees participated in the celebrations with devotion and joy. Beautifully decorated Bathukmmas, arranged with colourful seasonal flowers, added a spectacular touch to the festive atmosphere.”“Women gathered around the floral arrangements, singing traditional Bathukamma songs and participating in customary celebrations that reflected Telangana's rich cultural heritage. The illuminated decorations and festive lighting created a captivating atmosphere, attracting families, children and residents from the surrounding neighbourhoods.”“The celebrations highlighted the significance of Bathukamma as a festival symbolising respect for nature, womanhood, unity and cultural identity. The enthusiastic participation of women across different age groups reflected the community's commitment to preserving Telangana's traditions and passing them on to future generations.”“The beautifully illuminated central floral display became a major attraction, while numerous colourful Bathukmmas arranged around it transformed the park into a vibrant celebration of flowers and devotion.”“The festive gathering also provided an opportunity for residents to strengthen community bonds, celebrate togetherness and share the joy of Telangana's unique floral tradition.



Devi Navaratri Celebrations Held Grandly Under the Auspices of Jai Mata Di Friends Youth Association

-- Annadanam Conducted for Devotees After Special Prayers”““RAMANTHAPUR, OCTOBER19 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):The Devi Sharannavaratri celebrations organized by the Jai Mata Di Friends Youth Association are continuing with devotion and religious fervour. As part of the festivities, special prayers were offered to the Goddess on Monday, followed by an annadanam programme (free distribution of food) for devotees.”Devotees who visited the temple participated in the special prayers and sought the blessings of the Goddess. A large number of devotees and local residents took part in the annadanam programme organized as part of the Navaratri celebrations.”Several people appreciated the organizers for demonstrating their spirit of service by providing free meals to devotees. They stated that conducting social service activities alongside spiritual programmes was commendable.”Those who participated in the programme included Aravind Nagar Colony General Secretary Somanaarayana, Secretary Chukkala Satyanarayana, Congress senior leader and Aravind Nagar Colony advisor Avulagadda Srinivas Yadav, Maisa Prakash, A. Lakshman, Prem Chand, Chukkala Suman, C.H. Lakshman, Raghavendra, Praneeth Reddy, Charan Teja, Sai Kumar, Praneeth and others.



Anjaneyulu Sagar Extends Birthday Wishes to Dr. Kethuri Venkatesh



“Serilingampalli Zone: On the occasion of the birthday of TPCC OBC Convener Dr. Kethuri Venkatesh, Anjaneyulu Sagar, a leader from the Anjaiah Nagar division, extended his heartfelt birthday wishes.”“During the event, Anjaneyulu Sagar honored Dr. Venkatesh with a shawl and conveyed his birthday greetings.”“Anjaneyulu Sagar expressed his wish that Dr. Kethuri Venkatesh may lead a long, healthy, and happy life, and continue to reach greater heights in his service to the public.”“Leaders including Ravi Sagar, Krishna Sagar, Shiva, and others were present at the event and also extended their birthday wishes to Dr. Kethuri Venkatesh.

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA FORM - VII														
SPECIAL DEPUTY COLLECTOR (LA), (JLISP) NALASOMANADRI (GHATTU) LIFT IRRIGATION PROJECT :: GADWAL, JOGULAMBA GADWAL DISTRICT														
As per Section -19 (1) of the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in land Acquisition Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013 (Central Act No. 30/2013) and sub Rule (1) of Rule -25														
DECLARATION														
Collector Proceedings No: G/467/2026			Dt : 29.09.2026											
Special Deputy Collector Lr.No. E/45/2023			Dt : 25.09.2026											
Gazette No: 60/2026														
Where as it appears that total of Ac 14.325 Cts land is required for acquisition in the Appakondanahalli Village of K.T.Doddy Mandal, Jogulamba Gadwal District, for public purpose, namely for formation of Left Main Canal of Nalasomanadri (Ghattu) Lift Irrigation Scheme Project.														
Therefore declaration is made for the land measuring Ac.14.325Cts., in Appakondanahalli Village of K.T.Doddy Mandal, Jogulamba Gadwal, which is needed for construction of above said project, whose detail description is as following, is proposed for acquisition.														
SCHEDULE														
Sl No.	Sy. No.	Patta/ Isamli PP or Govt.	Well/ Dry	Total Extent to be Acquired	Name of the Pattadar/Name of the Enjoyer	Type of Tenure- Type of Construction area in Sq.Mtrs								
1	2	3	4	5	6	7								
1	10	Patta	Dry	1.20	1) Hr.Anjaneyulu S/o Palle Bheemaih 2) Narsimulu S/o Rangappa 3) M.Sanjeevulu S/o Rangappa 4) Kangaru Pagunta S/o Yellappa 5) Kangaru Gopi S/o Yellappa 6) K.Suresh S/o K.Mahadev 7) Dhoddyolla Ramalingamma W/o Pagunta 8) M.D.Chand Pasha S/o Mahibub Saheb 9) Kamarthi Vani W/o Kamarthi Venugopal 10) Kurva Mahadev S/o Kurva Narayana Enjoyers:- 1) Ramalingam S/o Pagunta 2) Mahadev S/o Narayana 3) Suresh S/o Mahadev 4) Md.Chand Basha S/o Mahabub Sab 5) Narsimulu S/o Rangappa	Tank, Pipeline								
2	15	Patta	Dry	0.875	1) Harijana Davidu S/o Babu 2) Ramaiah S/o Babu 3) Santhoshamma W/o Ramaiah 4) Geethamma W/o Davidu Enjoyers:- 1) H.Ramaiah S/o Babu	(95) Mango trees (58) Teak trees								
3	30	Govt. land	Dry	2.55	1) Hr.Khajamma W/o H. Gokarappa 2) Latha W/o Muniswamy 3) Manemma W/o Chinnna Malliah 4) Narendra S/o Pedda Malliah 5) Sateesh S/o Jangiliaiah 6) Kavitha W/o Venkatesh Enjoyers:- 1) Meesala Bolabandi S/o Pedda Thimmaiah 2) Laxmi W/o Kashimaiah 3) Khajamma W/o Gokarappa 4) Latha W/o Muniswamy	(144) Mango trees (02) Coconut trees								
4	46	Govt. land	Dry	1.45	1) Laxmi W/o Kashimaiah 2) BainiThippaiah S/o Bheemaih 3) Kurva Pedda Tayappa S/o Kashimanna 4) Hr.Padamma W/o Shirappa 5) Kurva Narsimha S/o Chinnna Narsaiah 6) K.Narasamma W/o Tayappa 7) Pedda Narsaiah S/o Dasagiri 8) Hr.Buddanna S/o Narsaiah 9) Savarappa S/o Pedda Kurva Narsimulu 10) Harijana Nagappa S/o Bheemaih 11) Narsamma W/o Kurva Bajarappa 12) Veeramma W/o Umesh 13) Chakali Shanthamma W/o Thimmappa 14) Kurva Chinnna Tayappa S/o Kashimanna 15) Thimmappa S/o Pedda Narsaiah 16) Komili Venkateshwar S/o Hanumantiah 17) Telugu Anjanamma W/o Jambaiah 18) Meesala Bolubandi S/o Thimmaiah 19) Thimmappa S/o Narsappa 20) Pedda Tayamma W/o Narsappa 21) Chinnna Tayamma W/o Narsappa 22) Shivamma W/o Hr. Nagappa 23) T.Yellappa S/o T.Savarappa Enjoyers:- 1) Laxmi W/o Kashimaiah 2) Khajamma W/o Gokarappa 3) Latha W/o Muniswamy	-								
5	62	Patta	Dry	1.25	1)Hr.Ramesh S/o Karraiah 2) Harijana Prakash S/o Narsanna 3) Thimmappa S/o Sambiah 4) Eegala Yellappa S/o Boddanna 5) Eegala Thimmappa S/o Savaramna 6) Eegala Galeppa S/o Thikkanna 7) Parvathi W/o Karreppa 8) Hr.Davidu S/o Musu Hanumanthu 9) Eegala Savarappa S/o Narsappa 10) Eegala Bheemaih S/o Karraiah 11) Shashikala S/o Anjanappa 12) Jayaraju S/o Harijan Thikkanna 13) Bathini Markandeya S/o Harijan Thikkanna Enjoyers:- 1) Prakash S/o Narsappa 2) Samelu S/o Narsappa 3) Daveedu S/o Oosa Hanumanthu 4)Savarappa S/o Pedda Narsappa 5) Yallappa S/o Narsappa 6) Galappa S/o Thikkappa	(02)Pipe lines (01)Pomegr anietree (01)Nerdu tree (02)Nem trees (01)Lemon tree (01)Kottam 3x4 Pipe line								
6	64	Govt. land	Dry	3.775	1)Hr.Ramesh S/o Karraiah 2)D.K.Sujatha W/o D.K.Eeranna 3) Bani Shantamma W/o Gokaraih 4) Anjanlu S/o Jambaiah 5) Nagappa S/o Jambaiah 6) Harijan Thimulamma W/o Thimmappa	Well (02)Pipe line								
TOTAL							14.325							
This declaration is made after considering the objections from interested persons as provided under section 15 (Central Act No. 30/2013).														
As there are No Displaced Families/No livelihoods lost due to acquisition R&R Scheme provisions are not applicable.														
Mines of coal, Iron, stone or other minerals lying under the said land or any particular portion of the said land, extent such parts of the mines and minerals which may be required to be dug or removed or used during the construction phase of the project for the public purpose of which the land being acquired are not need.														
A plan of the land may be inspected in the office of the Special Deputy Collector, (Land Acquisition) JLI Project, Nalasomanadri Gattu Lift Irrigation Project Hq.at Gadwal on any working day during the working hours.														
Sd/- Spl.Dy Collector Sd/- Additional LA JLI, Collector (Revenue) Sd/- District Gadwal, Jogulamba Gadwal Jogulamba Gadwal														
DIPR NO: 1059/LA/PP/Advt/Pub/2026-27														

7) Chand Pasha S/o Bade Sab
8)Kurva Narsamma W/o Devappa
9)Vadde Savaramma W/o Yallappa
10) Harijana Eegala Laxmaiah
S/o Eegala Narsappa
11) Thimmappa S/o Sambiah
12) Harijan Narsaiah S/o Jarraiah
13) Eegala Yallappa S/o Bodenna
14) Eegala Thimmappa
S/o Savaramna
15) Eegala Galeppa
S/o Thikkanna
16) Harijan Roothamma
W/o Bheemaih
17) Harijan Rajamma
W/o Samelu
18) Hr.Tayamma
W/o Thimmappa
19) Gugupadappa
S/o Parshappa
20) Harijan Narsamma
S/o Pedda Narsaiah
21) Kurva Umesh
S/o Bajarappa
22) Uligeppa S/o
Harijan Basaiah
23) Uligemma W/o
Harijan Thimmappa
24) Narsimulu S/o Narsappa
25) Vadde Nagamma
W/o Boya Narsimulu
26) Prabhu S/o Harijan Prakash
27)K.Papamma W/o
Harijan Eeranna
28) Thimulamma
W/o Thimmaiah
29) Katika Raju S/o
Katika Shankaraj
30) Gopanamoni Prakash
S/o Gopanamoni
Venkatesh
31) Dannaada Ailamma
W/o Dannaada Jangiliaiah
32) Dasari Sisailam
S/o Late Mahesh
33)K.Nareesh Kumar
S/o Kantekar Anand
34) Gopanamoni
Chandrasekhar S/o
Late Narayana
35) Gopanamoni Mallesh
S/o Gopanamoni Pandu
36) Dannaada Jangiliaiah
S/o Pochaiah
37) Akkaldev Rahul S/o
Akkaldev Lingaiah
38) Bandaru Ravikumar
S/o Bandaru Yadaiah
39) Akkaladev Rakesh
S/o Akkaladev Lingaiah
40)Sheri Hari Shankaraj
S/o Sheri Pentaiah
41)Sara Anitha W/o Sara Balaji
42) Katike Mahesh
S/o Katike Kishan
43) Katike Vanaja W/o
Katike Mahesh
44) Katika Sumitha
W/o Katika Raju
45) Karika Ramesh
S/o Katika Venkatesh
46) Katika Shyamali S/o
Katika Venkatesh
47) Buyyakar NarsingRao
@ Katika Narsing
Rao S/o Kishan
48) Buyyakar Raju
@ Katika Raju S/o
Katika Venkatesh
49) K.Maruthamma
W/o K.Paguntappa
50) Jayamma W/o
Harijan Nallamma
51) Belam Pedda Eeranna
S/o Harijan Narsaiah
52) Meesala Mareppa
S/o Harijan Narsaiah
53) Bellam Mariyamma
W/o Narsimulu
54) Bellam Suraiah
S/o Harijan Narsaiah
55) H.Sovindu S/o
Chinnna Narsaiah
56) Galla Srikanth
S/o Galla Narsimha
Enjoyers:-
1) Umesh S/o Narsappa
2) Gurupada S/o Parichaya
3) Ramesh S/o
Eegala Karappa
4) Ruthamma W/o Bheemaih
5) Thimmappa S/o
Eegala Savarappa
6) Galappa S/o Thikkappa
7)Yallappa S/o Narsappa
8) Laxmaiah S/o
Pedda Narsappa | | | | | | | | | | || 7 | 94 | Patta | Dry | 1.05 | 1)Pagidi Achuthamma W/o Pagidi Krishna Reddy 2)Pagidi Sujani S/o Pagidi Ravindar 3) Kurva Umesh S/o Bajarappa 4) Krishnavardhan Reddy S/o Dhama Reddy 5)Rilli Ramesh S/o Rilli Anjaneyulu 6) T.Chandrakala W/o T.Purandar Reddy 7)G.Shashikala W/o Govulla Chinnna Hanumanthu Enjoyers:- 1) Existing BT Road 2)Achutamma W/o Krishna Reddy 3)Sujani W/o Ravi 4) Ravi S/o Krishna Reddy | - | | | | | | |
| 8 | 95 | Patta | Dry | 2.175 | 1)P.Ravindar S/o Krishna Reddy 2) Kurva Umesh S/o Bajarappa 3) Thoka Devadas S/o Hanumanthu 4) Thoka Jamulamma W/o Chinnna Hanumanthu 5) Thoka Bhagyamma W/o Thoka Narsimlu Enjoyers:- 1) Achutamma W/o Krishna Reddy 2)Sujani W/o Ravi 3) Ravi S/o Krishna Reddy 4) Bhagyamma W/o Narsimulu 5) Toka Jamulamma W/o Toka Hanumanthu 6) Umesh S/o Narsappa | (90) Mango trees Bore well Pipe line | | | | | | |

Grand Welcome to Dhamma Yatra at Wankidi



"Kumrambheem, Asifabad, District. Reporter "Indian Chronicle" October. 20. "Wankidi, The Satya Dhamma Buddhist Dhamma Yatra, which began its journey from Mancherial district towards Deekshabhoomi in Nagpur, Maharashtra, to participate in the Ashoka Vijayadashami celebrations, reached Wankidi mandal headquarters on Monday. Buddhist community leaders and members of Jetwan Buddha Vihar extended a grand welcome to the yatra. The yatra is being organised under the leadership of Satya Dhamma Uddham Singh Kalari from Mancherial district as part of the fifth Chalo Deekshabhoomi Jatara Yatra.

Guru Bhumanna Maharaj and Yashwant Maharaj are leading the journey. The yatra aims to spread the teachings of Tathagata Gautama Buddha and promote the ideals of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, the architect of the Indian Constitution. Travelling through several villages from Mancherial to Nagpur, the participants are spreading the message of Buddha's Dhamma and creating awareness about Ambedkar's vision of social equality and justice. Upon reaching Wankidi, the yatra members were warmly welcomed at Jetwan Buddha Vihar. They offered prayers at the statue of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and inspected the ongoing development works at the Buddha Vihar. They also held a meeting with local Buddhist community leaders before continuing their journey towards Deekshabhoomi in Nagpur. Several prominent leaders and Buddhist community members participated in the programme, including Dr. Ashok Mahulkar, State Vice-President of the SC Welfare Association and District President of the Bharatiya Bauddha Mahasabha; Durgam Sandeep, State General Secretary of Samata Sainik Dal; Vijay, District In-charge of Samata Sainik Dal; organiser Roshan; Durgam Shyam Rao, President of the Varshavas Committee; Shyam Rao, Community President; Durgam Deepak, Treasurer of the Varshavas Committee; Buddhist Upasakas Panduji, Upre, Nagasen, Prasad, Bhikshapati, Annarao, Nuthan and others.

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Non-Payment of Wages During Festival Is Shameful: AITUC Leader Boge Upender



Workers' Families Forced to Struggle Without Income During Festival" "Demand for Action Against Mission Bhagiratha Officials and Raghava Agency" Kumrambheem, Asifabad, District. Reporter "Indian Chronicle" October. 20. "Asifabad: AITUC District General Secretary Boge Upender has demanded the immediate payment of five months of pending wages to Mission Bhagiratha workers employed at the Manikguda Water Plant in Kumuram Bheem Asifabad district. He expressed concern that workers' families were facing financial hardship due to the non-payment of wages, even during the festive season. "Protesting against

the delay in payment, AITUC organised a demonstration in front of the District Collectorate and submitted a representation to Additional Collector Venu, demanding immediate intervention and action against Raghava Agency and the concerned Mission Bhagiratha officials. Speaking on the occasion, Boge Upender alleged that despite submitting several representations to the agency management seeking payment of pending wages, the management had continued to delay payments by repeatedly assuring workers that they would be paid soon. "He said that the non-payment of wages for five months had pushed workers' families into severe financial difficulties, forcing them to struggle to meet their basic needs during the festival. Upender further alleged that Mission Bhagiratha workers were being subjected to exploitation and that minimum wages were not being implemented properly. He demanded that the concerned authorities intervene immediately, ensure payment of all pending wages and initiate appropriate action against the agency responsible for the delay. He warned that AITUC would launch district-wide protests if the pending wages were not paid immediately and the workers' other grievances were not resolved. AITUC District President T. Divakar and Raghava Agency workers Tirupati, Srikanth, Rajeshwar, Sudhakar, Jayakrishna, Venu and others participated in the protest.

CM Revanth Reddy Greets Telangana People on Vijayadashami festival

"Hyderabad" "Honourable Chief Minister Shri A. Revanth Reddy extended warm greetings to the Telangana people on the occasion of "Vijayadashami", a festival symbolizes the triumph of good over evil and righteousness over lawlessness. "The auspicious Dussehra holds a special place in the culture and traditions of Telangana," the Chief Minister noted the festival imparts great values such as courage, righteousness, truth, unity, and self-confidence. The Vijayadashami festival is for everyone to strive toward building a society rooted in love, compassion, brotherhood, and humanity, by shedding negative traits like ego, jealousy, hatred, and injustice. "I sincerely wish that this

Vijayadashami brings joy to every home, fills every family with happiness and prosperity, and bestows good health, abundant wealth, and success upon everyone," the CM said. "Further, CM Revanth Reddy remarked that the auspicious day reminds us of the power of the Goddess, who vanquished the demon Mahishasura, and the victory of Lord Rama over Ravana. The Chief Minister also highlighted a unique tradition in Telangana- worshipping the 'Jammi tree' and exchanging its leaves, which regarded as 'gold', with elders to seek their blessings. This custom serves as a reminder to cherish nature and show respect toward one's elders, the CM said.

Elaborate Arrangements Completed for Vijayadashami Celebrations in Uppal

-- Under the Leadership of Dussehra Celebrations Committee Founder-President MANDUMULA PARAMESWAR REDDY "UPPAL, OCTOBER 19 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): "Elaborate arrangements have been completed for the grand celebration of Vijayadashami in Uppal under the aegis of the Uppal Dussehra Celebrations Committee. The Uppal Municipal Stadium has been readied for the festivities under the leadership of committee founder-president Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy. "As part of the Vijayadashami celebrations, Shami tree puja, Ravana Dahan (effigy burning) and cultural programmes will be organised at the stadium on Tuesday evening from 6:30 p.m. "On Monday, Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy, along with committee members Pashikanti Nagaraju, Eega Anjaneyulu Mudiraj, Sunku Shekhar Reddy, Paladugu Santosh, Manda Muralikrishna Reddy, Amar, Satyam, Mahipal Reddy, Nani, Jittu, Banti and others, inspected the arrangements at the venue. "The organisers stated that all necessary measures had been taken to ensure that devotees and visitors would not face any inconvenience during the celebrations. "On the occasion of Vijayadashami,



Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy appealed to devotees, members of the public and youth to participate in large numbers and make the celebrations a grand success.

Minister D. Sridhar Babu Graces Saddula Bathukamma Celebrations in Manthani; Extends Festive Greetings.



"MANTHANI, TELANGANA | October 19, 2026 — "The town of Manthani witnessed vibrant cultural fervor as the Minister for Information Technology, Electronics & Communications, and Industries, Duddilla Sridhar Babu, partici-

pated in the grand culmination of the floral festival, Saddula Bathukamma, at the historic Gandhi Chowk junction. "The high-spirited event was organized under the auspices of Municipal Chairman V. Srinivas (Srinu Babu), drawing a massive congregation of local residents and devotees. "Key Highlights of the Event" * Heartfelt Civic Engagement: "Minister Sridhar Babu personally interacted with the women (Mahila Sodarimanulu) gathered for the traditional rituals, warmly acknowledging their pivotal role in preserving Telangana's rich cultural heritage. " * Warm Festive Wishes: "Extending his heartfelt greetings on the auspicious occasions of Saddula Bathukamma and Vijayadashami (Dasara), the Minister expressed his earnest desire for peace, health, and socio-economic prosperity across every household in the constituency. " * Resonant Public Support: "The gathering resonated with enthusiasm as local leaders and citizens expressed profound appreciation for the steadfast leadership and public service of Minister Sridhar Babu and Municipal Chairman Srinu Babu.

BRS Leader Ragam Hari Shankar Yadav Extends Vijayadashami Wishes



"Serilingampalli Zone Nallagandla division: Ragam Hari Shankar Yadav, a BRS leader from the Nallagandla division, has extended his Dasara (Vijayadashami) greetings to the residents of the division, women, party workers, youth leaders, and friends in the media. "Speaking on the occasion, Ragam Hari Shankar Yadav stated that Dasara—or Vijayadashami—is a sacred festival symbolizing the victory of good over evil. He expressed his hope that during this auspicious period of Devi Navaratri, the divine blessings of the Universal Mother (Jaganmata) will shine upon everyone, dispelling the darkness from our lives. "He further conveyed his heartfelt wishes that the blessings and grace of the Goddess may always be upon you, your family members, relatives, and friends.

SCR operates 120 special trains, carries four lakh additional passengers

Hyderabad: The South Central Railway (SCR) has operated 120 special trains in the past week, carrying around four lakh additional passengers amid the Dasara festive rush. The zone has announced more than 700 special trains to meet the increased travel demand during Dasara, Diwali and Chhath Puja.

The special trains connect major destinations across the country, including Prayagraj, Danapur, Nizamuddin, Bengaluru, Mangaluru, Tirupati, Visakhapatnam, Kakinada and Narasapur. SCR has also strengthened security and crowd management at busy stations by deploying additional Railway Protection Force personnel and railway officials.

To ease passenger movement, additional ticket counters have been opened at Secunderabad, Hyderabad, Kacheguda, Lingampalli and Charlapalli stations. Extra automatic ticket vending machines have also been installed, while passengers are being encouraged to use the UTS mobile app and QR codes to purchase general tickets without waiting in queues. Other measures include regulated



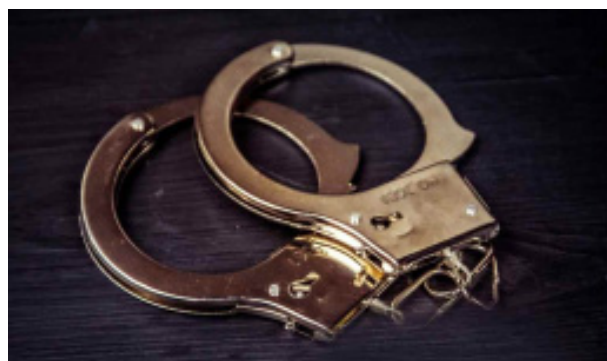
queues for general compartments, separate entry and exit routes, additional enquiry counters, frequent announcements about platforms and coach positions, and improved cleanliness and drinking water facilities. Also, dedicated women staff have been deployed at Secunderabad, Hyderabad, and Kacheguda stations to assist female passengers during the festive season.

Illegal firecracker consignment seized in Delhi, three held

New Delhi: Three people, including two women, have been apprehended for allegedly supplying illegal firecrackers in northeast Delhi, with police recovering 98 kg of firecrackers and a car used to transport them, an official said on Monday. The accused were intercepted by a police team in the Nand Nagri area on October 17 following a tip-off about a consignment of illegal firecrackers being transported in a car, he said.

The team was checking vehicles around 8.40 pm when an informer alerted them to the arrival of the consignment. Acting on the information, the police intercepted a white car carrying two women and a man. A search of the vehicle led to the recovery of a large quantity of firecrackers stacked on the rear seat and in the boot, police said.

The occupants allegedly failed to provide a satisfactory explanation for carrying the consignment, following which they were apprehended and the firecrackers and the car were seized. The accused have been identified as two women, aged 44 and 33, both residents of Geetanjali Park in Sagarpur, southwest Delhi, and Shubham, 28, a resident of Badarpur in south Delhi. During interrogation, the accused



allegedly disclosed that they had procured the firecrackers from Gurugram in Haryana to supply them in the area, police said. An FIR has been registered under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and the Explosives Act, and further investigation is underway. No previous criminal involvement has been found against any of the three accused, police added.

Sexual Harassment Allegations Against a Woman Employee at Bala Rakshak Bhavan

“Complaint Submitted to District Collector; Mekarthi Srinivas Demands a Comprehensive and Impartial Inquiry”
Kumrambheem, Asifabad, District Reporter “Indian Chronicle” October. 20. “Asifabad, Allegations of sexual harassment against a woman employee at Bala Rakshak Bhavan, functioning under the Women and Child Welfare Department in Kumuram Bheem Asifabad district headquarters, have sparked concern. Mekarthi Srinivas, a resident of Buruguda village, submitted a complaint to the Public Grievances Section at the District Collector’s Office on Monday, demanding a comprehensive inquiry and legal action against those found responsible. “Allegations of Harassment Against a Woman Employee” Srinivas stated that he submitted the complaint based on media reports alleging that DCPO Burla Mahesh, working at Bala Rakshak Bhavan, had behaved inappropriately towards women employees and subjected them to sexual harassment. “He further referred to allegations that women employees working on a contractual and outsourcing basis had been threatened with termination of their employment. “According to the complaint, allegations emerged that a woman employee was called into the officer’s room on October 10 and subjected to sexual harassment. Srinivas stated that the woman had reportedly submitted a written complaint to higher authorities. “Allegations of Pressure to Reach a Compromise” Srinivas also alleged in his representation that officials, who were expected to ensure justice for the woman employee, had pressured her to reach a compromise. He urged the authorities to conduct an impartial investigation to establish the facts. “He further requested that the complaint be examined in accordance with the



provisions of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (POSH Act). “Three Key Demands” In his complaint to the District Collector, Srinivas raised three major demands: “1. Conduct an impartial inquiry into the allegations against the DCPO and take appropriate legal action based on the findings. “2. Initiate a comprehensive investigation through the competent committee in accordance with the provisions of the POSH Act. “3. Ensure the safety of the woman employee concerned and other female staff members, and prevent any retaliatory action against them for raising complaints. “Srinivas expressed concern over such allegations arising within a department entrusted with the protection of women and the welfare of children. He urged the District Collector to intervene and ensure a fair and comprehensive investigation. “The allegations are yet to be established through an official inquiry.

500 Sarees Distributed on the Occasion of Saddula Bathukamma and Dussehra

“Indian Chronicle,” Secunderabad, October 19: “On the occasion of Saddula Bathukamma and Dussehra, 500 sarees were distributed to local women at Sanjay Gandhi Nagar in the Boudhanagar Division of Secunderabad. The programme was organised under the leadership of senior BRS leader Sunku Ramchander. “Speaking on the occasion, Sunku Ramchander said festivals bring people together and strengthen the spirit of brotherhood and community. He said the saree distribution programme was organised with the intention of extending support to women from economically weaker sections and sharing the festive joy with them. “A large number of local women participated in the programme and received the sarees. The event was held in a festive and enthusiastic atmosphere.



BRS Leader Ragam Jangayya Yadav Extends Dasara Greetings

“Serilingampalli Zone Nallagandla division: Ragam Jangayya Yadav, a BRS leader from the Nallagandla division, has extended his Dasara greetings to the residents of the division, women, party workers, youth leaders, and friends in the media. “Speaking on the occasion, Ragam Jangayya Yadav stated that Dasara—also known as Vijayadashami—is a sacred festival that symbolizes the victory of good over evil. He expressed his belief that during this auspicious time of the Devi Navaratri, the divine blessings of the Universal Mother (Jaganmata) will shine upon us, dispelling the darkness from our lives. “He further conveyed his heartfelt wishes that the blessings and grace of the Goddess may be bestowed upon everyone, including their family members, relatives, and friends.

Vijay announces major irrigation, education and infrastructure projects in Tamil Nadu



Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay has announced development packages for the Madurantakam and Dharapuram constituencies, including a Rs 1,439-crore Cauvery water scheme, irrigation works, agricultural storage facilities, education projects, healthcare upgrades and civic infrastructure improvements across the two regions

GNS News Agency, Oct 15

Chennai: Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay on Monday announced comprehensive development and welfare packages for the Madurantakam and Dharapuram Assembly constituencies, which were won by his Tamilaga Vetti Kazhagam (TVK) in the October 6 by-elections. The packages cover infrastructure, agriculture, education and civic amenities. They include a new government college, large-capacity storage facilities for farmers and a mega Cauvery drinking water project. The Chief Minister has directed the concerned departments to initiate implementation of the projects in Madurantakam in Chengalpattu district and Dharapuram in Tiruppur district.

Both constituencies, reserved for Scheduled Castes, were won by the Vijay-led TVK in the by-elections. TVK candidate Maragatham Kumaravel won the Madurantakam seat with 74,048 votes, defeating DMK candidate I Paranthamen and AIADMK candidate S Kanitha Sampath. In Dharapuram, TVK nominee P Sathyabama secured 66,841 votes, defeating DMK candidate S Suganya and AIADMK candidate K Banumathi. The highlight of the announcements for Dharapuram is a Rs 1,439-crore Cauvery combined water supply scheme aimed at meeting the drinking water needs of more than 1,200 rural habitations. The package also includes land title distribution and major canal rejuvenation works. In a statement, the Chief Minister outlined a development plan for Dharapuram, emphasising the Cauvery combined water supply scheme to ensure drinking water reaches rural areas of Tiruppur district. Of the 2,455 rural habitations in the district, 1,223 are currently covered by existing schemes. The new Rs 1,439-crore project will provide drinking water infrastructure to the remaining 1,232

habitations across the Dharapuram, Kangeyam, Kundadam, Pongalur and Vellakoil panchayat unions, seven village panchayats in Mulanur and 17 village panchayats in Palladam. Additionally, new overhead water tanks will be constructed across the Dharapuram, Mulanur and Kundadam blocks, providing 13,000 new household drinking water connections. The government will distribute 2,700 free house-site pattas (land ownership titles) to homeless people in Dharapuram. Vijay also directed officials to take immediate steps to issue pattas to 87 families in Kuruvappa Nayakkan Palayam, who have been living in self-built houses for more than 20 years without legal ownership documents. To support agriculture, desilting works covering 159 irrigation structures have been sanctioned across Tiruppur district at a cost of Rs 10 crore. The works aim to remove sand deposits and blockages from irrigation canals. The desilting drive in Dharapuram will cover 271 km of canals and channels, clearing silt, wild bushes and thorny shrubs to restore water flow to agricultural fields.

The Dharapuram Municipality will receive a civic infrastructure upgrade, including Rs 6 crore for a new overhead water tank and improvements to the water supply system. Another Rs 6 crore has been sanctioned for solid waste management and stormwater drain upgrades. Street lighting across the municipality will be modernised at a cost of Rs 40 lakh. A Fire and Rescue Services Station will also be established in Mulanur. For Madurantakam, Vijay announced a check dam across the Pukkathurai riverbed in Aththianam village at an estimated cost of Rs 5 crore. The plans also include restoring lake sluices in Sempoondi panchayat at a cost of Rs 4.50 crore and desilting and strengthening the bund along the Nelvai panchayat riverbed at a cost of Rs 1.30 crore. A feasibility study and Detailed Project Report (DPR) will be prepared for a high-level check dam across the Palar River between Padalam and Udhayambakkam.

Additionally, the 30-km Madurantakam high-level canal, built in 1984, will be desilted in phases to supply water to 30 local lakes. A community hall will be constructed in Thinnalur panchayat at a cost of Rs 70 lakh. A new 25-MVA transformer, costing Rs 3 crore, will be installed at the Madurantakam substation to improve power supply, the statement said. The government will establish a state-of-the-art State Seed Farm on 25 acres at a cost of Rs 10 crore. A semi-covered warehouse with a storage capacity of 20,000 metric tonnes will be built at Athur for Rs 20 crore to store procured paddy. Six new direct paddy procurement centres will also be established across the constituency at a total cost of Rs 1.80 crore. Other announcements include a new Government Arts and Science College for Women at Acharapakkam, a Trauma and Emergency Care Unit at Madurantakam Government Hospital, the upgrading of Pukkathurai Government High School to a higher secondary school and a mini-sports stadium in Karunguzhi at a cost of Rs 80 lakh. The package also includes a working women’s hostel, a learning centre for educated youth, a weekly public market, new stormwater drains and tourist amenities at Madurantakam lake. Additional government bus services connecting villages across Chengalpattu district will also be introduced to help farmers and students commute more easily.

Why India-Bangladesh ties must focus more on Bay of Bengal link



GNS News Agency, Oct 15

New Delhi: Bangladesh shares a large border with India, across which issues such as smuggling, trafficking, irregular migration and other forms of organised crime require serious attention. However, the two countries also share a maritime link because of their proximity to the Bay of Bengal, according to a new report. Bangladesh is not simply a neighbouring state across India’s eastern frontier. It is a gateway to the sea, a bridge to the Northeast and a vital partner in India’s attempt to become a more influential power in the Indo-Pacific, according to an article in India Narrative. The article observes that when bilateral relations are viewed primarily through concerns on the land border between the two countries, the approach limits India’s own strategic imagination.

It encourages New Delhi to look eastward through the lens of containment instead of opportunity. It gives disproportionate importance to short-term political controversies while neglecting the long-term value of maritime connectiv-

ity, energy cooperation, trade, and climate resilience. A maritime-centred relationship would enable India to combine security with connectivity. India must, therefore, retain a firm approach to border security while placing the border inside a much larger strategic framework, that includes the Bay of Bengal which is the country’s Eastern Gateway, the article states. It highlights that the Bay of Bengal is increasingly becoming a central arena of India’s economic and strategic interests. It connects India’s eastern coast with Bangladesh, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Southeast Asia. India’s geography gives it a natural advantage in this maritime space. Its eastern coastline, island territories, naval capabilities, ports, and growing commercial networks provide the foundations for regional leadership. India is one of the region’s principal geographical and civilisational centres.

Bangladesh’s growing engagement with China is an important consideration for India. China has expanded its infrastructure, commercial and diplomatic presence across the Bay of Bengal. Bangladesh seeks investment, technology and development opportunities from multiple partners. The article further states that India should respond with strategic seriousness, but not with insecurity. Bangladesh will not accept a relationship based on exclusive alignment. It has its own national interests and will continue to engage with different powers. India’s answer should be to improve its own performance. It should offer projects that are timely, transparent, financially viable and responsive to Bangladesh’s development needs. It should use its natural advantages of proximity, market access, cultural links, energy connections and regional knowledge- to become the partner Bangladesh finds most useful, the article observes.

Veteran BJP leader LK Advani discharged from hospital

New Delhi: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader, Lal Krishna Advani, who was admitted to Indraprastha Apollo Hospital in New Delhi, is being discharged, the hospital said on Monday. The 98-year-old leader has shown improvement and, hence, is being discharged today. “Mr L.K. Advani, who was admitted to Apollo Hospitals on 16th October with a chest infection, is being discharged today. He has been under the care of Dr Vinit Suri, Senior Consultant – Neurology and has shown improvement in his medical status,” the hospital said in a press statement.

The former Deputy Prime Minister was admitted to Indraprastha Apollo Hospital’s pulmonary department with a chest infection at around 7.30 p.m. on October 16. Earlier on Saturday, Union Health Minister JP Nadda also met Advani at the hospital and enquired about his health. This is not the first time the veteran leader has been hospitalised in recent months. He was last admitted to Apollo Hospital in May this year due to age-related health complications. He remained under medical care for a few days before being discharged.

Earlier, in December 2024, Advani was admitted to the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) of Indraprastha Apollo Hospital for medical management and investigations. He was treated under the supervision of a neurologist. The hospital then stated that his condition was stable. Born on November 8, 1927, in Karachi (present-day Pakistan), Advani is one of the most prominent leaders in the BJP. He played a key role in the party’s growth from a relatively small political force into a major national political organisation. Advani served as the BJP President on multiple occasions and



was instrumental in strengthening the party’s organisational base across the country. His nationwide Ram Rath Yatra in 1990 became a significant turning point in Indian politics and helped expand the BJP’s political reach. He served as India’s Deputy Prime Minister from 2002 to 2004 under the government led by then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. He also held several important portfolios, including Home Affairs, during his political career. In recognition of his contribution to public life, Advani was conferred the Bharat Ratna, India’s highest civilian award, in 2024. He was previously awarded the Padma Vibhushan in 2015. Advani remains a senior figure in the BJP and a key part of the party’s political history.

PETA India calls for withdrawal of Centre’s draft rules on animal experimentation



GNS News Agency, Oct 19

Thiruvananthapuram: Animal Rights organisation, / PETA India has called for withdrawal of the Centre’s proposed rules governing animal experimentation, claiming it could weaken existing animal protections. People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals India (PETA India) has said that the draft Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Control and Supervision of Experiment, Breeding and Trading of Laboratory Animals) Rules, 2026 could expose animals to greater suffering in labs. The animal rights organisation claimed that the draft rules could permit the capture and use of animals protected under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, in ex-

periments, subject to scientific justification and legal permissions. Exemptions under the rules could also allow experimentation on stray dogs and cats under specified circumstances, it contended. “Although the draft prohibits prolonged severe suffering that cannot be alleviated, it continues to accommodate experiments involving severe suffering,” PETA India claimed. It further claimed that the draft rules would result in weakening independent oversight and existing animal welfare protection. “The draft would allow institutional ethics committees to approve experiments classified as mild or moderate on larger animals, including dogs, horses, pigs, and cattle, without prior approval from the central Committee for Control and Supervision of Experiments on Animals (CCSEA),” it contended. PETA India said that globally there is a shift towards non-animal research technologies and methods and therefore, the draft rules should focus on the “use of scientifically advanced non-animal approaches and animal-welfare protections, rather than weakening existing safeguards or creating new avenues for animal experimentation”. “PETA India calls for the withdrawal of the proposed rules and urges stronger regulations that protect wildlife and community animals, preserve independent oversight and existing safeguards, and prioritise scientifically sound non-animal methods,” the animal rights organisation said.

Orange alert for Chennai, Coimbatore and two other districts

Chennai: An orange alert has been issued for Chennai, Tiruchirappalli, Coimbatore and the Nilgiris on Monday, with the weather department forecasting heavy to very heavy rainfall in the four districts amid widespread rain across Tamil Nadu. The weather centre, in a bulletin, said several other districts would also receive heavy rainfall. The forecast indicates an extensive spell of rain covering the northern, western, central and southern parts of the state. Dharmapuri, Krishnagiri, Salem, Tiruvallur, Tiruppur, Dindigul and Theni are among the districts likely to experience heavy rain. Similar conditions are expected in Virudhunagar, Tenkasi, Tirunelveli, Kanniyakumari and Thoothukudi. The department has also predicted heavy rainfall in Ramanathapuram, Madurai, Sivaganga, Pudukkottai, Thanjavur, Tiruvallur, Nagapattinam, Mayiladuthurai, Cuddalore and Perambalur, extending the rain forecast across the southern districts and the Cauvery delta region. Other districts covered by the heavy rainfall forecast include Ariyalur, Villupuram, Chengalpattu, Kancheepuram, Vellore, Ranipet, Tiruvannamalai, Kallakurichi, Tirupattur, Erode and

Namakkal. Chennai and its neighbouring districts, therefore, remain within the forecast area, while western districts, including Coimbatore and the Nilgiris, face the possibility of more intense rainfall. The bulletin distinguishes between the four districts placed under an orange alert and the other districts where heavy rainfall has been forecast. Chennai, Tiruchirappalli, Coimbatore and the Nilgiris are expected to receive heavy to very heavy rain on Monday. For Tuesday, the weather department has issued an orange alert for Tirunelveli and Madurai, where heavy to very heavy rainfall is likely. The forecast points to continued rain across much of Tamil Nadu for a second consecutive day. Heavy rainfall is also expected on Tuesday in Coimbatore, the Nilgiris, Erode, Tiruppur, Dindigul, Salem, Dharmapuri and Krishnagiri. In northern Tamil Nadu, Tirupattur, Vellore, Ranipet and Tiruvallur are among the districts likely to receive heavy rain. Chennai and Chengalpattu also feature in Tuesday’s forecast. The weather centre said Kallakurichi, Cuddalore, Karur, Perambalur, Namakkal, Tiruchirappalli, Pudukkottai and Thanjavur would also be among the districts experiencing heavy rainfall tomorrow.

D K Shivakumar alleges plot to trap ministers, officials in Karnataka: ‘I’ve got all proof’



GNS News Agency, Oct 19

Karnataka Chief Minister D K Shivakumar Thursday alleged that attempts are being made to trap him and discredit the state government, claiming similar efforts were being made against his ministers and bureaucrats. Responding to media queries on alleged attempts to trap ministers in his Cabinet, he said, “They tried

to start with me. I have got all proof.... This (the attempt) is after I became CM. They are trying others also. I know who the ‘pitamaha’ (grandfather) is, who is financing it, and other information.” He was speaking to reporters in New Delhi. The chief minister said that some people had approached him in the guise of discussing something; he said he knew how they came to meet him, and details of those they had met before. “Some people came to me. I will release photos if you want. I know who is doing what,” he said.

Since he had suspicions about the people who were meeting him, Shivakumar said that he had informed the police in advance. “I have collected their information and relevant documents. I shouldn’t be disclosing the details now,” Shivakumar said. Apart from ministers, he alleged that there was also a ploy to trap officials in the state government. Shivakumar said he has warned officials to be careful about the same. Those plotting to trap ministers and bureaucrats, according to the CM, are “hired by a leader.” “I have credible information,” he added. Shivakumar was sworn in as the Chief Minister of Karnataka in June after Siddaramaiah stepped down as part of a power-sharing pact.

Rat floats in gulab jamun vessel at Thane shop. FDA suspects ‘jealousy’, but shuts shop

GNS News Agency, Oct 19

The Maharashtra food safety regulator raided an establishment in Bhiwandi city, Thane, and issued a stop-business notice after a video purportedly showing a rat floating in a vessel of gulab jamuns surfaced on social media. Speaking to The Indian Express, Santosh Sirosiya, Assistant Commissioner at Thane Food and Drug Administration (FDA), under whose jurisdiction Bhiwandi falls, said the authority took the action after seeing the viral reel on Tuesday, October 6.

The video, which shows a rat swimming among the gulab jamuns in the vessel at Harish Gulab Jamun on Naga Road in Shanti Nagar, Bhiwandi, has since gone viral. “On Tuesday night, we saw the reel. The following morning, our Food Safety Officer Praveen Shinde inspected the establishment and issued a stop business notice,” he said.

“It is actually a fairly new establishment, operating out of a 5x6-foot area. It was not manufacturing anything, but was buying ready-made gulab jamuns from the Kalyan side and reselling them here. When our inspector visited, he did not find a rat, but the operator had no documents, no food business registration certificate, and there were hygiene violations. So we shut it down for now,” Sirosiya said. Prima facie, the FDA was also unable to establish how the rat could enter the vessel, he said, since the container had a heavy mesh covering on top. FDA officer says ‘jealousy



among people’ While lack of hygiene has traditionally triggered FDA action against food outlets, the officer told The Indian Express that jealousy among people in Bhiwandi could also be a factor in this case, aimed at bringing them down. “In areas like Bhiwandi, there is a lot of jealousy among people and the culture is such that one can even do it to another just to bring them down. There is also another problem, which is that rats are everywhere in Bhiwandi. But even then, it is the operator’s responsibility to take measures to ensure this does not happen,” he further added.

Now e-bus services from Pune to Navi Mumbai airport; maximum fare at Rs 445



Travelling from Pune to the new Navi Mumbai International Airport (NMIA) has become far more affordable. The Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC) has introduced a direct daily bus service featuring two eco-friendly E-Shivai buses from Swargate to cater to the growing passenger footfall at the airport. The services started Wednesday, with one bus leaving Swargate at 6.15 am and reaching the airport around 9.30 am. The second service departs from Swargate at 2.25 pm and is scheduled to reach the airport around 6 pm.

The route has stops, including Wanaz, Chandni Chowk, Balewadi, Hinjewadi Phata and Indira College in Wakad, allowing passengers from several parts of Pune to

access the airport. The maximum adult fare for a 120 km journey has been fixed at Rs 445, while the fare for children is Rs 230. Passengers eligible for concessions can avail of the applicable benefits through their National Common Mobility Card (NCMC).

However, commuters said the initial frequency of just two buses a day may not be enough to cater to the growing number of flyers expected to use NMIA. They said additional services, including buses from other parts of Pune, would be needed as flight operations at the airport expand. Arun Siya, divisional controller of MSRTC, Pune division, said the corporation would assess passenger demand before deciding on an increase in services. “We would analyse the demand and will increase the frequency on the route,” Siya told. For many passengers from areas such as Wakad, Hinjewadi, and others, the direct road connectivity to NMIA through the expressway and Missing Link could make the new service a convenient alternative, compared to travelling to Pune airport amid traffic congestion. “As more people from Pune are expected to use NMIA, two buses a day may not be sufficient. The frequency should be increased to provide more options to flyers, particularly those whose flight timings do not match the existing services,” said Rahul Jadhav, a resident of Wakad. The MSRTC has also introduced direct services connecting NMIA with Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT), Dadar and Borivali.

Maratha students to receive educational benefits on par with OBC students



Accordingly, Pramod Naik, Project Director at the Directorate of Technical Education, has issued the necessary orders, and the concessions will be implemented from the academic year 2026–27.

GNS News Agency, Oct 19

Maharashtra minister for Industries, Investment and Services and Marathi language Dr Uday Samant has directed the Directorate of Technical Education to ensure that students from the Maratha community receive all educational concessions and facilities available to students belonging to the Other Backward Classes (OBC) category. Accordingly, Pramod Naik, Project Director at the Directorate of Technical Education, has issued the necessary orders, and the concessions will be implemented from the academic year 2026–27.

As per the Government Resolution (GR) issued by the General Administration Department on June 5, 2026, the government has decided to extend all educational concessions and facilities to students from the Maratha community from the academic year 2026–27. To implement the decision, the Directorate of Technical Education issued a letter on September 3, 2026, directing the Joint Directors of the Regional Offices of the Directorate of Technical Education, the Registrar of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Technological University, Lonere, and the Registrar of COEP Technological University, Pune, to issue necessary instructions to the respective colleges and submit reports on the action taken to the Directorate. After the order, COEP Technological University has announced a revised fee structure for the academic year 2026–27. Under the revised structure, SEBC students holding a valid Non-Creamy Layer (NCL) certificate will be eligible for substantial fee concession.

For instance, for the M.Tech. programme in Data Science and Artificial Intelligence & Machine Learning, the total fee payable at the time of admission will be Rs 50,014 for eligible SEBC students, compared to Rs 3,00,040 for students in the Open category. Similarly, for M.Tech. and M.Planning programmes, the applicable fee for eligible SEBC students will be Rs 25,994, compared to Rs 1,15,890 for students in the Open category. Minister Samant said, “It is the Government’s position that students from the Maratha community should not face any financial barriers in pursuing education. I had directed the concerned department to ensure that they receive all educational concessions available to students from the Other Backward Classes. Accordingly, the necessary orders have now been issued, and a large number of students across the state will benefit from this decision.”

‘Error 404’, ‘Gyanesh, it’s done bro’ slogans at CJP’s Bengaluru EC stir



GNS News Agency, Oct 19

CJP Bengaluru Freedom Park protest: Influencer Dhruv Rathee, actor-activist Prakash Raj join CJP founder Abhijeet Dipke, to demand Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar resign. Influencer and activist Dhruv Rathee, second left, Indian actor Prakash Raj, fourth left, Cockroach Janta Party founder Abhijeet Dipke, fifth left and other supporters join hands during a protest demanding the resignation of the country’s election chief Gyanesh Kumar, in Bengaluru. On Thursday Freedom Park in Bengaluru became Ground Zero for the Cockroach Janta Party-led protest against Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, with YouTuber Dhruv Rathee and actor Prakash Raj among high-profile figures in attendance. Reporting from the park, The Indian Express’ Atiya Firdos said hundreds had gathered — mirroring Congress-led INDIA bloc protests that brought central Delhi to near-standstill Tuesday and Wednesday. A third round of protests is due this evening. The common demand — Gyanesh Kumar must resign as head of the Election Commission — the body tasked with holding free-and-fair federal and state polls. The Chief Election Commissioner has come under fire after the Express reported last month that the other two commissioners — Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi — had objected repeatedly to as-

pects of the voter re-verification drive, i.e., the Special Intensive Revision. Ashutosh Ranka speaking with Bengaluru crowd at Freedom Park on Thursday. CJP co-convenor Ashutosh Ranka at Freedom Park on Thursday. The objections included red flags over ‘illegal’ changes to Form 6 and centralisation of control of ECINET, the voter rolls database. The Election Commission later rolled back the changes to Form 6 and announced special drives to re-enlist ‘left out’ voters. At Bengaluru CJP protest Similar to the CJP’s protest in Mumbai earlier this week, the Bengaluru gathering has brought people together, with even working professionals turning up despite it being a weekday. Protesters said they wanted to express support for the CJP. That sentiment was evident in the vociferous chanting of slogans — ‘vote chor, gaddi chhod’, ‘Gyanesh, it’s done bro’, and ‘Error 404’ were among the more popular. Some protesters also raised slogans like ‘dictatorship will not be tolerated’, ‘vote theft’, and ‘Gyanesh Kumar gaddi, leave your chair’. Posters featuring freedom fighters Bhagat Singh and Subhash Chandra Bose also made an appearance. Actor-activist Prakash Raj at Bengaluru’s Freedom Park. Actor-activist Prakash Raj at Bengaluru’s Freedom Park. There were also calls for a formal investigation into alleged SIR irregularities. For example, Social Democratic Party of India member Shakil Basha claimed to have worked with poll officials during the SIR and alleged he saw instances where the names of Muslim and Dalit voters were deleted from voter lists. Mujibur Rehman, a Bengaluru-based software engineer, told news agency PTI: “It is our democratic right. We have been robbed of our right to vote. We have to be together to save democracy, because I have lost my own vote.” He alleged his name had been deleted after a Form-7 request — seeking deletion of a voter’s name — was made without his knowledge. Over in the national capital, the Congress-led INDIA opposition bloc will protest — possibly at Rajghat, Mahatma Gandhi’s memorial — for a third consecutive day. night, as he was being detained for a second time in 12 hours, Congress MP Rahul Gandhi vowed to continue the agitation till Kumar resigns.

From saline fields to 50 biofloc tanks: Punjab women rewrite the farm story with fisheries

GNS News Agency, Oct 19

Kamal Sahney’s farm at Bahudinpur village in Jalandhar district has neither wheat nor paddy stored in 50 circular tanks lined up in rows under a polysheet-covered shed spread over less than an acre. Nearly 7-8 feet deep and around four metres wide, each tank holds nearly 15,000 litres of water and fish seeds inside, being raised in a controlled environment — turning a small holding into an intensive aquaculture enterprise. The project set up on around 1.25 acres cost her around Rs 50 lakh, of which about Rs 30 lakh, or 60 per cent, has come as a subsidy under the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY). Amal Sahney at her Biofloc Fish Farm in Kathar (Jalandhar) Ahneer Kaur at her open Fish pond at Jaitewali in Jalandhar.

A BTech IT professional settled in Canada, Sahney started this enterprise in February. Barely six months later, she completed her first fish-seed production cycle and is preparing for another before winter sets in. In her first year, she aims to sell 7-8 lakh fish seeds for Rs 1 to Rs 8 per piece, depending on variety and size. “We are selling seeds off-season when it’s not available at the government and other seed farms and fetching us good money. One can earn Rs 8 lakh to over Rs 50 lakh from one acre or more, depending on how enterprising a person is,” she said. Sahney also has a small open pool for growing fish for consumption. Under the biofloc fish-farming system, beneficial microbes convert fish waste into useful biomass, helping maintain water quality and reducing the need for frequent water replacement. With continuous aeration and proper feed, the system allows more fish to be raised in a relatively smaller area. “The 60 per cent subsidy encouraged me and my husband Karandeep Singh to take up the project. A 15 KW solar system installed with the assistance of another government scheme helped us cut the electricity cost,” she said.

For Punjab, where the farm economy has long revolved around wheat and paddy, the enterprise represents a different proposition — intensive production from a small area, with technology replacing acreage as a key input. Launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on September 10, 2020, for five years and extended till September 2026, the PMMSY in its first phase saw Punjab women emerging as a significant force in fisheries diversification. According to Punjab Fisheries Department data up to September 2026, Rs 3,667.08 lakh has been disbursed under the scheme. Of this, Rs 1,947.96 lakh was distributed among 239 women — comprising 53 per cent of the total subsidy disbursed.

The subsidy is provided for the construction of new grow-out ponds, shrimp ponds, recirculatory aquaculture system (RAS), biofloc (small and large) system, insulated vehicle, motorcycle/ auto-rickshaw with ice box, mini fish feed mill, cold storage, fish kiosk, refrigerator van, etc. Under specified components of PMMSY, women are eligible for assistance of 60 per cent of the prescribed project cost, compared to 40 per cent for men under the general category. The Fisheries Department has supplemented the financial assistance with awareness programmes, facilitation for subsidy and free-of-cost training under PMMSY, helping women enter activities ranging from fish and shrimp farming to biofloc units, recirculatory aquaculture systems and fisheries-related infrastructure.

One acre, several enterprises At Jaitewali village in Jalandhar, Ahneer Kaur, a young BSc Biotechnology graduate, has taken a different route. Her 0.45-hectare or 1.12-acre freshwater fish pond is the centre of an integrated farm that includes organic seasonal vegetables, geese rearing and solar power. She has also planned poultry and goat farming. Kaur embarked on the project in 2024 as her father Sukhjinder Singh, a retired Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP), wanted her to be an entrepreneur. Of the total cost of around Rs 14 lakh, she received 60 per cent assistance for fish culture, and a 10-KW solar system received a 35 per cent subsidy. She also availed a loan of Rs 2 lakh on her Kisan Credit Card. According to Kaur, once the enterprise reaches full production, it will yield 2.5-3 tonnes per acre and generate around Rs 2-3 lakh per acre after expenses. Saline land becomes shrimp land In Punjab’s south-western districts, the challenge is different. Salinity and waterlogging have made conventional agriculture increasingly difficult, prompting farmers to look for alternatives. Rupinder Kaur in Muktsar Sahib was introduced to shrimp farming under PMMSY by an awareness camp organised by the Fisheries Department in her Inna Khara village. After training, I began with my family’s four acres in 2021. Now, we have expanded shrimp farming to around 35 acres,” she said. Kaur, a graduate, underwent training in



shrimp culture and was subsequently nominated for advanced training in shrimp culture in earthen biofloc ponds at Guru Angad Dev Veterinary and Animal Sciences University (GADVASU) in Ludhiana and Central Institute of Fisheries Education (CIFE) in Rohtak. The family cultivates Litopenaeus vannamei (Whiteleg shrimp) and has also moved into value addition by including shrimp pickle. Kaur says the farm follows two cycles a year and earns her a profit of Rs 7-8 lakh per acre annually after all expenses on 13.5 acres. The family is reinvesting profits in the infrastructure as the enterprise expands to 35 acres. Her work has also received national recognition, including an invitation to the Republic Day celebrations in New Delhi. According to Punjab Fisheries Department data, the state has around 1,120 acres under shrimp farming, producing about 2,792.30 tonnes. From housewife to aquaculture entrepreneur

In Fazilka, Harmanpreet Kaur, a BA graduate and housewife, established a shrimp farming and marketing enterprise in 2025. She purchased a nine-tonne-capacity refrigerated vehicle, with a project cost of less than Rs 25 lakh, and received Rs 15 lakh assistance under PMMSY. The vehicle transports shrimp from farms to processing units and markets, besides carrying feed and seed. During the shrimp season, April-November, she estimates net monthly earnings of Rs 1- Rs 1.5 lakh. The enterprise has generated four jobs and provides transportation support to other shrimp farmers. An active member of the Pentapotamia Aquaculture Farmer Producer Company, she also encourages new and women farmers to adopt shrimp culture and modern aquaculture technologies. Other women beneficiaries

Other women PMMSY beneficiaries include Robindeep Kaur of Khiala Kalan, who has a three-acre shrimp pond at Jattana Khurd and received Rs 8,95,800 subsidy in 2022, and Bhupinder Kaur of Bahadur Khara, who received Rs 2,45,248 subsidy for a 0.70-hectare project. In Bathinda, Sharanjit Kaur is pursuing aquaculture as an alternative farm enterprise. She has encouraged a large number of women in her village to adopt fishery and shrimp farming. The Fisheries Department has taken the scheme to villages, created awareness about alternatives to conventional agriculture and provided beneficiaries free-of-cost training under PMMSY. Principal Secretary, Animal Husbandry, Dairy Development and Fisheries Rahul Bhandari said, “With the first phase of PMMSY ending in September, more significant change is in the profile of women entering the sector.” “The women in Punjab have not only availed themselves of the scheme, but have also achieved significant success,” he said. “Their participation has created a new generation of women farmers in the state.” “Given their potential, I hope the second phase of PMMSY will be more successful,” he said. “Women officers, along with their male colleagues, are also making efforts to popularise the scheme and strengthen the Blue Revolution.” Director and Warden of Fisheries for the Department of Fisheries, Punjab, Hardev Singh also stressed the importance of bringing more women into aquaculture, particularly through enterprises generating substantial returns from small holdings and through models suited to saline and waterlogged land. “Punjab’s women entering fisheries fit that changing definition. One is raising fish seeds in 50 tanks on about an acre. Another is building an integrated farm around one pond. Some other has turned saline land into a shrimp enterprise. One has moved into refrigerated transport and marketing. All of them are doing great work under the scheme,” said the Director, adding that Punjab has different farmers now. Meanwhile, Punjab now has around 45,156 acres, including 1,422 acres under the PMMSY scheme under fish farming and produces about 2.11 lakh metric tonnes of fish annually, according to Fisheries Department data. The state has 16 government fish-seed farms, besides feed mills and soil and water testing laboratories.

Dhruv Rathee, Prakash Raj join CJP protest against Gyanesh Kumar



GNS News Agency, Oct 19

In a surprise move, CJP founder Abhijeet Dipke was joined by YouTuber Dhruv Rathee and actor-activist Prakash Raj during a protest against CEC Gyanesh Kumar, seeking his immediate resignation over alleged irregularities in the SIR of electoral rolls on Thursday at Freedom Park in Bengaluru. Addressing protesters, Rathee said, "I have not come here for regime change" and targeting the CEC, Rathee

said, "there is zero transparency, zero accountability from EC."

Prakash Raj demanded scrapping the SIR exercise, alleging it was not merely about the deletion of votes, but an attack on the dignity and rights of citizens. CEC Gyanesh Kumar is "acting at the behest of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah," he alleged. The scenes at Freedom Park dramatically turned electric, with unceasing slogan-shouting, demanding the scrapping of the SIR exercise and asking Gyanesh Kumar to step down. The protest, named a "people's tribunal" for the victims of SIR from Karnataka, was attended by agitators from various walks of life, including women and students. The "people's tribunal" will be followed by a "Chappal protest" in solidarity with women. At the protest site, agitators held posters written with slogans — "Error 404 — Name Not Found", and "It's done bro, resign sir" and "Don't erase us, hear us." The agitators also raised slogans like "Dictatorship will not be tolerated", "vote theft", "Gyanesh Kumar Gaddi leave your chair." Posters featuring freedom fighters Bhagat Singh and Subhash Chandra Bose were also featured among the many.

Farm labourer to woman farmer: How a Maharashtra law gives millions a new identity

GNS News Agency, Oct 19

At 60, Vijayanta Jadhav from Maharashtra's Satara holds her woman farmer certificate with unmistakable pride. For her, the paper represents far more than official recognition; it is a long-overdue acknowledgement of decades of work. "I have spent the last 30 years working on other people's farms, weeding, sowing seeds and harvesting," says Jadhav, who has been known only as a farm labourer all these years. "But now that I have received my certificate as a woman farmer, I feel that my identity has finally been recognised," says the woman from the Saskal village in Phaltan. Not only Jadhav, but many others like her have also gained a renewed sense of dignity through this certificate, which officially recognises a woman's identity as a farmer, irrespective of land ownership. According to Maharashtra agriculture department data, more than 35 lakh applications have been received since Maharashtra became the first state to pass the Women Farmer Empowerment Act on July 22.

According to Ganesh Kachare, Deputy Secretary, Department of Agriculture, approximately 58,700 certificates have been issued through 750 gram sabhas. "This new law gives every woman engaged in farming or allied work, regardless of whose name the land is in, an official woman farmer identity and certificate," Kachare said. Women involved in agricultural activities, whether as landowners, tenants, sharecroppers, tenant farmers, or agricultural labourers, are encouraged to apply through the portal established by the Department of Agriculture. The gram sabha then reviews these applications. Immense response: Gram sabhas are usually held on January 26, May 1, August 15, and October 2. However, special instructions have been issued to conduct additional gram sabhas to facilitate the verification and certification of women farmers. Officials noted that while responses may vary across different gram sabhas, some districts have achieved outstanding results. In Phaltan, Satara, Sachin Jadhav, an assistant agricultural officer and a recipient of the Krishi Seva Ratna award, made it his mission to reach as many women in the villages as possible. On October 2, 412 applications for women farmer certificates were approved during the gram sabha, he says.

with over 35 lakh applying for certificates that validate their role in agriculture. Over 35 lakh women have applied for farmer certificates (Express photo/Special arrangement).



Uploading documents online was not easy, especially as Jadhav had to check their availability and ensure the papers were in order. The eligibility covers women engaged in crop cultivation, seed production, animal husbandry and dairy farming, poultry farming, beekeeping, fisheries, agroforestry, mushroom cultivation, horticulture and floriculture, and other allied agricultural activities. Women involved in leased land or sharecropping, as well as landless farmers, agricultural labourers, nursery workers, and livestock herders, can also be included under broader eligibility provisions. Jadhav recalls connecting with self-help groups to reach out to these people. "It is important to recognise women's contribution to agriculture and the aim is to ensure that they get official recognition," he says. According to Vijayanta Jadhav and other women from Sasakal, the gram sabha used to be so crowded that there was no place to sit, even at the village temple. However, as part of the one-month-long Seva Sankalp Abhiyan, efforts are underway to raise awareness about this initiative until October 17. At the M S Swaminathan Research Foundation in Chennai, Dr R V Bhavani, a senior fellow, emphasised that while seeing women receive their certificates is encouraging, it is just the beginning of their journey. "Many more women are still unaware that they are eligible for these certificates or of the opportunities this recognition can provide," Dr Bhavani says. "In the coming weeks, we will hold awareness meetings in Gadchiroli and other parts of the state to reach more women, answer their questions, and encourage them to come forward. The true success of this initiative will be when more women understand their rights, confidently claim them, and utilise them to improve their lives and livelihoods," she adds.

How ex-Delhi cop in debt plotted Rs 50 lakh cash courier robbery using jail contacts

GNS News Agency, Oct 19

Around 5.45 pm on March 31, an autorickshaw carrying two cash couriers and Rs 50.37 lakh slowed inside the railway underpass before Azad Market Chowk in North Delhi. A scooter cut in front of it and a motorcycle pulled up alongside. One courier was allegedly slapped and the other struck on the hand with a helmet. Within moments, both their bags were gone. What initially appeared to be a robbery by men on two-wheelers led investigators to a former Delhi Police constable who, according to the chargesheet filed in the case on May 30, was not at the scene but had allegedly helped plan the crime. Samay Singh Meena, 39, then a constable with the 5th Battalion of the Delhi Armed Police, was arrested in early May. The Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA) was invoked against him later that month.

The case has since expanded into an investigation into an alleged organised criminal syndicate, with police examining the roles of the men who carried out the robbery, their links to Samay and how the proceeds were distributed. The two couriers, Rana Mahepalsinh, 23, and Mohan Lal worked for a firm in Kucha Ghasi Ram, Chandni Chowk. On March 31, they had collected Rs 50,37,000 from a coal trading office in Kirti Nagar Industrial Area — 100 bundles of Rs 50,000 and 74 loose Rs 500 notes — and left in an app-booked auto at 5.15 pm. As per the chargesheet, they were already being followed. Accused Nikhil Kumar Meena, 27, was allegedly waiting near Kirti Nagar Metro station and pointed the courier out to the others when the auto passed by. At the Inderlok red light, two men on a scooter picked a quarrel with the auto driver. Fifteen minutes later, they blocked it in the underpass and stole the bags with the money. Police got their first lead from a CCTV camera at the Gulabi Bagh cut, which caught the number plate of a Hero Honda Splendor. Its owner told police he had lent the motorcycle to Salman, 30, who was arrested on April 4. Four others — Sahil, 22, Javed, 23, Nikhil and Rohit alias Himanshu, 22 — were arrested over the next week. A fifth accused, Farman, 22, was subsequently arrested on April 25. With five men alleged to have taken part in the robbery, police added dacoity charges to the case. The accused had allegedly taken the stolen cash to a guest house in Loni, across the Uttar Pradesh border. CCTV footage showed the men arriving at 7.48 pm and leaving about 30 minutes later, the chargesheet stated. They allegedly kept Rs 10 lakh each. Bills seized by police and dated April 1, 2026 show three iPhone 17 Pros bought from a market in Manali on April 1, the day after the robbery. Till date, Rs 30 lakh has been recovered from the accused.

Samay, Farman and Sahil are being represented in

court by advocates Akhil Rexwal and Waqar Khan.

The constable's role: Samay's disclosure statement, as per the chargesheet, stated that he joined the force in 2009. "Because I had a lot of debt, I fell into the company of the wrong people and began getting robberies carried out. Because of this I have been to jail before. I was under suspension; I was reinstated only about 3-4 months ago," it read. The link to Samay emerged during the investigation through Farman, the chargesheet stated. Farman told police that his brother, Hashim, had met Samay in jail. He claimed Samay used to call him 15-20 times a day and ask him to carry out the robbery, as per the chargesheet. The chargesheet stated that Samay's alleged links with the other accused went back further than the March 31 robbery. He first met Nikhil in court about two years ago and the two continued to meet frequently. After Nikhil said he was in financial distress, Samay allegedly told Nikhil about his plan to execute robberies. Samay allegedly said "big hawala money keeps moving from Chandni Chowk to Pitampura and Kirti Nagar. If it is looted, they will not even complain to the police", stated the chargesheet. He then allegedly used his prison contacts to assemble a field crew, reaching out to Farman and instructing him to organise a team. Farman, in turn, reached out to his former jailmate Sahil, who recruited three local associates from his neighborhood: Javed, Salman, and Rohit.

As per the chargesheet, Samay identified the target on March 31. He noticed "a boy from Kucha Ghasi Ram who was going by Metro with an empty bag" and was "sure that he was going to collect a payment". He allegedly passed on a description of the man. After the robbery, Farman allegedly called Singh and told him: "Brother, the work is done and your share will reach you." There are three other cases going on against Samay: kidnapping for ransom at Chandni Mahal in 2022, dacoity at Paschim Vihar West and robbery at Sarai Rohilla in 2024. MCOCA probe into 'syndicate' On October 5, accused Farman and Sahil were arrested under the MCOCA after being questioned by the police. Since they were already in judicial custody, they were produced the same day before Special MCOCA Judge Surabhi Sharma Vats of Rouse Avenue Court. As per the police, the investigation under the MCOCA revealed the involvement of an organised criminal syndicate where "different accused persons appear to have performed specific roles in the planning, execution, distribution and concealment/disposal of the proceeds of crime". Additional Public Prosecutor Neeraj Madhup, representing the prosecution, said Farman and Sahil's custody was required to ascertain their respective roles in the organised criminal activity and their association with other members.

How ex-Delhi cop in debt plotted Rs 50 lakh cash courier robbery using jail contacts



GNS News Agency, Oct 19

Around 5.45 pm on March 31, an autorickshaw carrying two cash couriers and Rs 50.37 lakh slowed inside the railway underpass before Azad Market Chowk in North Delhi. A scooter cut in front of it and a motorcycle pulled up alongside. One courier was allegedly slapped and the other struck on the hand with a helmet. Within moments, both their bags were gone. What initially appeared to be a robbery by men on two-wheelers led investigators to a former Delhi Police constable who, according to the chargesheet filed in the case on May 30, was not at the scene but had allegedly helped plan the crime. Samay Singh Meena, 39, then a constable with the 5th Battalion of the Delhi Armed Police, was arrested in early May. The Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA) was invoked against him later that month. The case has since expanded into an investigation into an alleged organised criminal syndicate, with police examining the roles of the men who carried out the robbery, their links to Samay and how the proceeds were distributed.

The two couriers, Rana Mahepalsinh, 23, and Mohan Lal worked for a firm in Kucha Ghasi Ram, Chandni Chowk. On March 31, they had collected Rs 50,37,000 from a coal trading office in Kirti Nagar Industrial Area — 100 bundles of Rs 50,000 and 74 loose Rs 500 notes — and left in an app-booked auto at 5.15 pm. As per the chargesheet, they were already being followed. Accused Nikhil Kumar Meena, 27, was allegedly waiting near Kirti Nagar Metro station and pointed the courier out to the others when the auto passed by. At the Inderlok red light, two men on a scooter picked a quarrel with the auto driver. Fifteen minutes later, they blocked it in the underpass and stole the bags with the money.

Police got their first lead from a CCTV camera at the Gulabi Bagh cut, which caught the number plate of a Hero Honda Splendor. Its owner told police he had lent the motorcycle to Salman, 30, who was arrested on April 4. Four others — Sahil, 22, Javed, 23, Nikhil and Rohit alias Himanshu, 22 — were arrested over the next week. A fifth accused, Farman, 22, was subsequently arrested on April 25. With five men alleged to have taken part in the robbery, police added dacoity charges to the case. The accused had allegedly taken the stolen cash to a guest house in Loni, across the Uttar Pradesh border. CCTV footage showed the men arriving at 7.48 pm and leaving about 30 minutes later, the chargesheet stated. They allegedly kept Rs 10 lakh each. Bills seized by police and dated April 1, 2026 show

Reliance man chosen as SP's Rajya Sabha pick praises Modi, Akhilesh faces questions

The Samajwadi Party's decision to nominate Dhanraj Nathwani to the Rajya Sabha has come under fresh scrutiny after the Reliance executive posted a long message praising Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the completion of 25 years of his political career. In a post on X on Wednesday, Nathwani described Modi's journey since becoming Gujarat Chief Minister in 2001 as one of "unwavering conviction, perseverance, and commitment to nation-building". "25 years of leadership. 25 years of dedication. 25 years of Seva ka Sankalp," he wrote. "Since taking oath as the Chief Minister of Gujarat in 2001, Shri Narendra Modi has travelled a remarkable journey — from serving Gujarat to leading India as Prime Minister," Nathwani said. He also wished Modi "continued strength and success in the service of the nation". The post was accompanied by a video of Modi waving to crowds, with BJP flags visible in the background. The SP's rivals were swift to react. AIMIM Uttar Pradesh president Shaukat Ali wrote: "Modi ji ka yaar, Samajwadi Party ka pyaar, yeh rishta kya kehlaata hai, samajh sakta hai har aam khaas." The party and Akhilesh have not responded. Nathwani, in another post on X, on October 6, had also questioned Akhilesh's detention during the INDIA bloc protest against Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar in Delhi and said democratic dialogue is essential to democracy. "I hope the concerns surrounding the detention of SP National President Shri Akhilesh Yadav ji and other leaders are resolved at the earliest. Peaceful expression and democratic dialogue are an important part of our democracy," he wrote.

Questions over nomination: The post comes amid questions over the SP's decision to nominate him for one of the two Rajya Sabha seats it could win comfortably. The party had sought to project his nomination as part of its attempt to expand its reach beyond its traditional political constituencies and build a connection with the corporate and business community. Party president Akhilesh Yadav had also defended the choice, arguing that the party needed to engage with the corporate world. Nathwani, a senior corporate executive associated with the Reliance group, was presented as part of that outreach. But it also raised questions over the

three iPhone 17 Pros bought from a market in Manali on April 1, the day after the robbery. Till date, Rs 30 lakh has been recovered from the accused. Samay, Farman and Sahil are being represented in court by advocates Akhil Rexwal and Waqar Khan. The constable's role: Samay's disclosure statement, as per the chargesheet, stated that he joined the force in 2009. "Because I had a lot of debt, I fell into the company of the wrong people and began getting robberies carried out. Because of this I have been to jail before. I was under suspension; I was reinstated only about 3-4 months ago," it read. The link to Samay emerged during the investigation through Farman, the chargesheet stated. Farman told police that his brother, Hashim, had met Samay in jail. He claimed Samay used to call him 15-20 times a day and ask him to carry out the robbery, as per the chargesheet.

The chargesheet stated that Samay's alleged links with the other accused went back further than the March 31 robbery. He first met Nikhil in court about two years ago and the two continued to meet frequently. After Nikhil said he was in financial distress, Samay allegedly told Nikhil about his plan to execute robberies. Samay allegedly said "big hawala money keeps moving from Chandni Chowk to Pitampura and Kirti Nagar. If it is looted, they will not even complain to the police", stated the chargesheet. He then allegedly used his prison contacts to assemble a field crew, reaching out to Farman and instructing him to organise a team. Farman, in turn, reached out to his former jailmate Sahil, who recruited three local associates from his neighborhood: Javed, Salman, and Rohit. As per the chargesheet, Samay identified the target on March 31. He noticed "a boy from Kucha Ghasi Ram who was going by Metro with an empty bag" and was "sure that he was going to collect a payment". He allegedly passed on a description of the man. After the robbery, Farman allegedly called Singh and told him: "Brother, the work is done and your share will reach you." There are three other cases going on against Samay: kidnapping for ransom at Chandni Mahal in 2022, dacoity at Paschim Vihar West and robbery at Sarai Rohilla in 2024.

MCOCA probe into 'syndicate' On October 5, accused Farman and Sahil were arrested under the MCOCA after being questioned by the police. Since they were already in judicial custody, they were produced the same day before Special MCOCA Judge Surabhi Sharma Vats of Rouse Avenue Court. As per the police, the investigation under the MCOCA revealed the involvement of an organised criminal syndicate where "different accused persons appear to have performed specific roles in the planning, execution, distribution and concealment/disposal of the proceeds of crime". Additional Public Prosecutor Neeraj Madhup, representing the prosecution, said Farman and Sahil's custody was required to ascertain their respective roles in the organised criminal activity and their association with other members. Sending Farman and Sahil to five-day police custody, the court order dated October 5 said, "Ld. Addl. PP submits that during investigation, financial, electronic, forensic and technical evidence, including bank records, FSL material, CDR/IPDR, location details and Cell ID details, has now been collected and is being scrutinised and correlated with the material already available on record."



SP's PDA (Pichhda, Dalit, Alpsankhyak) politics. Bahujan Samaj Party chief Mayawati had attacked the party over the choice, pointing out that the SP had two seats it could win with ease but had chosen candidates that, according to her, did not reflect its PDA claim — alleging that one seat had gone to a family member and the other to a representative of the business community. The criticism came as the SP was simultaneously discussing the possibility of fielding a third candidate from the PDA communities. Party leaders had indicated that such a candidate could be put up to underline its commitment to the PDA formulation, even though the party did not have the numbers to ensure a third victory. After several days of suspense, however, the SP decided against fielding the third candidate. Nathwani's latest post has now provided the party's rivals with another line of attack. His praise of Modi sits uneasily with the SP's opposition to the BJP and its campaign around the PDA social coalition. For the SP, the issue is less about Nathwani's personal views than the political optics of his nomination. The party had sought to use his candidature to signal an outreach to the corporate sector. But with Nathwani publicly praising Modi at a time when the SP is positioning itself as the principal political challenger to the BJP in Uttar Pradesh, the choice risks reopening the very questions the party had hoped to settle through its explanation of the nomination.

No water for farms and drinking, but plenty for brewing beer in Telangana?

Hyderabad: Telangana may be grappling with a severe drinking water and irrigation water crisis amid the persisting El Nino effects, but when it comes to beer manufacturing, water appears to be in plenty. The Telangana Excise Department has reportedly sought details of water requirements from breweries manufacturing beer, with the department also stating that the required quantity of water for manufacturing units in Sangareddy district would be supplied from the Singur and Manjeera projects.

Sangareddy currently houses United Breweries Limited, Crown Beers India Pvt Ltd, American Brew Crafts Pvt Ltd and Carlsberg India. The reported move has raised questions over the government's priorities, particularly as ground-water levels are depleting and irrigation and drinking water needs remain a concern in areas dependent on the Singur and Manjeera projects. The Singur project, which is currently undergoing repair works, is considered the lifeline for irrigation needs in Sangareddy and surrounding districts, while the Manjeera project fulfils the drinking water needs of

Hyderabad. The Singur project, which is currently undergoing repairs, has a Full Tank Capacity of 29.91 TMC and currently holds a mere 3.9 TMC. Meanwhile, the Manjeera project, which has a Full Tank Capacity of 1.5 TMC, currently holds only 0.210 TMC. The project, which usually receives inflows in September and October, has barely seen any inflows this year. The reported proposal to supply water to breweries from these projects assumes significance against the backdrop of the prevailing water stress in the State and concerns over the availability of water for irrigation and drinking purposes. State Excise Minister Jupally Krishna Rao, in a recent statement, said that the government would use water from the Srisailem project for liquor production. BRS Legislature Party Deputy Leader and former Minister T Harish Rao strongly criticised the Minister's statement, saying, "El Nino appeared to affect electricity and irrigation for farmers but not liquor production and sales." Harish Rao also alleged that the Revanth Reddy government was more concerned about increasing liquor revenue than addressing the welfare of farmers and people.

Iran’s wartime hunt for protesters ushers in a new era of repression

Weeks into the war in Iran, at the height of the US and Israeli strikes on the country, a 21-year-old engineering student was summoned for interrogation. The student, Pouriya, had already spent days in jail for filming recent street protests in his hometown. Now, in March, investigators accused him of taking part in the killing of a local official. In Istanbul, Zahra, an Iranian with a modest social media following, was fielding panicked calls from home after intelligence officers threatened to arrest her mother over her Instagram posts. Many visits to the family home would follow, as officers passed messages to the 23-year-old through her family in Iran, accusing Zahra of working with Iran’s enemies to stir up trouble at home.

And in northeast Iran, security forces dragged a 15-year-old out of bed, arresting him for participating in the protests. The next time he was seen, Abbas Nio Bajizahi wore a blindfold in a blurred forced confession video. In January, tens of thousands of Iranians protested against an economic collapse they blamed on the government. Nine months later, the country is witnessing its fiercest repression in decades, according to interviews with more than 75 human rights experts, lawyers and ordinary Iranians. The United States and Israel have claimed they struck at least 17 police stations, military bases and intelligence offices responsible for crushing the January protests. Yet Iran’s security apparatus appears entrenched and stronger than ever. US President Donald Trump encouraged Iranian citizens to “keep protesting” and promised on January 13 that help was on its way. Scores of Iranians who took to the streets have since been charged with treason for allegedly cooperating with Iran’s enemies. At least 34 people have been executed for taking part in the January protests. Thousands have been jailed. A Reuters examination of cases involving protesters since January points to a coordinated campaign by Iran’s security apparatus, judiciary and state broadcaster to instill a climate of fear, especially among the families of the accused. Inside Iran, the campaign is carried out by fast-track executions that are announced online and in broadcasts, closed-door proceedings, and mass prosecutions. “The courts, which were created to deliver justice, are now being used as instruments of repression. The institutions of power have all come together and joined hands to do this.” Iran’s security apparatus is also reaching across borders to target Iranians who protested from exile. Interviews with dozens of Iranians in Armenia, Turkey and Georgia reveal how Iran is curbing opposition abroad by threatening family members in Iran, cancelling passports and withholding consular services.

“This is one of the darkest periods in contemporary Iranian history,” said Sina Yousefi, a human rights lawyer now based in Germany. He was arrested in 2022 after he formed a defense council for protesters during the “Woman, Life, Freedom” movement, sparked by the death of a Kurdish woman detained by the morality police for violating Iran’s female dress code. “The courts, which were created to deliver justice, are now being used as instruments of repression,” said Yousefi, who has been repeatedly sentenced in Iran for his activism, most recently for “agitation” and anti-government statements. “The institutions of power have all come together and joined hands to do this.” Iran’s mission to the United Nations in Geneva, which is responsible for international media inquiries, did not respond to a detailed request for comment about its deadly crackdown.

Since the protests erupted in January, Reuters has examined how Iran’s leadership has survived months of bombardment by the world’s most powerful military and years of punishing sanctions through a combination of repression and a network of shadowy financial structures. Investigations have revealed how Iran exploits crypto exchanges and illegal gambling networks to tap illicit revenues

and circumvent sanctions, how its Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps consolidated control of the Strait of Hormuz, and how it fuelled the Myanmar junta’s bombing campaign against civilian targets. Reuters is withholding the full names of most people who spoke about the crackdown from inside Iran because they risk arrest for talking with international media. Not all the details described by Pouriya, Zahra and others could be confirmed, but their accounts, provided in separate interviews, are consistent with broader reporting by Reuters about the government’s campaign to silence dissent. For 47 years, American Presidents and countless other world leaders talked about the threat posed by Iran, but no one had the courage to address it,” White House spokeswoman Anna Kelly wrote in response to detailed questions about the Iranian crackdown. “President Trump took decisive action to ensure that Iran could never harm our homeland, our troops, or our allies again.” Israel’s military declined to comment on the Reuters findings. The latest protests in Iran started on December 28, 2025, after the currency plummeted to a then-historic low. Plagued by years of sanctions and economic mismanagement, this devaluation pushed shopkeepers in Tehran’s Grand Bazaar to strike. Thousands of citizens around the country joined, calling for regime change. Demonstrations reached Pouriya’s town within days. He was first detained on December 31 after a plainclothes officer grabbed him as he was filming the protests. He was released after signing a pledge to not film anymore. But two days later, Pouriya was detained again while filming with his cellphone. Pouriya, who appears younger than his 21 years with his dark mop of unruly hair, spent six nights in jail. There, he was beaten during interrogations and accused of spying. He said he shared a cell with injured protesters – two with broken ribs and another with a leg badly burned by a tear gas canister fired into a crowd. None of the injured were taken to the hospital, Pouriya said. Reuters could not confirm his account but it was consistent with how former prisoners describe conditions.

Once Pouriya was released, he described a dazed walk alone through his hometown. Pouriya, a 21-year-old who was sentenced to six years in prison after filming the protests in Iran last winter, has fled the country. But Iran’s security services have reached abroad to track down dissidents. While he was in jail, Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, the force known as IRGC that is charged with maintaining the Islamic Republic in both internal and external security operations, unleashed a nationwide crackdown. Police and local militias known as Basij opened fire on the crowds. On the night of January 8, the government cut off the internet and mobile phone networks. That night and the next saw thousands of deaths. In all, the US-based Human Rights Activist News Agency documented 6,488 protester deaths and 25,846 injured across more than 200 cities. Reuters could not independently confirm the figures, which have been broadly reflected in the tallies of other human rights organizations. As Pouriya roamed his neighborhood, he saw scars of clashes from the days before – broken windows, buildings marked with bullet holes. And on the concrete walls of shops and homes were memorial posters of young Iranians killed on the streets, put up by their grieving families. Pouriya recognized some faces – a gifted classmate in one photo, a childhood friend in another. The endless news bulletins of arrests and executions reminded Pouriya of the stories he grew up hearing about the violent summer of 1988, when the nascent Islamic Republic killed thousands of political dissidents. Each morning, Iranians awoke to the names of the dead filling their newspapers and television broadcasts. On the morning of January 8, Zahra, an Iranian student at a college in Istanbul, opened her phone to see dozens of missed calls and unread messages from her family and friends in Iran.

She tried responding but could not get through. Her stomach dropped. Zahra, brushing her long dark hair out of her face, recounted how she watched, zombie-like, at news reports of security forces shooting young protesters in the streets. Young neighbors and friends back in Iran had been so excited about their first street demonstrations. She had no idea if they were dead or alive.

Zahra marched in the 2022 protests but left her home in central Iran in 2024. She rarely discussed politics after moving to Turkey. On Instagram, she mostly posted videos of herself lip syncing and dancing to music. All that changed last November, when strangers in Iran began sending her messages, describing their financial hardships. Zahra shared their stories online and posted her support for the last shah of Iran, whose rule was overthrown in 1979 during the Islamic Revolution. “I had no feelings left. No sadness, no happiness.” In December, Zahra posted Instagram reels venting her frustration at the Iranian government. Young people from her hometown saw her posts and messaged her, asking for advice on where to gather. Zahra gave tips on meeting points and advised them to hide their faces. For many Iranians living abroad, the weeks leading up to the nationwide protests in January offered hope. In Turkey, Armenia and Georgia, all countries with significant Iranian diaspora populations, people like Zahra with little experience in political activism posted support for the protesters on social media and tried to organise their own gatherings abroad. These early international protests were widely covered. Unlike Iranians back home, most participants did not cover their faces. One day after the protests were violently suppressed, local intelligence officers visited Zahra’s father at his house in central Iran. “They told him, ‘You have to tell her, she has to stop posting,’” she said. “It was really bizarre because even though I’m a nobody, the security officers told my dad, ‘Your daughter’s like a ringleader, she’s brainwashing young people,’” she said. The officers told her father the local protest would never have happened if it were not for her social media posts. Zahra, who is focused on her studies and devoted to her family, says she’s no opposition mastermind. “I’m a nobody,” she repeated. She no longer posts about politics. A Springtime of Executions Iran briefly restored internet access at the end of January. But after Israel and the US launched the war on February 28, the Islamic Republic plunged its people into darkness again. This information blackout would last until late May. Pouriya, the engineering student, was summoned to an interrogation in mid-March. Intelligence officers accused him of causing the death of an official who was killed in the protests during the six days Pouriya was jailed. Three weeks later, Pouriya learned his sentence. “They gave me six years: one year for propaganda against the system and five years for disturbing the peace and causing a commotion,” said Pouriya. But he left Iran after he was released on bail while appealing the sentence. Several young men from his town were a part of a group trial in the death of the same government official. These men face the death penalty and their cases are pending, according to Iranian human rights organizations. Reuters reviewed documents related to Pouriya’s conviction but could not confirm the cases involving the other young men and could not reach officials in Iran.

Since March, at least 34 protesters have been executed in connection with the most recent uprising, according to the United Nations and human rights groups. By contrast, 15 people were executed relating to the 2022 protests over a four-year period. Of more than 560 executions announced by mid-September, more than 10% have involved political prisoners, according to Mahmood Amiry-Moghaddam of Iran Human Rights, which has been documenting the death penalty since 2007. In previous decades, he said, executions for political crimes accounted for 3% to



5% of the total number of people put to death. Reuters could not independently confirm his analysis. We have never had such a high number of political prisoners being executed in such a short time,” he said. Five men have been executed in the past 10 days, indicating an accelerating pace. Yousefi, the lawyer, said legal proceedings are faster than before, and the appeal window has been cut in half. That’s largely because of a new espionage law passed after US and Israeli airstrikes on Iran in June 2025 that killed many of Iran’s military leaders, said Hamidreza Azizi, a senior Iran analyst at the International Crisis Group, a Brussels-based research institute. And headline elements of the Islamic Republic now view the current conflict as a “hybrid war” that requires both foreign and domestic operations.

“We have never had such a high number of political prisoners being executed in such a short time.” “They really believe that this is a war just being fought on different fronts, and wartime measures have to be applied on all these different fronts as well,” Azizi said. Since January, Iranian state officials have emphasized the deaths of its security forces during the demonstrations, branding protesters as collaborators with the US and Israel. “Does this look like a ‘protest’ for FREEDOM? Or the exact kind of scenes that the US Administration would NEVER tolerate within its own borders?” Iran’s Foreign Minister Abbas Aragchi wrote on X in January, days after the crackdown. As the war continued through spring, group trials of young men charged with murdering officials or committing arson began in the cities of Tehran, Esfahan and Mashhad. Two mass trials opened in Isfahan, one of Iran’s largest cities, which saw mass demonstrations in January. Videos showed crowds of people marching in the streets. They chanted “Iranians, get loud! Shout for your rights,” while storeowners shuttered their shops in solidarity. About 60 people were arrested in connection with protests in Isfahan’s Alikhani Square. According to Mizan, the judiciary’s official media outlet, the men are accused of killing four security force members, destruction of property and being leaders of protests on January 8. The state quickly produced and promoted propaganda around the Alikhani Square case. On January 23, state television released a documentary called “Shock: Fire Starter.” Iran’s state broadcaster released a documentary called “Shock: Fire Starter” about the Alikhani Square protests in Isfahan. Published two weeks after the demonstrations, the video is dramatized in the style of a true-crime documentary, as seen in this short excerpt. The show included confessions of three detainees alongside CCTV footage and eyewitness accounts that claimed to provide evidence of their crimes. The protestors are referred to as “terrorists” throughout the film. These screen captures show a news package about the trials of Abolfazl Sepahi Badijani (pictured here) and Amirhossein Safari Hosseinabadi. They are questioned about the events of Alikhani Square during the January protests and their involvement. Both admit under duress to being present. Sepahi Badijani says he wore a mask to the protest, and Safari Hosseinabadi (pictured here) says he carried a knife.

US proposes \$70,000 fee for international students seeking OPT work programme



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Washington: The US Department of Homeland Security has proposed charging \$70,000 for international students seeking initial participation in the Optional Practical Training programme, a sweeping change that could sharply increase the cost of obtaining post-study work experience in the United States. The proposed rule would also impose a \$30,000 fee for any subsequent OPT participation, DHS said Wednesday. The fees are proposed and are not currently in effect. DHS will accept public comments from Oct. 8 through Nov. 9 before considering a final rule. OPT allows eligible international students in F-1 status to obtain temporary employment authorisation for work directly related to their field of study. It is widely used by foreign graduates of US colleges and universities, including students in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Under the proposal, the fees would be paid by SEVP-certified schools before their designated school officials recommend students for OPT in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System, known as SEVIS. US Citizenship and Immigration Services would not grant employment authorisation if the school had not paid the required fee, according to DHS.

The fee would not be linked to a particular employer. It would apply when a school recommends an F-1 student for any form of OPT. DHS said the money collected would be deposited in the US Treasury. The department said it was proposing the changes to combat fraud and abuse, strengthen immigration-system integrity and protect US workers. “Optional Practical Training was never meant to be a back door into the American workforce, a subsidy for cheap labour, or a prize for those who game the system,” a DHS spokesperson said. “DHS is upskilling OPT to require foreign students to justify their worth to employers. American workers should not have to compete against a program that has been turned into a pipeline for cheap foreign labour,” the spokesperson said.

DHS said the Student and Exchange Visitor Program had encountered schools, designated school officials, employers and F-1 students involved in schemes exploiting existing regulations, including problematic work sites and what it described as “pay-to-stay” visa schemes. The department said the proposed fees could encourage schools to exercise greater oversight and selectivity before recom-

mending students for OPT. Under current regulations, eligible F-1 students can seek OPT before completing their academic programme or after graduation, provided the work is directly related to their major field of study. Students can receive up to 12 months of OPT at each educational level. Graduates with qualifying degrees in science, technology, engineering or mathematics can be eligible for an additional 24-month STEM OPT extension, making the programme particularly important to international graduates seeking professional experience in US technology and other high-skilled industries. To participate, students must receive a recommendation from a designated school official and separately apply to USCIS for employment authorisation. The proposal comes amid a broader push by the US administration to tighten employment-based immigration programmes, with officials arguing that stronger enforcement is needed to combat fraud and protect domestic workers. DHS said that after the public-comment period closes, it will review properly submitted comments and supporting materials and could revise the proposal before issuing any final rule.



The Pentagon has reportedly directed US Central Command to prepare for possible major combat operations against Iran, with potential strikes targeting energy, infrastructure and nuclear facilities ahead of US and Israeli elections. Iran, meanwhile, has warned it may carry out preemptive military action and says it has shifted from a defensive to an offensive military doctrine

Civilians in Yemen continue to flee homes amid insecurity: UN



United Nations: Civilians in Yemen continue to flee their homes amid the ongoing conflict, as the humanitarian crisis worsens by the day, UN humanitarian officials said. Since August 1, more than 184,000 people have been displaced nationwide, including over 21,000 people in the past week alone, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said on Wednesday (local time), citing the International Organization for Migration. According to OCHA,

the United Nations and its humanitarian partners have reached more than 126,000 people with life-saving assistance. Nevertheless, it warned that needs continue to outpace the resources available. The World Health Organization warned of major funding shortfalls as rising displacement, disease outbreaks and conflict put more pressure on an already fragile health system, OCHA said. “Cholera cases have tripled in recent weeks — including in displacement camps — while measles, dengue and malaria continue to spread.” Key roads connecting Taiz governorate with major surrounding cities, including Hodeidah, Aden and Sanaa, remain blocked, the office said, adding that the closure severely restricts the movement of civilians and commercial supplies, as well as humanitarian access. Shortages of essential commodities and medical supplies are being reported, with sharp increases in food and fuel prices, and growing concerns over the availability of flour, cooking gas and medicines, OCHA said. The office said it was alarmed by reports of civilian casualties, damage to civilian property and heightened risks from explosive hazards, which are further constraining humanitarian access and the safe movement of civilians, Xinhua news agency reported. “

Pentagon prepares for possible major combat operations against Iran

Washington: The Pentagon instructed US Central Command several days ago to complete preparations for resuming major combat operations in Iran, according to a report citing US officials. US and Israeli sources said the strikes could take place before the US midterm elections, which will be held on November 3, and possibly before the Israeli elections a week earlier, reports Xinhua, quoting news website Axios. Potential combat operations include massive bombing campaigns targeting Iranian energy, infrastructure and nuclear facilities, according to the sources. Less than a month before the US midterms, affordability is the biggest issue for voters, who are blaming Republicans, the party in power. The war in Iran has caused gas prices to surge, driving up costs across industries including shipping, trucking, air travel and food.

A Reuters/Ipsos poll released Monday showed that US President Donald Trump’s approval rating remained at a record low of 32 per cent, unchanged from a September poll that marked the lowest rating of his political career. Cost of living is the top issue on Americans’ minds as they decide how to vote next month, the Reuters/Ipsos poll found. Meanwhile, Iranian Army spokesman Mohammad Akraminia has said that, if necessary, the country will carry out preemptive military operations to prevent any “aggres-

sion by the enemy.” He made the remarks in an interview with the semi-official Fars news agency, which was published on Wednesday, while stressing that Iranian armed forces had previously launched such operations against the “enemy”. Akraminia said the country has changed its military doctrine from being defensive to offensive and has followed it in the war with the United States and Israel. He noted among the operations carried out by the Iranian armed forces based on the new doctrine were a missile strike against a US base in Jordan in late July, as well as several missile and drone attacks over the past months against the bases of the “counter-revolutionary and separatist” groups stationed in Iraq’s semi-autonomous Kurdistan region. He added the strike against the US base, which was preemptive, “wrested the initiative from them and left them unable to take any action.” Akraminia stressed that carrying out preemptive operations while adhering to principles, such as necessity, urgency, and proportionality, is considered “legitimate.” Commenting on the possibility of a ground invasion by the United States against Iran, he said, “My assessment is that the Americans will not dare launch a ground invasion.” Akraminia said Iran’s Army has decided to work on increasing the range of its missiles following the war with the United States and Israel.

The Art and Science of Fitness | Reclaiming your fitness goals after pregnancy



Nothing makes you admire the human body quite like the amazing feat of pregnancy and childbirth. The ability to create life (with a bit of celestial help), while old as time, is also among the most magical things in life. Obviously, in all of this, men play a supportive role. Women carry the weight, quite literally. And once the baby is there, your life has changed quite significantly and nothing is like it was before. Including your body.

Eva, one of the co-authors, can talk from her own experience. She noted that it is hard not to feel like a vessel during pregnancy. If one is breastfeeding and catering to the baby's needs, you are no longer the sole dependent on your body. Exercise can help. Of course, only once it is safe to do so, light stretching and yoga can start pretty soon postpartum, gradually building it up over weeks, but for more vigorous exercises you should wait at least six weeks.

Postpartum exercise can serve two functions: It is good for getting back to fitness. But it also means that you, as a new mother, need to set aside time to prioritise yourself. Which is hard to do with a newborn. It is all too easy to lose the sense of self and instead feel a sense of servitude to the newborn. Even though becoming physically active soon after the delivery of the child is important, it is worthwhile mentioning that any woman planning a pregnancy should prepare for it. This should include both physical and mental health. Becoming a parent is one of the most fundamental shifts of our lives and nothing can prepare us for it, but ourselves. We literally need to get moving. Physical journey during and after the pregnancy

Here we'll focus on the physical aspect. Most get worried and don't get started on the fitness journey worrying that they can't, without realising that they definitely won't be able to stay fit if they don't get started. Expectant mothers, who are on their physical fitness journey, tend to have a smoother pregnancy. It also prepares them for the delivery and the post-pregnancy phase. The only caveat is that there should be no rush. They need to gradually build up physical activity, and not try to do everything suddenly because that is when injuries happen. Cardiovascular exercises like walking, jogging, running, cycling, swimming and rowing have an important role. The same is the case for strength training exercises, whether floor, free weights or machine-based. Both of these help in improving bone strength. Weak bones are a big concern in women post-pregnancy. The overall objective of post-partum fitness should simply be to become better than the day before.

Like the whole body, the pregnant woman's heart is also working overtime. During pregnancy, the heart rate (number of times the heart beats) and the stroke volume (volume of blood pumped per heartbeat) increase to nourish the growing baby. Fascinatingly, this change is similar to what happens after training in an endurance exercise. So, mothers who had already been running during pregnancy, and/or start with their training after delivery, have an

edge over their non-pregnant counterparts. There will be some women who, post pregnancy, will experience pelvic floor muscle dysfunction during exercises, symptoms of which will be heaviness and pain in the pelvic area and incontinence. They should undergo supervised rehabilitation to address the same. The best way to get rid of the excess weight post-pregnancy is to make good food choices, i.e. cutting down on sugars, carbohydrates and deep-fried food. For six months after delivery, breastfeeding increases energy expenditure, protein requirements and fluid needs, hence, there is a need to increase energy intake, rather than cutting down on it. Also, there is a need to adequately hydrate, particularly before exercising. Pregnant and breastfeeding mothers should have a sufficient amount of vitamins B, C, E, D and A, iron, folic acid, selenium, copper, zinc, manganese, iodine and choline. However, always take these supplements after your doctor's advice. Addressing postpartum mental health is crucial. We would be remiss not to mention that postpartum physical bodily changes, returning to training and/or going back to work will all influence mental health. When we talk about postpartum fitness and parenting, it is crucial not to overlook this. After all, whether it is about putting on your shoes for a run or to the gym, first you need to be motivated enough to do that, and that's all psychological. The same applies when your newborn baby cries and you lose your cool because that's what babies tend to do.

You need to dig in and stay calmer. This is often easier said than done, and roughly 15% of women experience some degree of postpartum depression (PPD). Coupled with anxiety, psychosis and eating disorders, this can be debilitating and they should be encouraged to ask for help. The body-mind connection is real in more ways than we can imagine. Postpartum depression is associated with urge urinary incontinence, and it further increases the risk of depression. Eating disorders, whether it be because of the impression of body image or because of hormonal changes, in turn, increase the risk of postpartum depression and also lead to an energy deficit, which further physically makes you feel fatigued all the time. The vicious cycle carries on unless help is sought. And one way to regain that sense of control is through exercise. It doesn't have to be much. Once a week is great. Twice is fantastic. Or incorporate 3 minutes of strength training exercises into your day. A little goes a long way. A positive thing that came out of the Covid pandemic was the increased acceptance of the importance of mental health and the removal of the stigma surrounding seeking help for it. Following delivery, early mental health screenings by a mental health professional are highly recommended, followed – if needed – by treatment, whether it be therapy, lifestyle changes including exercises, reducing screen time, better sleeping times, improved eating habits or in a few cases, medication. Being aware of all of this and taking action by getting moving will help you to get back to your pre-pregnancy fitness levels, or even better. And if you need an excuse to prioritise your exercise and health, keep in mind that you are helping your children as well. When they observe their parents leading an active healthy life, especially their mother, children tend to pick up a better lifestyle for good. Which — besides life — is the biggest gift you could have given them. Dr Rajat Chauhan (drrajatchauhan.com) Sports Medicine & Musculoskeletal Medicine Physician, Author and Student of Running & PainEva Bacon (evabacon.com) Runner, Roller Blader, Rock Climber, Urban Hiker, Translator and IT Program ManagerEva and Rajat write a weekly column, exclusively for HT Premium readers, that breaks down the science of movement and exercise.

Curating a product market fit for your crypto startup

So, cryptocurrencies, like Bitcoin, seem to have their highs and lows. These cryptocurrencies are built on the decentralised technology Blockchain and one may understand the motivations of the West for adopting such technology. After all, it seemed like fundamental confidence in the traditional financial system had been a bit shattered, pretty much forming the genesis of something like cryptocurrency. The notion may have been to have something decentralised with limited circulation without a central entity controlling fortunes.

And among those thinking of being part of the crypto space, how much of it is about seeing it as a monetary system or a means of exchange or a barter system based on which the future economy would be built, as opposed to a way to exchange goods and services? Is cryptocurrency being seen as a foundational economic tool for the future or just another method for transactions? Being a crypto entrepreneur in India could have Herculean challenges, because, from a regulatory perspective, it's a rocky relationship with crypto without much legitimacy. And if someone puts their hard-earned salary into crypto and something goes wrong, they may not be able to knock on the doors of regulators either, because policymakers may see cryptocurrency akin to gambling. In an interview, Vikram Subburaj, CEO & co-founder of Giottus, a crypto assets trading portal, answered a range of questions on crypto entrepreneurship in India.

So, what does the crypto landscape look like for entrepreneurs in India?

Crypto is a parallel technology, like the Internet, where more than one industry is redefined and transformed and where even new industries get created. It's, also, a horizontal technology that is able to create a network in a decentralised manner. Traditionally, the benefits and value of a network lie only with the entity or corporate that creates it and that's where cryptocurrency comes in to spread that value across to everyone. Think of those old dial-up connections where the network was really slow, but it could still do certain things; the promise of what it could do was what ought to be kept in mind. We're at that stage right now where there is a limitation of transactions per second, but it's being solved.

But, what could that mean from the consumer perspective?

One may not want a centralised corporate entity to dictate the terms of digital media that people are using. People should have a say in defining the rules of technology, which proves the need for a decentralized system... Say there are people investing or having ownership of a particular cryptocurrency project. They have a say on what the rules of the project should be, how the network should work, what the punishment could be, like a deduction of a certain percentage or being banned from the network and more. So, they're defining the rules by having ownership in the network. And if this network grows really big, it becomes like a decentralized nation with people sitting around different parts of the world. But, imagine that on a smaller scale, where rules, habits and characteristics get defined and a



So, cryptocurrencies, like Bitcoin, seem to have their highs and lows. These cryptocurrencies are built on the decentralised technology Blockchain and one may understand the motivations of the West for adopting such technology

culture gets formed if the network survives.

But, what could the use cases of cryptocurrency tangibly look like?

The use cases of cryptocurrency are already seen as being better than existing systems, such as payments in the remittance market. One area or challenge where adoption hasn't grown drastically yet is because of regulations. So, there are industries, where regulation is the hurdle, not the product. And the amount of monetary gain that this is going to give people who would adopt it is much higher than that of existing systems and processes... Parallely, when there's no headache from a regulatory perspective and where adoption would be more cemented is the gaming industry, which has an imminent need in the form of NFTs, which are going to be really big in that sector. 10 years from now, I foresee most of the infrastructure behind one's payments and remittance markets being handled through cryptocurrency networks.

And how does one curate a product-market fit in the crypto realm?

Out of the 8-10 players out there, we're the only ones bootstrapped and we're said to be in the top 4 based on volumes. And we didn't spend money to acquire customers, it was just our product and the referral programme we had, which has led to a customer base of about 1 million to 1.5 million... At one point, an RBI circular restricted crypto entities from having a banking exchange. At that point, there were about 50 exchanges and that came down to about 10, which made our job much clearer. And then, a Supreme Court verdict lifted this ban a couple of years later... We, also, created models through which customers could buy and sell cryptos in India and we were the first in the market to launch these models. That's how we got our initial customer base.

India's fraying garment industry needs a stitch in time under Modi 3.0



Until then, China dominated garment exports to western markets, commanding a 40% market share in both the EU and the US. However, according to the chief purchasing managers, there were growing headwinds: labour shortage in China's coastal industrial hubs, rising wages and diversion of production capacity toward national consumption. About 54% of purchasing managers said that they would diversify up to 10% of sourcing away from China while 32% said they would diversify more than 10% of sourcing, McKinsey reported. A clear winner emerged—Bangladesh, which McKinsey deemed the “next China” in garment-making and exports.

Looking back at the survey, which was conducted 13 years ago at a time when global supply chains were getting further embedded in Asia, one statistic is revealing. When asked about the new sourcing hotspots in the next five years, 89% said Bangladesh, followed by Vietnam, Indonesia and Cambodia. India did not have the confidence of global purchasing managers; in hindsight, they were prescient. Early this year, the New Delhi-based research group Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) reported that India's global market share in garment trade has declined between 2015 and 2023: share of knitted apparel dropped from 3.85% to 3.10%, and the share of non-knitted apparel dropped from 4.6% to 3.7%.

In 2023, China exported \$114 billion worth of garments, the EU \$94.4 billion, Vietnam \$81.6 billion, Bangladesh \$43.8 billion, and India just \$14.5 billion, according to GTRI. Consider the trend in growth. Between 2013 and 2023, while China's garment exports declined by 23.5%, Bangladesh's grew by 69.6%, Vietnam's grew by 81.6%, and India's grew by a marginal 4.6%. Ajay Shrivastava, a former bureaucrat and the founder of GTRI, stressed how important the entire sector is to the Indian economy and its dream of becoming a manufacturing nation. “The sector [including both textiles and garments] provides jobs to [an estimated] 50 million people,” Shrivastava said. “Textiles and garments are not technology-intensive industries; these are labour-intensive. If we are losing to countries like Bangladesh then it is a sad reality and we have to do something about it.”

Shrivastava lays out the entire value chain of the sector. “Cotton is grown in the fields, then cotton fibre is converted into yarns, then yarn into fabric, then fabric into garments. It's sad that we have to export cotton yarns. Ideally, we should convert it into fabrics, but after yarns, our value chain breaks, mostly because of quality issues,” he said. Another bottleneck plaguing exports is the industry failing to catch up with shifting trends in the fast fashion industry, according to Shrivastava. “We are a historically cotton-growing country. But about 70% of clothing bought by developed countries is made of mixed synthetics—it has overtaken cotton and become a favourite of the fashion industry. Their share in Indian exports is less than 40%.” Hence, Indian factories produce cotton apparel for the spring and summer seasons in the West, leading to low utilisation during autumn and winter when synthetics and blended fabrics dominate demand. “A factory that runs only six months a year still has to pay the full year's fixed costs. This makes anything made in the factory expensive. With weak synthetics, India's apparel industry is a horse running with one leg tied. The results are low exports, low wages, and low investments in the sector,” Shrivastava said. “Entry into synthetics would make factories run full year and increase wages manifold.” Fast fashion is a low-margin industry with a complex production process, and one indicator could determine manufacturing success. It is called the Standard Allowed Minute (SAM), which measures the time taken by a worker at a factory unit to make one garment. SAM is a function of skilled workforce, assembly line efficiency and the man-to-machine ratio. According to GTRI, about 80% of Indian exporters fail to meet SAM or other [industry] requirements, thereby limiting their ability to secure orders.”

Kumar Duraiswamy, joint secretary at the Tirupur Exporters' Association in Tamil Nadu, said that while the man-to-machine ratio in India is about 2:1, it is close to 1.15:1 for

China and Bangladesh. “The efficiency of machines is about 80-85% in Bangladesh, China and Vietnam whereas the average for us is about 40%. Now imagine a 10,000 sq.ft factory with the standard expenses producing 5000 pieces in India [compared to] 9000 pieces there—what we get is cheaper products offered by these countries,” he said. “A crucial part of the garment industry is the thousands of weaving and processing units, most of which are informal and small- and medium-sized enterprises. Shrivastava said that these units lack expertise, scale, and technology and remain racked with issues such as power outages and underutilization, which, in turn, increase weaving costs in India to levels comparable with those in the EU or US. Consider this statistic: Chinese fabric processing units process about 1 million metres of cloth per day compared to less than 20,000 metres in India, according to GTRI's analysis. Duraiswamy inveighed against successive governments' apathy toward the garment industry. “The thing is you cannot transform the MSME sector all of a sudden. The availability of orders, and the trust of the customers, is a big process. And with the policies that we have, people are tired; they do not want to run a garment business,” he said.

In 2021, the government announced that it will build seven Mega Integrated Textile?Region?and?Apparel (PM MITRA) parks, as part of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's “5F vision: Farm to Fibre to Factory to Fashion to Foreign.” The parks aim to create an integrated value chain: spinning, weaving, processing, dyeing and printing at one location. “Tirupur - India's largest garment-making hub - is a cluster-based model. About 2000 exporters are supported by 20,000 MSMEs that are part of the different processes in the value chain from yarn to fabric to knitting to dyeing to finishing to sewing, printing, embroidery and packaging. The future is an integrated model but we have to scale up taking the traditional model along because orders by buyers are a function of the manufacturing model, and the transition will take time,” Duraiswamy said. To boost the sector, the government included it in its flagship production-linked incentives scheme, which was launched in 2021. However, under the scheme, fibre manufacturers were prioritised over garment makers and the threshold for investments was between rupees 100 crore to 300 crore, which, according to Duraiswamy, is high for the industry, cutting off most small and medium-sized manufacturers. “The government has to go to the grassroots and find out about the nature of transformation that is required in this industry. High employment potential is only possible in the garment industry. You are promoting cotton and yarn exports. But exporting one unit of garment generates more jobs than one unit of cotton or yarn,” Duraiswamy said. On June 25, 2024, the newly installed textiles minister Giriraj Singh said that his challenge is to beat China - not Bangladesh - in garment exports, and promised to make small clusters for smaller players in India and revive the making of integrated textile parks. “Who knows how much time it will take to make it happen? This is the time to talk to leading manufacturers and ask them about the problems they face. There are decisions that need to be made now and not in the future,” Shrivastava said.

“In Bangladesh, executives from companies such as Zara and H&M planned and designed policies for the garment sector, and the government fully supported them in whatever policy changes and trade facilitation measures they wanted,” he said, noting that India should negotiate both tariff and non-tariff barriers in its ongoing free trade agreement discussions with the United Kingdom and EU. “The EU levies tariffs anywhere between 10-18% on India-made garments while the tariffs for Bangladesh and Vietnam remain zero. However, we have to remember that the EU levies full duty on China-made garments and yet China is their top garment supplier,” Shrivastava said. “Tariff is only one of the factors [that determine success in exports],” Duraiswamy says that an appreciating dollar has made machines expensive - most of which are imported - at a time when small - and medium-sized factories are finding it difficult to get access to credit owing to the adoption of Basel III capital norms by India. “When credit growth stops, these factories go out of business.” According to Duraiswamy, the global buying capacity has not increased but the manufacturing capacities [in Asia] have increased in the last few years with Pakistan, Vietnam, Cambodia and Myanmar joining the global supply chain. “Change is the order of the day,” he said and stressed the importance of a factory to a growing and ambitious economy such as India's. “Factories create an entire ecosystem with indirect jobs: a tea vendor will come, a fruit vendor will come, a salon will come, a real estate fellow will come,” Duraiswamy said. “But if the industry doesn't do well, it affects this entire ecosystem.”

Insects and death intersect in art, poetry, forensics

The origin point: The first case of insects being used to point to a killer dates to the 13th century, and the murder of a farmer in rural China. Investigators of the time could tell that the man had been murdered with a sickle, but in a village full of rice farmers and sickles, it was proving impossible to tell which one, the Chinese physician and death investigator Sung Tzhu writes, in his 1247 book Hsi Yüan Chi Lu (The Washing Away of Wrongs). Since searches and questioning had failed, the local judge decided to try a different tack. He called upon all the rice field workers to lay their sickles on the ground. One began to attract flies. Hordes of them. Confronted, the owner of the sickle confessed. This case is said to mark the earliest point in the history of forensic entomology. Art: By the time of the Renaissance, with its growing fascination with anatomical studies of the human body, elements of forensic entomology were showing up on canvas. Take the woodcut series The Dance of Death by the 16th century German artist Hans Holbein the Younger. The macabre visuals depict Death as a skeletonised individual paying surprise visits to all kinds of people — a pope, a physician, a ploughman, a knight, a sailor.

In one revelry-filled depiction, skeletons dance and play a drum around a corpse, as tiny snake-like creatures dangle around their heads, necks and limbs. “Such artwork accurately depicts the insect-mediated pattern of body mass reduction, particularly the early skeletonization of the skull and the reduction of internal organs, with large parts of the skin left intact... Close observation of decomposition of human corpses built the basis for these figures,” writes German forensic biologist Mark Benecke, in a paper on the history of the field, published in Forensic Science International in 2001. Poetry: Bugs feasting on the dead and decaying inspired the French poet Charles Baudelaire's Une Charogne (A Carcass; first published in 1857). Amid a growing Romantic movement in which the arts focused on Nature, the self, and the lives of everyday individuals, the poem



offers a raw and graphic exploration of death as a natural force, as a man describes a decaying body to his lover: And the sky was watching that superb cadaver / Blossom like a flower... True crime: Around this time, the French physician Dr Louis François Étienne Bergeret used the life cycle of bugs to crack a case wide open, in the first such case on record. The insect samples had been collected from the mummified remains of an infant, found stashed behind the chimney of a home in Paris, in the 1850s. Dr Bergeret's analysis of the insect remains led him to ascertain time of death at approximately seven years before the tiny body was found. This timeline was used to arrest the previous tenants of the house. Investigators began to question neighbours about their memories of the tenants in this period, just before they moved, and it emerged that the child, possibly born out of wedlock, had been buried alive. The woman responsible and her lover were convicted of murder. Evolutions: From the 1890s on, small, scattered research projects were investigating the life cycle of insects and their relationship with decomposition, in Canada, the US, Sweden, France, the UK and Germany.

Study relates stroke risk with mental ability



Lower abilities of concentration and learning during childhood and teenage could be related to a tripling of risk of having a stroke before turning 50, according to a research.

While lower mental abilities have been linked to higher risks of developing cardiovascular and metabolic diseases, researchers said that evidence in this regard is inconsistent. The latest findings are published in the Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health. In their analysis, the team of researchers, including those from Hebrew University, used data of over 17.4 lakh young Israelis — aged between 16 to 20 years — taken as part of an evaluation before they began military service. This data included weight, blood pressure, diabetic status and other factors, such as education, socioeconomic background and mental ability, including concentration, reasoning and problem solving.

Recorded between 1987 and 2012, the data from military evaluation was compared with those from the Israeli national stroke database, mandatory reporting for which began in 2014. Up until 2018, an individual's first stroke or death, whichever came first, was used for analysis.

Among the participants with low to medium mental ability (IQ scores up to 118), stroke cases were found to be more common, with these individuals facing a 2.5 times higher risk of experiencing a stroke before turning 50 years old, compared to those with higher mental abilities (IQ scores above 118). Of the total 908 stroke cases recorded between 2014-2018, 767 were caused by a blood clot (ischaemic stroke), 41 per cent of which were found to have occurred before turning 40 years of age. The researchers found that among these 767 ischaemic stroke cases, the risk was almost double in the participants with medium mental ability and over three times higher in those with low mental abilities during their teenage. Further, the authors found that the risk of stroke heightened by 33 per cent for every one unit drop of mental ability on a scale of 1-9 developed by them.

A score of 1-3 corresponded to an IQ below 89 (low), 4-7 to IQ 90-118 (medium), and 8-9 to IQ above 118 (high), according to the scale developed by the researchers. Even as no cause-and-effect relationships were established, they suggested that mental ability (or cognitive function) could serve to identify people at a higher risk of getting a stroke, thereby delaying disability and death. "Provision of early social and health support for individuals with lower cognitive function might be essential for mitigating their elevated risk," the authors wrote.

Jaideep Ahlawat sheds 8-9 kilos in a month for 'Maharaj': Is rapid weight loss really safe?



Actor Jaideep Ahlawat recently revealed his impressive weight loss journey for Maharaj, shedding from 109.7 kg to 83 kg in just five months. Speaking with Netflix India, Ahlawat said he lost 8-9 kg in the first month alone, under the guidance of fitness coach Prajwal Shetty. "Within a month, I lost almost 8-9 kilos. But it was very painful. He has videos of me where I am crying," the actor told the streaming platform. To understand the health implications of such rapid weight loss, and the precautions one should take, indianexpress.com spoke to clinical experts.

What happens when you lose weight drastically?

According to Sampada Shinde, clinical nutritionist and certified diabetes educator, shedding eight to 10 kg in a month is considered rapid weight loss, which can strain the body even with a proper workout regimen and diet. "Rapid weight loss can result in deficiencies of essential vitamins and minerals, as some food groups are completely eliminated from calorie-restricted diets," she said. This drastic reduction in food intake can also impact mood, hunger hormones, sleep patterns, and stress levels due to nutrient deficiencies and calorie restrictions. Shinde explained, noting that it may compromise immunity and increase susceptibility to infections. Anushree Sharma, a registered dietitian at Health1 hospitals in Ahmedabad, said, "Such quick weight loss is

often seen in patients practicing water fasting or on very low-calorie diets, which are insufficient for normal bodily functions." She warned that rapid weight fluctuations can lead to gallstones and loss of muscle proteins if heavy exercises aren't complemented by a proper diet. Patients may get results but could face issues like dull skin and hair fall later due to deficiency of micronutrients, she said. What is the ideal weight one should lose in a month?

Sharma recommended that patients may aim to lose two to three kg per month. Shinde suggested that a healthy target for weight loss is 0.5 to 1 kg per week, leading to approximately two to four kg of weight loss per month, depending on individual diet and lifestyle factors.

What's the safest way to go about it? For rapid weight loss, Sharma advised seeking guidance from a qualified dietitian to manage portion sizes of meals while ensuring nutrient adequacy in the diet. "Effective weight loss requires a holistic approach that includes proper diet, exercise, stress management, and adequate sleep," Sharma emphasised. Shinde stressed the importance of a balanced, nutrient-rich diet comprising whole grains, pulses, vegetables, fruits, lean proteins, and healthy fats. "Regular exercise of at least 30 minutes daily should be a priority. Combining exercise with diet supports optimal fat loss and muscle development," she recommended.

Online guide faces flak for listing Indian foods like jaljeera, aloo baingan, upma, and more as 'worst-rated': 'Far away from reality'

Indians love their food, with its enormous variety distinguishing it from other cuisines. Recently, an experiential online guide, Taste Atlas, sparked controversy by ranking 10 popular Indian foods and drinks as "worst-rated" — gajak, jaljeera, coconut rice, panta bhat, thandai, achappam, mirchi ka salan, malpua, upma, and aloo baingan. The ratings range from 2.7 to 3.2 stars. This is the second time in a row aloo baingan has been rated the worst. In January 2024, aloo baingan or brinjal-potato combination found itself among the world's 100 worst-rated foods. Former Rashtrapati Bhavan chef Montu Saini told indianexpress.com that he "completely disagrees" with the list and called it "far away from reality". "What was the sample size considered to draw such an outcome? Who all voted? How many of them were vegetarian/non-vegetarian? I disagree with this outcome. You can't



generalise with this," said Saini. One user wrote, "Unfortunately this list is negligence max. All of our heirloom recipes are on that worst list. Indian culture celebrates seasonal produce. Gajak, and Panta Baat are all examples of this. And it fell into the worst list. This is what happens when the world wants to think they know everything about India." "Bruh India has one of the richest culinary histories and argu-

ably the most culinary diversity out of every country in the world and you chose Mango Lassi as #1? This is like cappuccino being the #1 food in Italy. Stick to European foods you'll have no idea what you're talking about when it comes to Asia," said a third user. One Instagram user said, "A very carefully curated list of Indian foods by non-Indians definitely. I have no idea what you guys were even thinking when you put

Mirchi ka Salan on that list." Another one wrote, "Got to set the record straight: Indian food is a treasure of flavors and diversity. Every dish and every bite tells a unique story, a journey! This ranking is typical and completely misses the incredible richness of Indian cuisine." Meanwhile, the "best-rated" foods list, in the same Instagram post, featured mango lassi, masala chai, butter garlic naan, stars.

Can 5:2 fasting method control Type 2 diabetes? Here's what an expert has to say



The medical fraternity has been neck deep in research to find ways to alleviate worries for diabetics. While injections and insulin shots can be expensive, altering one's diet is a more affordable alternative. With diet culture gaining traction in the health and wellness industry, we explore the 5:2 fasting method. To understand its potential benefits, indianexpress.com spoke to Dr Aasim Maldar, consultant endocrinologist and diabetologist at PD Hinduja Hospital & MRC, Mahim, Mumbai. The 5:2 fasting method involves following a normal diet for five days a week and fasting for the other two days. The fasting days can be any two days, as long as there is at least one non-fasting day between them," said Maldar.

How can it help regulate diabetes type 2?

"Studies have shown that the 5:2 fasting method can improve fasting plasma glucose levels and overall diabetes

control, but it is unclear if these benefits are above those gained from weight loss. A six-month study showed similar weight loss and maintenance with 5:2 fasting and a daily low-calorie diet," he said. "Weight loss, in turn, improves glycemic control. We need more long-term, robust studies to confirm if there are any direct benefits to glycemic control and cardiac health," said Maldar.

Is this method safe?

Maldar mentioned that while the 5:2 fasting method may be an alternative for short-term weight loss, it isn't recommended for long-term use, especially for people with chronic illnesses. "It should not be practiced by growing children, adults with comorbidities like kidney, liver, or heart issues, elderly people, and pregnant women. Additionally, Type 2 diabetics on insulin or multiple oral medications should refrain from this diet," he said. He suggested that a daily calorie-restricted, balanced diet should be your go-to method. If that is not possible due to work commitments or travel, then you may consider 5:2 fasting. "Usually, a non-fasting day will involve a normal diet with whatever food a person usually eats. Fasting days, however, consist of a very low-calorie diet, around 400 to 500 calories," Maldar said. On non-fasting days, one should avoid eating anything and everything; it should still be a balanced diet. According to him, diet advice should always be personalised, as "one size doesn't fit all." Always consult your doctor, nutritionist, and healthcare team before making any drastic changes to your dietary patterns.

Doctors on why they prefer a person's left (or right) hand to administer vaccine — and if it impacts efficacy

There are numerous dos and don'ts when it comes to taking vaccines. But today, we would like to understand how vaccines are administered and why one particular arm is chosen over the other, and whether that also affects the vaccine's efficacy. Dr Rajeev Gupta, director, internal medicine, CK Birla Hospital (R), Delhi said that normally, the upper deltoid region of the left arm for right-handed individuals is preferred. "This preference is due to the potential for local pain at the injection site, which could impede the use of the dominant hand if the vaccine were administered in the right arm. By choosing the left arm, right-handed people can avoid discomfort that might interfere with their daily activities," said Dr Gupta.

Additionally, the deltoid is easy to access and less sensitive than other potential injection sites, making the process more comfortable for the recipient, said Dr Amit P Ghawade, consultant-pediatrician and neonatologist, Motherhood Hospitals, Kharghar, Mumbai. However, if you have had a previous reaction or experience with a vaccine in one arm, it may be preferable to use the other arm to avoid any potential issues, said Dr Ghawade.

So, does the choice of arm affect efficacy?

Denying the hypothesis, Dr Gupta said that the choice of arm does not affect the efficacy of the vaccine, as the immune response remains the same regardless of which



arm is used. "This consideration applies to all vaccines, ensuring that individuals can comfortably continue their routines without compromising the effectiveness of the immunisation," said Dr Gupta. It's important to note that these guidelines apply to most routine vaccines, such as the flu shot, Covid-19 vaccine, and other common immunisations. "However, there may be exceptions for certain vaccines or specific medical conditions. In such cases, it is always best to follow the recommendations of your healthcare provider," said Dr Ghawade. However, Dr Ghawade added that individual circumstances and preferences should also be considered when deciding which arm to use for vaccine administration.

Are magnesium flake baths an effective way to reduce stress?

When stressed, the body undergoes a series of physiological changes, one of which is the depletion of magnesium levels, neuroscientist and former psychiatric doctor Dr Tara Swart said. According to Dr Swart, magnesium is a crucial mineral involved in over 300 biochemical reactions in the body, including those that regulate stress response. "Therefore, during times of stress, your body's demand for magnesium increases which can manifest with twitchy eyelids or spasms," she explained in a podcast with Mel Robbins, a best-selling author, life coach, host, and CNN commentator. As such, bathing in magnesium flakes is beneficial for replenishing magnesium levels and managing stress, he added. "When you soak in a bath infused with magnesium flakes, your skin absorbs the mineral directly into the bloodstream, bypassing the digestive system. This method ensures efficient absorption and utilisation of magnesium, especially when compared to oral supplements, which may not be as readily absorbed by the body," said Dr Swart.

What are magnesium flakes and how are they beneficial?

Dr Saroj Kumar Yadav, consultant, internal medicine, Aakash Healthcare said that magnesium flakes are a "highly effective and natural way to combat stress and enhance overall well-being". "Regular use of magnesium flakes can be a transformative addition to your wellness regimen, helping you to feel more relaxed, sleep better, and ultimately lead a healthier life. Adequate magnesium levels can significantly reduce stress and improve sleep, making it easier to handle daily challenges," said Dr Yadav. Magnesium flakes are derived from magnesium chloride, a highly absorbable form of the mineral. "These flakes are sourced from the ancient Zechstein Sea, ensuring their purity and efficacy. When dissolved in water, they create a magnesium-rich solution that can be easily absorbed through the skin," described Dr Yadav. Magnesium is known as nature's relaxant. "It plays a crucial role in regulating the body's stress response by supporting the production of neurotransmitters that promote



relaxation and calmness. Additionally, magnesium helps to balance melatonin levels, the hormone responsible for sleep, thereby improving sleep quality," noted Dr Yadav. It also aids in the removal of lactic acid from muscles, promoting quicker recovery after exercise and reducing muscle soreness, added Dr Yadav. According to Dr Yadav, using magnesium flakes is simple and convenient. "For a full-body soak, dissolve 1 cup of flakes in a warm bath and soak for 20-30 minutes. For a more localised treatment, such as a foot soak, dissolve half a cup in a basin of warm water and soak your feet for 15-20 minutes. This method allows magnesium to be quickly absorbed through the soles of the feet, providing a concentrated dose of the mineral," said Dr Yadav.

What to keep in mind?

While magnesium flakes are generally safe for most people, there are a few considerations to keep in mind. "Individuals with kidney problems or severe heart conditions should consult a healthcare provider before using magnesium flakes," said Dr Yadav. Also, people with chronic sleep issues, or mental health issues need to seek timely medical treatment and should not resort to magnesium as a one-point solution.

Deepika Padukone's LiveLoveLaugh launches 'Lecture Series Unplugged'

Mumbai: Actress Deepika Padukone's LiveLoveLaugh (LLL) foundation has announced a new platform for mental health conversations with the launch of 'Lecture Series Unplugged'. This quarterly event aims to build awareness and sustain open discussions about mental health. Deepika, founder of LLL, said: "Over the last decade, LLL has managed to successfully create a safe space for crucial mental health conversations. With 'Lecture Series Unplugged', LLL aims to reach a broader audience by offering relatable stories that can further strengthen our impact on individuals, communities, and society at large." The series will spotlight prominent figures sharing their lived experiences and insights on success, failures, triumphs, and learnings. "By featuring personal stories, we'd like to foster a sense of connection and hope and an understanding that mental health challenges are a common part of the human experience,"



Repo rate hiked by 25 bps to 5.50 pc: Why RBI has hiked interest rates; EMIs set to rise



The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has increased its policy repo rate by 25 basis points (bps) to 5.50 per cent, marking the first rate hike since February 2023 and signalling a shift towards tighter monetary policy amid rising inflationary pressures, elevated crude oil prices and a challenging global interest-rate environment. The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) has changed the policy stance to 'calibrated tightening' from 'neutral' indicating further hike in the interest rates is a likelihood. The MPC has also hiked the growth projection from 6.7 per cent to 7.1 per cent in FY27 in the wake of the higher economic activity in the country. The panel also raised the inflation forecast to 5.2 per cent for FY27 from 5 per cent previously.

The decision by the policy panel to hike rates comes after nearly two years of monetary accommodation. The increase is expected to push up borrowing costs across the economy, affecting interest rates on home, personal and vehicle loans, while also providing some support to deposit rates. RBI Monetary Policy Meeting October 2026 LIVE Announcing the monetary policy, RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra said high frequency indicators show economic activity holding momentum in the second quarter albeit with some moderation when compared to first quarter. "The policy action ahead can only be a rate hike or pause, depending on the evolving conditions," Malhotra said.

The RBI's move follows growing concerns that inflationary pressures are becoming more broad-based. Retail inflation rose to 4.82 per cent in August, remaining above the central bank's medium-term target of 4 per cent for the third consecutive month, although it continues to remain within the RBI's tolerance band of 2-6 per cent. The last rate hike — when it was hiked from 6.25 per cent to 6.50 per cent — occurred in February 2023, making any potential increase the first in over three-and-a-half years. Governor Sanjay Malhotra hinted at policy recalibration due to signs of inflation normalizing, while Deputy Governor Poonam Gupta acknowledged that conditions for a rate hike may arise during the year. Recent CPI data shows headline inflation at 4.82% in August, marking the third consecutive month above the 4% medium-term target, though still within the RBI's 2-6% range. Forecasts project inflation to rise to an average of 5.9% in Q4 2026 before moderating in the following quarters. As inflation risks persist, a more extended rate hike cycle may be on the horizon.

Why has the RBI raised rates?

The decision comes against a backdrop of rising food and energy prices, weather-related disruptions and higher crude oil prices. Maharashtra has declared drought in about 265 of its 358 talukas, while the possibility of drought has also been flagged in Karnataka, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh

and Rajasthan. Reservoir levels across India are around 20 per cent below last year's levels, raising concerns about agricultural output and the rabi crop. The possibility of El Niño conditions extending into 2027 remains another key risk to the inflation outlook. Global developments have added to the pressure. Crude oil prices have risen above \$100 a barrel amid geopolitical tensions, raising concerns about imported inflation and India's external balance. The West Asia conflict and the Russia-Ukraine war have also added uncertainty to the global economic outlook. At the same time, global interest rates remain elevated. The US Federal Reserve recently raised its policy rate by 25 bps to 3.75-4 per cent, while US benchmark yields have also risen sharply by 53 bps to 5.31 per cent in a month. The benchmark 10-year bond yield in India has gone up by 25 bps to 7.21 per cent in a month. A narrowing interest-rate differential with the US could increase pressure on India's financial markets and currency, making the RBI's policy response more important. Foreign investors have been pulling out funds from India in the wake of the rise in yields in the US.

What does the rate hike mean for borrowers?

The increase in the repo rate is expected to feed into lending rates, particularly for loans linked to external benchmarks. Home, personal and vehicle loan borrowers could see their equated monthly instalments (EMIs) rise as banks pass on the higher cost of funds. Loans linked to the marginal cost of funds-based lending rate (MCLR) may also become more expensive. Banks, however, have flexibility in revising MCLR-based rates depending on their funding costs, liquidity conditions and deposit mobilisation. Deposit rates could also rise marginally as banks reassess their funding requirements. The extent of any increase will depend on liquidity and broader funding conditions. Savers and depositors would like to see the deposit rates going up as high retail inflation has cut into their savings.

Inflation risks remain broad-based. The RBI's decision to hike retail inflation to 5.2 per cent comes as price pressures extend beyond food and perishable commodities. Higher energy prices, food inflation and weather disruptions are adding to the risks. Analysts expect retail inflation to peak at around 6 per cent in the third quarter and average about 5 per cent in FY27. The possibility of sustained inflation above the RBI's target has strengthened expectations that monetary policy may remain tighter for longer. Economists have pointed to the widening gap between consumer and wholesale price inflation, with rising input costs gradually spreading across farming and non-farming sectors. The rate increase comes amid strong economic growth. India's GDP grew 7.8 per cent in the first quarter of FY27, beating expectations, with consumption, investment and exports supporting momentum. GST collections, automobile sales and bank credit have also remained healthy. While analysts expect FY27 growth at 7.3 per cent, RBI was conservative in its assessment and raised its growth projection to 7.1 per cent from the earlier estimate of 6.7 per cent. However, higher crude prices, elevated global interest rates, geopolitical tensions, trade-policy uncertainty and weather disruptions pose risks to growth in the coming quarters. The 25-bps increase to 5.50 per cent therefore marks an important change in the RBI's policy direction. With inflation becoming broader and global financial conditions remaining tight, the central bank faces the challenge of containing price pressures without significantly weakening domestic growth.

UPI, government salaries may be used to measure growth in health, education services

The statistics ministry is considering using UPI payments data and salaries paid by the government to help measure the growth of education, health, and public administration and defence services. This would increase the services covered by the new Index of Services Production (ISP), the ministry said on Tuesday.

The proposed use of UPI data for the ISP comes despite a sub-committee of the ministry's Advisory Committee on National Accounts Statistics deciding against it as an input in the calculation of India's GDP, noting that payments transaction data is not yet stable, with many people yet to move to UPI from cash. "Once the UPI transaction data get stabilised, it may be explored for possible inclusion as an indicator in the estimation of PFCE," the report of the sub-committee, released in February, had said. PFCE is Private Final Consumption Expenditure and the biggest component of GDP when it's measured as the sum of various types of spending. However, the statistics ministry said on Tuesday the UPI is "entering a new phase of market maturity" and growth in transaction values and volumes is showing a "clear stabilising trend" after several years of "hyper-growth". "Looking forward, the trend strongly suggests that UPI is transitioning into a highly mature and resilient utility. Future growth is likely to flatten into a stable band," the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) said. In an 'approach paper' to widen the ISP's coverage — released on an experimental basis starting July — MoSPI said payments made by UPI for various types of schools, universities, other educational and health and medical services can be used to gauge the private sector aspect of these two categories. Meanwhile, these services provided by the public sector are proposed to be measured by the salaries paid by the government for various staff. Comments on the approach paper are invited by October 16. Identification of UPI payments for these categories will be done by the Merchant Category Codes. For instance, the merchant code for 'taxi cabs and limousines' is 4121. Meanwhile, salaries for relevant government staff are to be taken from the Public Financial Management System (PFMS), which captures budget provisions and expenditures incurred by the government under different heads.

For public administration and defence, which are not market activities and hence can't be measured through their transaction values, MoSPI has proposed adding together the compensation paid to relevant employees and operational expenses incurred in the provision of these services. According to data from the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), Rs 25,635 crore was spent via UPI on education in August, while the figure for the 'hospitals' segment was Rs 16,976 crore. Meanwhile, Rs 17,487 crore was spent on government services. These three categories constituted 2.9%, 1.9%, and 2%, respectively of the entire month's Person-to-Merchant UPI payments of almost Rs 9 lakh crore. These three sub-sectors made up almost a fifth of the entire services sector's Gross Value Added (GVA) in 2024-25: education around 7%, human health and residential care around 3%, and public administration and defence almost 11%. The ISP is the service counterpart to the Index of Industrial Production and currently comprises 19 sub-sectors covering approximately 60% of the sector's GVA in 2024-25, which is the base year for this new data series.



Health, education, and public administration and defence were not initially included in the index as MoSPI hadn't finalised a method to measure their output. Following their inclusion, the ISP will cover around 78% of the services sector's GVA. The remaining 22% or so comes from ownership of dwellings, the Reserve Bank of India, and gambling and betting, among other activities. These will continue to be excluded from the index. The ISP aims to fill a key gap in India's official statistics; until now, there has been no official monthly measure of the services sector's performance, with private sector firm S&P Global's services Purchasing Managers' Index being the only one. This is despite services being the largest contributor to India's economy, making up more than half of it for the last decade and a half or so. Industry, meanwhile, makes up less than a third of the GVA.

PHDCCI calls for data-led monetary tightening

New Delhi: Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) policy rate hike after 44 months and the Reserve Bank of India's shift to a calibrated tightening stance was expected amid global tensions but further tightening must be data-led, an industry chamber said on Wednesday. The statement from PHDCCI cited experts to keep monetary tightening data-dependent while safeguarding credit flows to productive sectors.

"The policy rate hike after 44 months is in line with industry expectations, given the global scenario and the decision of rate hikes in major central banks across the World. The Governor's strong stance of no rate cuts in the near future but chances of pause or rate hikes add to the cautious approach being taken by the RBI," said Rajeev Juneja, President, PHDCCI. "The shift to calibrated tightening with global energy prices, geopolitical developments and domestic food-price pressures are creating uncertainty around the inflation trajectory," said Dr. Ranjeet Mehta, CEO&SG, PHDCCI. Mehta said that the priority now should be to ensure that "monetary tightening remains data-dependent while maintaining adequate credit flows to productive sectors." Faster improvement in supply-side capacity, logistics, food management and energy security will be critical to complement monetary policy in containing inflation, he added.

Man weighing 144 kg loses over 60 kilos: What transformation may mean for his health



How does it feel to be over 60 kgs lighter? "Sometimes the end is just life making room for a different beginning. At 144 kg, I knew something had to change. What followed was a journey that transformed far more than my body. I lost 60+ kilos, but somewhere along the way, I also discovered a version of myself I did not know existed," expressed Niraj Jha in a post on Instagram. "Looking back, what once felt like the end was actually where everything began. 144 kg to 79 kg. 60+ kilos lighter. And still evolving," the man added. A man's transformation from 144 kg to 79 kg has drawn attention online, with his journey documenting a weight reduction of more than 60 kg and, in his words, a change that went far beyond his physical appearance.

From a health perspective, consultant dietitian Garima Goyal said that a reduction of this magnitude represents a major change in body weight. "At a higher starting weight, losing excess body fat can potentially improve several obe-

sity-related health risks, including metabolic health, blood pressure, physical mobility and cardiovascular risk. However, the health impact of any transformation depends on factors such as the individual's medical history, body composition and how the weight was lost," Goyal told indianexpress.com. One of the most important considerations in a major weight-loss journey is preserving lean muscle while reducing fat mass. "A very large reduction on the weighing scale should not be viewed simply as a race to reach a smaller number. Adequate protein, resistance training and sufficient nutrition can help support muscle preservation, while physical activity can improve strength and functional capacity," said Goyal. Long-term weight management also has an important psychological dimension. "When someone has lived at a higher body weight for years, the changes may extend into everyday experiences: walking becomes easier, movement becomes more comfortable, clothes fit differently and activities that once felt exhausting may become more manageable," said Goyal. At the same time, a transformation reel cannot show the complete journey. "It doesn't reveal the person's exact diet, medical history, training programme, setbacks, or whether the weight loss was entirely intentional. That context matters, particularly when a large amount of weight has been lost," mentioned Goyal. And reaching 79 kg does not necessarily mark the end of the process. "Maintaining weight loss requires a sustainable approach to nutrition, physical activity, sleep, behaviour and ongoing health monitoring. The goal ultimately needs to be more than simply maintaining a number on the scale," said Goyal.

Why old health practices are being rebranded as 'neurowellness'



Wellness, for all these years, has largely been about the body—eating better, exercising more, losing weight, building muscle and looking healthier. But that conversation is shifting. People are now asking different questions about their wellbeing: Why can't I sleep properly? Why am I constantly overwhelmed? Why is my attention so fragmented? Why can't I switch off even when I am technically resting? The search for answers has given rise to a new wellness buzzword: neurowellness. The term may be new, but much of what it includes is already familiar.

Meditation, yoga, pranayama, breathwork, sound healing, spending time in nature, social connection, and simply allowing yourself to rest—all these have existed for years. So what exactly is new? Moreover, why are these familiar practices suddenly being presented as ways to care for the brain and nervous system?

Dr Munia Bhattacharya, Senior Consultant, Clinical Psychology, Marengo Asia Hospitals, Gurgaon, describes neurowellness as an emerging umbrella term within the wellness industry rather than a formally established clinical concept. "The term may be new, but the need is not," she says. Broadly speaking, it means caring for the brain as part of overall wellbeing—from sleep and concentration to emotional regulation, stress management, and recovery. The idea is especially relevant to how people live now. "We are living in a world where the body gets a fitness routine, but the brain gets whatever time is left," says Dr Bhattacharya. The modern brain is being asked to process an extraordinary amount of information: notifications, emails, social media, work demands, family responsibilities and an almost continuous stream of information. "We have created a lifestyle where the body can stop, but the mind is rarely allowed to clock out," she says. And this may explain why someone can appear to be functioning perfectly well while still feeling mentally depleted. "In my clinical practice, I increasingly meet people who are not necessarily presenting with a diagnosable psychological disorder. They are functioning. They are working, meeting deadlines, managing families and maintaining their responsibilities," says Dr Bhattacharya. Yet, she says, they may arrive saying, "My mind doesn't switch off", "I cannot concentrate like I used to", or "I am exhausted even after sleeping". She hears another sentence increasingly often. "Nothing is really wrong, but I don't feel like myself." "We have become remarkably good at functioning while feeling unwell," she says, adding that a healthy brain is not one that is productive every minute of the day. It can focus when needed, rest when needed, experience emotions, adapt to change, and recover from stress.

This is perhaps the biggest distinction between the term neurowellness and all the wellness trends that preceded it. Tarun Gulati, Director, Ganga Kinare Resorts and Hotels, says meditation, yoga, pranayama, sound healing and time spent in nature have long been a part of people's lives. "What is new is not necessarily the practices, but what people are looking for from them," he says, mentioning that "they want to sleep better, switch off from work, quieten the mind and come back feeling less overwhelmed." Shane Gunasekara, Director, Kurundu Wellness at Cinnamon Life in Colombo, Sri Lanka, observes a similar shift among guests. "We are constantly connected to our phones, work pressure and deadlines, we travel more, sleep patterns are disturbed, and even when we are resting, our minds are still busy," he says.

That changes the reason someone might seek out an old practice. "People are no longer coming to a spa only because their back is tight or because they want a massage. They understand that beyond muscle relaxation, they also need to calm down, unwind and manage stress," he adds. To address this, Kurundu Wellness introduced 'Traditional Himalayan Sound Healing' with Sakron Boonjing and developed its 'Sleep Enhancement Ritual'. Person taking a quiet break away from phone and digital stimulation Person taking a quiet break away from phone and digital stimulation (Image Source: Ganga Kinare Resorts & Hotels) Making ancient practices relatable There is also a language shift. Dr Chandni Tugnait, MD (A.M.), Psychotherapist, Life Alchemist, Coach and Healer, Founder and Director, Gateway of Healing, says the growing scientific understanding of practices such as meditation and breathwork has given a vocabulary that appeals to a different generation of consumers. "There's now a much clearer picture of what meditation and breathwork are actually doing to the body,

not just settling the mind in some vague way, but genuinely calming the nervous system," she says. That matters because the way something is framed and packaged can determine whether people are willing to try it. "But I wouldn't call it pure repackaging. Sit through a breathing exercise and your body responds exactly the way it always has, long before anyone gave it a fancy name or a scientific framework to sit inside," says Dr Tugnait. What has changed is who's willing to try it. "Someone who would never touch anything labelled spiritual will happily do the same breathwork if it's framed as nervous system regulation, backed by a chart and a heart rate number," she says. She sees some of the trend as a rebranding exercise—but not entirely. "So call it a rebrand if you want, honestly, in some ways it is exactly that," she says, adding, "Underneath it, though, is something genuinely old, tested quietly for generations, just finally handed a name this particular audience trusts enough to actually sit down and try."

Neurowellness and 'nervous-system regulation' The two phrases appear together, but they describe different things. Dr Atampreet Singh, Senior Director and Head, Neurology, ShardaCare-Healthcity, says, "Neurowellness is a broader approach to supporting brain and nervous-system health through habits such as adequate sleep, regular physical activity, balanced nutrition, social connection, stress management, cognitive stimulation and emotional wellbeing." However, nervous-system regulation "refers to the body's ability to appropriately respond to stress and then return towards a calmer baseline once the stressor has passed," he adds. Regulation does not mean being calm all the time; it means being flexible in how you respond to different situations and recovering after stress. Dr Singh explains that several aspects of neurowellness can support this process. "Regular exercise can help improve stress resilience and mood, while consistent, good-quality sleep is important for emotional and physiological recovery. Slow, controlled breathing, mindfulness, relaxation practices and activities that promote social connection may also help reduce physiological arousal. A healthy diet and limiting excessive alcohol, nicotine and stimulants can further support overall nervous-system health," he says.

That distinction is important because wellness content can sometimes make 'regulation' sound like a state in which a person should remain permanently calm. That is not what it means. Asking a more fundamental question The changing language of wellness reflects a broader change in what people want from it. Dr Bhattacharya says wellness was once commonly discussed in terms of diet, exercise, weight, and physical appearance. Now, people are asking about attention, sleep, stress and emotional exhaustion. "These are not simply lifestyle questions," she says. "They tell us something about how modern life is affecting the way we think, feel and function." This is also why the idea of a wellness experience is changing. Gulati says people are becoming less interested in wellness as a checklist. "They don't necessarily want to attend a yoga class just because it is on the schedule. They want the experience to make a difference to how they feel. That is why multi-day programmes are becoming relevant," he says. At Ganga Kinare, programmes include combinations of yoga, meditation, kriya, pranayama, sound healing, therapies, wellness cuisine and nature experiences. "I think people are looking at wellness less as an activity and more as a way of changing their pace for a few days," says Gulati. Gunasekara has noticed a similar change at Kurundu Wellness. Earlier, a guest might have booked a massage, attended a meditation session or experienced a sound bath as separate activities. "Now, we are seeing guests looking for a more complete journey rather than one isolated treatment," he says. Its Sleep Enhancement Ritual, for instance, combines several elements: The experience begins with a warm welcome ritual, followed by a light-pressure head massage and Thai stretching techniques to help the guest slow down, release tension and prepare the body and mind for deeper rest. This then flows into the sound-bathing experience. You can simply lie down, listen and allow yourself some time away from everything else.

The experience doesn't finish there. Afterwards, guests can continue with hot and cold therapy through our steam, sauna and vitality pools with water jets, before finishing with a healthy cup of tea and a light snack. "I think this kind of complete journey is becoming very important in modern wellness," says Gunasekara. "It is no longer about experiencing one treatment in isolation, but about creating a journey that allows the guest to slow down, disconnect and leave feeling deeply relaxed." From sleep and concentration to stress and emotional wellbeing, neurowellness takes a broader view of brain health. From sleep and concentration to stress and emotional wellbeing, neurowellness takes a broader view of brain health. (Image: Kurundu Wellness, Cinnamon Life at City of Dreams Sri Lanka) How priorities are changing Perhaps the most noticeable change is in the outcome people are seeking. People still want the traditional benefits of wellness—muscle relaxation, physical recovery, skincare and feeling physically better. But the desired endpoint is increasingly intangible. At Ganga Kinare, Gulati says programmes such as Nidra Samadhi centre on sleep.

Smriti, the quiet leader that leads by example



Pandey first played with Mandhana in the lead-up to the 2014 T20 World Cup, when the left-hander was still finding her feet in international cricket. But even then, she showed a maturity beyond her age. "I first played with Smriti in the T20 series against Bangladesh, in the lead-up to the 2014 T20 World Cup. She stood out as a calm, composed and intelligent cricketer and a very kind and helpful person," Pandey told Mandhana was also already taking responsibility for her role in the team. "She was a leader in the sense that she wanted to take responsibility as an opener and took ownership in her performances. She always had a keen eye for tactics and had great game awareness for someone that young," Pandey said.

"She was already captaining the Maharashtra U19s back then, was successful, and she would keenly discuss match tactics after the game. I haven't played much under her captaincy, but the few practice games I did, I was pleasantly surprised by how good she was. For me, she was, and is, one of the best bowlers' captains I have played under." "Her biggest strength will be her calm, composed demeanour and her leading by example. She welcomes players to think and have opinions/ tactics. She takes ownership of her performances, and I hope she continues to perform well for India as an all-format captain," she added. Those qualities have stayed with Mandhana as she has grown into leadership. After leading Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) to two Women's Premier League (WPL) titles over the last four seasons, she will now take charge of an Indian team that has already experienced the high of winning a World Cup under Harmanpreet Kaur. Measured, quieter But Mandhana is unlikely to follow her predecessor's style. Her approach is quieter and more measured. RX Muralidhar, a coach who has worked in women's cricket, believes one of Mandhana's biggest strengths is her ability to understand

the people around her. "She's a very, very pleasant personality. She's very empathetic. And she understands her players' needs, her players' ability, and then she plans around it," Muralidhar told this newspaper. That understanding means Mandhana may not treat every player in the same manner. "She knows very well how to manage or how to treat players—who needs support, who needs ideas, who needs encouragement. If somebody needs encouragement, she'll only give encouragement. If somebody needs support, she'll give the support," he said. Muralidhar recalls one period when he and Mandhana were part of a team that had won four games in a row before losing two. Mandhana recognised that what had worked before was no longer working and brought the group together to change its approach. "We had won four games out of four. Then we lost two games in a row. That is when she got together and decided, 'Okay, what we are doing right now, what we did in the previous venue, is not working in the current venue.'

So we need to change the whole approach. She got together with the team and decided, 'Okay, let us change this and look at it in a different way.' That was one thing the entire team rallied around her," Muralidhar said. Muralidhar has also noticed her willingness to give players a run in the side. Sometimes, he says, it is about trusting the player you have backed. "Everybody looks to do that (pick a side looking at the opposition). They look to play the best team, the form team. If there is too much of a plan saying, 'Okay, we have to have somebody to match the opponent's team,' then she does. But otherwise, I think she's one of those who would give the people whom she believes in, the rope, and say, 'No, she'll do it,'" he said. There is also the challenge of ensuring captaincy does not affect Mandhana's batting. Muralidhar believes she has already shown an ability to separate the two responsibilities. "She has understood her role. As a batter, she is very focused. She knows what it is that she wants. She compartmentalises it so well that her batting is totally different and her captaincy is different. I think she is quite comfortable doing that and she is ready to do that now," he said. The calmness Pandey saw in her as a cricketer is still there. Now, Mandhana has to bring those qualities to lead India across three formats, while handling different personalities and expectations. She will also have to make decisions that may not always please everyone, while keeping the dressing room united and giving her players the confidence to express themselves. The challenge will be carrying that weight across formats, while ensuring the captaincy does not change the player she has always been.

Para Shooters protest at Asian Games send off ceremony due to selection mess



A protest from para shooters alleging favoritism and foul play in selections for the Asian Para Games disrupted the send-off ceremony organized by the Paralympic Committee of India for the Indian contingent. More than ten shooters and coaches, gathered at the ITC Maurya hotel, to register their protest against the lopsided selection of shooters and staff members alike. The shooters carried AI generated posters reading "The one who will play, will go to Asian Games" and similar slogans. "I am India's no one in Mixed 50m pistol SH1 in Asia and still my name is not there on the list. For only one reason as I didn't give his name in the coaches section. That is why he didn't put my name for the Asian Para Games," said Akash, who is Asia no 3 in the category. Another shooter, Sandeep, who is Asia no 7 in the same event and India's no 2 claimed that one of the officials JP Nautiyal asked for money. "JP Nautiyal asked for a commission from me for the prize money. There is a lot of favor-

itism in selecting shooters and coaches," Sandeep said.

The athletes protesting demanded corruption in selection for major events to end. Former Paralympic champion javelin thrower and Paralympic Committee of India President Devendra Jhajharia met the protesting athletes but there was no dialogue possible at that moment. The athletes wanted to meet the Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya, who was attending the event, but were eventually removed by Hotel security and police. After the event, Sports Minister along with PCI President, TOPS CEO NS Johal, and other PCI officials had a discussion about the issue. "See, athletes are selected on the basis of criteria and merit. The ones who fulfilled the criteria have been selected. However, we will make sure that there is dialogue around this issue and the shooters will be heard," Jhajharia later told the media. He also mentioned that PCI was in regular conversation with the athletes. "There was no need for this protest. We were in constant touch with these athletes and listening to what they were saying," Jhajharia said. However, the athlete refused. "They have been just giving us assurances for the past two months. They have not done anything. Today, there is a send-off ceremony and still our name is not there," shooter Sandeep said. PCI has been hit with selection mess just before the Asian Para Games scheduled to begin from October 18 in Aichi Nagoya Japan. Yesterday, Para cyclists were also protesting against the selection after only one para cyclist was named in the squad despite PCI and Cycling Federation of India recommending six names. "Yes, we recommended six cyclists to the ministry but they also evaluated and decided to go ahead with one cyclist," said Jhajharia.

'Gave us nothing': Argentina refused Benin players selfies with Messi, claims coach



GNS News Agency, Oct 19

Lionel Messi's farewell match for Argentina at the El Monumental Stadium was an unprecedented spectacle on Tuesday night in Buenos Aires. While the home crowd and the Albiceleste relished the perfect finish with Messi producing a goal and two assists, Gernot Rohr's side had to contend with much more than a harrowing loss. As Benin went 0-3 to a superior Argentina unit steered by Messi and motivated by his final appearance, Rohr claimed that his team was also denied a consolation. As Argentina celebrated their legend's farewell, Benin's players sought shirts and selfies with their opponents, only to be turned away empty-handed. "Yes, it was extremely difficult. We tried," Rohr said on RMC radio. "The only shame is that the Argentines gave us nothing. No photo with Messi, no shirt. They didn't even let us into the tunnel, nor even the dressing room." "Security refused to let anyone in. Some players came to swap shirts, so we knew it would be difficult. We tried everything, but we got nothing," the German coach added. "We offered a bouquet of flowers in Benin's colours, yellow, red and green, but that didn't work. However, I gave Messi's 2018 shirt to coach Scaloni, who got him to sign it for me and then returned it to me, but that was all." Messi was offered the stage for an emotional farewell and the eight-time Ballon d'Or winner rel-

ished the night with his 126th career goal in 208 international appearances since his debut in 2005. He also extended his world record for the most assists in international football, closing his tally at 68 by providing goals for Nicolas Otamendi and Nico Paz during the contest. The game paused for a moment in minute 10, the digits that magically sparkled on his shirt over the years. Messi had announced his retirement from international football on August 31, a little over two months after Argentina's FIFA World Cup 2026 final defeat to Spain in New Jersey.

Pujara urges India to back Samson despite recent low scores

New Delhi: Ahead of India's second T20I against West Indies in Ranchi, former India batter Cheteshwar Pujara has backed under-fire wicketkeeper-batter Sanju Samson, saying there should be no questions over his place in the playing XI after a couple of low scores. In the first T20I against West Indies in Lucknow, Samson's lean patch continued as he was dismissed for just 11. The low score added to a concerning string of single-digit outings for Samson, whose recent Asian Games campaign yielded scores of 9, 7 and 2. "I hope that there is no pressure on him, because there shouldn't be. He has won a World Cup for the Indian team and performed exceptionally well there. He's a quality player. So there shouldn't be any questions around him being part of the playing XI," Pujara said to JioHotstar. Further backing Samson, Pujara expressed confidence that he would come good in the upcoming matches. "Yes, you might have one or two bad games, and then if he has that, that's the time when the team management has to step in, to give him the right message that, 'You are an important part of this team and will be part of this playing XI, so just go out there, express yourself, play your natural game.'

Where does versatile Tilak Varma like to bat? He answers: 'Always like batting...'



One of the jaw-dropping innings in the India vs Pakistan Asian Games gold match came when Tilak Varma scored 51 off 22 balls. Tilak rarely bats in that position, or any position, for that matter; his role changes constantly depending on the situation and the team's needs. Tilak opened on issues he has had to go through when his batting number has been changed regularly for the country.

"It has been tough. You can easily shift from No.3 to 4

'Leo, all my respect for you': Ronaldo hails Messi after Argentina retirement

Lionel Messi bid farewell to his legendary 21-year Argentina career with a stellar showing in his final appearance against Benin in Buenos Aires on Tuesday night. The 39-year-old superstar bowed out in a 3-0 win, scoring a penalty and assisting the other two goals, all in the second half. Leading the post-match tributes for Messi was his long-time rival, Cristiano Ronaldo, the Portuguese superstar who went toe-to-toe with him for football's top honours and the Spanish LaLiga for over a decade.

"Leo, so many years defending your country and a history that will last forever," Ronaldo wrote in reply to a post from Messi describing his emotions from the previous night. "All my respect for what you have achieved with Argentina," the Portugal legend wrote on Instagram. Messi leaves the international stage as the most decorated figure in Argentine football history, having made 208 appearances, scored 126 goals and provided 66 assists, all records for Argentina. Only Ronaldo has scored more goals among men in the international ranks. His roll of honours includes the Beijing 2008 Olympic gold medal, the FIFA World Cup 2022 title, back-to-back Copa America trophies in 2021 and 2024, and the 2022 Finalissima. He appeared in a record-tying six World Cups alongside Ronaldo. While Messi will limit himself to club football with Inter Miami now, Ronaldo is currently locked in on an ugly spat with the Portugal national team, which he left mid-way during the recent international window comprising four matches, including Nations League matches. Ronaldo criticised Portugal coach Jorge Jesus for having "broken his word twice", claiming that he was denied playing time despite being assured of the same. Brazilian legend and Messi's former FC Barcelona teammate, Ronaldinho



hailed Messi on X: "What a pleasure and a joy it has been to be part of your story since day one, brother!

"You made us smile and enjoy football so much!!! Your name is etched in the history of your country and the entire world... Only we know the joy we felt fulfilling our childhood dream: representing our nation and becoming world champions!!!!" You gave your all for your national team and your country... I understand you perfectly, and I know that anything involving family makes us rethink things... Enjoy life, brother. I wish you the best, today and always. Neymar, who played with Messi at Barcelona and Paris Saint-Germain, thanked the eight-time Ballon d'Or winner for "making me love football even more." "Those who love football have cherished watching you all these years. Today marks your final match in the jersey of your national team — your country — and I hope you savor every second and that all the tributes today bring you happiness," wrote Neymar.

'Some of them need a job, so they go after us': Travis Head hits back at former Oz players



Australia opener Travis Head has launched a strong defence of his team and the national selectors, accusing former players turned critics of "putting a bullet" through the current side ahead of the first Test against South Africa in Durban on Friday. Head's remarks came a day after Matthew Hayden, the former Australia opener, described the selectors' recent picks as "the greatest pile of mediocrity that we've seen in a generation of cricket". Hayden's criticism, made on a podcast, was aimed at the recall of Nic Maddinson, who is back in the Test squad after nearly 10 years following injuries to Josh Inglis and Cameron Green.

Speaking at a press conference on Wednesday, Head did not name any pundit directly but made his feelings clear. "I think it's unfairly judged a fair bit from a group of past players, pretty much that put the bullet through a lot of players,

which I think is unfair," he said. "But that's what they're paid to do. Some of them need a job, so they go after us, and that's totally fine." Head added that the current group was equipped to handle the scrutiny. "This group is strong enough to deal with those sorts of things. That's how it is. It's unfortunate sometimes to have some of that feedback from a generation of players that we have huge respect for, but that's the caper."

Hayden had accused the selectors of "disrespecting first-class cricket", arguing that batters should average 45 or more before being considered for Test selection. Maddinson, 34, carries a first-class average of 37.11. Head, however, backed the decision to bring in an experienced campaigner. "We need mature guys that know what they need to be doing," he said. "And I think that revolves back to why we've been so good over a period of time and why Australian cricket was so good back then in that era, because you'd bring in the Mike Husseys of the world, who are 30, who are tried and tested and know what they need to do." Former Australia captain Allan Border also weighed in, suggesting that Head, 32, would face his toughest challenge as an opener against the South African attack and might be better suited to batting at number five. Head brushed that aside too. "I have laughed at a fair bit of it because if a traditional opening batter had pushed out the same sort of numbers in his first 20 innings, I think he'd be pretty safe and not talked about in the way that it has been talked about," he said. "It's a lot of headline stuff."

Telangana's Naresh Gotte wins South Zone Tenpin Bowling Tournament



GNS News Agency, Oct 19 Hyderabad: Telangana's Naresh Gotte won the South Zone Tenpin Bowling Tournament title, which concluded at Game Xtreme here. In the final, played on the cumulative pinfall of two games, eighth-seeded Naresh G (TG) gained a strong 32-pin lead in Game

1 against top seed Naveen Siddam of Telangana, winning 180-148. Naveen mounted a spirited fightback in Game 2, outscoring Naresh 173-158, but the 32-pin deficit from the opening game proved too substantial to overturn. Naresh held his nerve to secure a 17-pin aggregate victory, 338-321, completing a remarkable run from the eighth qualifying spot to lift the South Zone Tenpin Bowling Tournament title.

Earlier, in the knockout round, which was decided on the cumulative pinfall of two games, fifth-seeded Anand Babu (TN) scored 384 to finish ahead of third-seeded Parthiban J (TN) (320) and seventh-seeded Shanmugananda (KAR) (324) in Match 1. In Match 2, eighth-seeded Naresh G (TG) scored 356 to finish ahead of fourth-seeded Aditya Varma (TG) (363) and sixth-seeded Goutham Abhilash (AP) (368). The winners of Matches 1 and 2 moved on to the next round to play against second seed Mahipal Singh (TN).

In Match 3, eighth-seeded Naresh G (TG) scored 356 to win against Match 1 winner Anand Babu (TN) (303) and second seed Mahipal Singh (TN) (348), moving into the final against top seed Naveen Siddam (TG). Naveen Siddam finished second. Mahipal Singh of Tamil Nadu finished third, with his state-mate Anand Babu taking fourth. Goutham Abhilash of Andhra Pradesh placed fifth, Aditya Varma (TG) sixth, Shanmugananda of Karnataka seventh and Parthiban (TN) eighth. Among the special prizes, Naveen Siddam (TG) won both awards

‘Hero banne ke chakkar mein actor mat khona’: Shah Rukh Khan recalls Nana Patekar’s advice



Shah Rukh Khan has looked back at his fond memories with Nana Patekar, who died at the age of 75 on Thursday. Shah Rukh and Nana famously worked together in Aziz Mirza’s 1992 romantic comedy Raju Ban Gaya Gentleman. In a social media post, SRK described Nana as “a mentor, a teacher, a critic, and a friend” and credited him with keeping the actor in him alive over the decades. Shah Rukh Khan remembers Nana Patekar. Sharing a still of himself and Nana Patekar from Raju Ban Gaya Gentleman, Shah Rukh Khan wrote on X, “When I first met him, out of awe and awkward-

ness, I fiddled with my hair. He slapped my hand away, and said, ‘Hero ki tarah baal mat bana... tu actor hai’ (don’t treat your hair like a hero. You’re an actor!).”

“He didn’t flatter you. He didn’t tell you what you wanted to hear. He told you what you needed to hear. That was Nana. Straightforward. Rough, honest, and had the most beautiful smile. He always had a strange way of showing affection. He would shout at you first, and then somewhere between the third or fourth insult, you realised you were being hugged. He loved me and I loved him back,” confessed Shah Rukh. Calling Nana Patekar “a mentor, a teacher, a critic, and a friend”, Shah Rukh Khan revealed Nana Patekar “relished” beating him and everyone else around him in carrom, one round after another. “Nana, your intensity, laughter, madness, and love will always stay with us. I just wish we had time to have more conversations, another argument, another cup of tea, and a game of carrom,” added Shah Rukh.

Shah Rukh Khan also recalled a piece of advice from Nana Patekar that had stayed with him throughout his career. Reflecting on the actor’s death, he said it had left a void not only in cinema but also in the hearts of people across India and beyond. He added, “All I can say is, I will miss you dearly and carry your words in my heart till the end of time... ‘Hero banne ke chakkar mein actor mat khona’ (Don’t lose the actor within in the quest of becoming a hero).” “May your soul rest in peace Nana, and Allah bless you. The heavens will be blessed to have you... a masterful actor and an unbeatable carrom champion. Love you and miss you dearly!! Too soon, my Hero Actor! RIP,” SRK concluded. A couple of years ago, Nana Patekar said on The Lalantop that even though he doesn’t meet Shah Rukh Khan often, the young actor showers love on him whenever they do, as if no time had passed. Nana Patekar died of cardiac arrest on Thursday morning at his Goa residence. He’s being given a funeral with full state honours at his Pune farmhouse.

‘My parents saw the video’: Apoorva Mukhija recalls crying at airport over viral party video

Content creator Apoorva Mukhija, popularly known as The Rebel Kid, who moved to New York for further studies, recently made headlines after a video of her kissing DJ Amin Jaz went viral on social media. In her latest vlog, she clarified that the clip was recorded at a private party about a year ago but had only recently surfaced online. The influencer also recalled breaking down in tears at London’s Heathrow Airport after being flooded with messages about the video. In the vlog, Apoorva Mukhija shared she and Amin weren’t aware that they were being recorded at the party. “One of my videos from a year ago has gotten leaked. So this video was like a private moment between me and another guy. And we did not know that we were being recorded. This was at a private party,” she said.

The YouTuber further emphasised that the clip was not recent and made its way to social media, months after it was recorded. “Aur ye video bohut purani hai. 1 saal purani hai aur ab aayi hai baahar (And this video is very old. It’s about a year old and has surfaced now),” Apoorva said.

Apoorva Mukhija then recalled how she learnt about the viral video. Apoorva said that she was travelling from Turkey to New York and had a layover in London when messages began flooding her phone. By the time she reached Heathrow Airport, many people had reached out to her to ask if she had watched the clip. The situation became even more difficult for her when she realised that her parents, who were unaware of her relationship, had also seen the



video. “This is the first time my parents saw that video. They did not know I had a boyfriend. They had no clue. I had lost my mind. I remember I sat at Heathrow Airport, and there were, I think, a million people at that airport. Aur main bas neeche baithe roye jaa rahi hoon, roye jaa rahi hoon (And I just sat there and kept crying and crying),” she recalled. In September, a video of Apoorva Mukhija seemingly kissing podcast host and DJ Amin Jaz at a private party surfaced online, sparking widespread reactions on social media. The clip went viral shortly after the YouTuber revealed that she had travelled from New York to Turkey to meet her boyfriend.

Daya Nayak pays emotional tribute to Nana Patekar: ‘You inspired me by playing me’



Encounter specialist Daya Nayak, who inspired Nana Patekar’s character in Ab Tak Chhappan, paid tribute to the actor following his death

Veteran actor Nana Patekar’s sudden death at the age of 75 on October 8 has left the film industry and his fans in shock. Over his decades-long career, Nana delivered several memorable performances, including that of Inspector Sadhu Agashe in the 2004 crime drama Ab Tak Chhappan, a character inspired by real-life police officer Daya Nayak. In a recent social media post, Nayak paid an emotional tribute to the actor, remembering him as a close friend and brother.

Taking to his X handle, the encounter specialist Daya Nayak shared an emotional tweet. He wrote, “I can’t quite believe you are gone... we spoke just a few days ago, and somehow the thought that that was our last conversation feels impossible to believe.” The actor praised Nana Patekar’s versatility as an actor and recalled his portrayal in Ab Tak Chhappan. “Such a wonderfully versatile actor and the extraordinary way you inhabited every character you played. You inspired me while playing a character inspired by me... you didn’t simply portray a police officer—you made people understand the person behind the uniform, the pressures, the humanity and what it truly means to be a police officer. And you did it with such honesty and depth.” “But beyond the actor was the friend—the Nana I could always count on. Warm, dependable, generous and always there when it mattered. I will miss you terribly. I feel incredibly lucky to have known you, and most of all, to have called you my friend and brother.. Till we meet again, Nana.. You will be deeply missed and fondly remembered, always. Om Shanti,” Nayak concluded. “I can’t quite believe you are gone... we spoke just a few days ago, and somehow the thought that that was our last conversation feels impossible to believe... such a wonderfully versatile actor and the extraordinary way you inhabited every character you played.”



Rajkummar Rao on Dada poster backlash: ‘Team learnt its lesson, shouldn’t have rushed it’



Rajkummar Rao, who is playing the role of cricketer Sourav Ganguly in the upcoming biopic Dada has opened up about the severe backlash they got on the first poster of the film. The poster, which was released in July, was criticised by fans as they said that it looked AI-generated. Rajkummar acknowledged the backlash in a recent interview and said that the team responsible for making it has learnt its lesson.

“Shouldn’t have rushed it” Dada is being directed by Vikramaditya Motwane, and in a recent chat with Mashable India, Rajkummar said that they indeed got a lot of criticism for the first look. “The ones who made it, they learnt the lesson that they shouldn’t have rushed it. Take your time, there’s no hurry. I think the team learnt their lesson. But they also learnt another thing with this, that Dada has a crazy fan fol-

lowing,” he said. In the same chat, he also discussed the increasing usage of AI in movies and said that it must only be used as a tool, and must not replace human effort as lakhs of livelihoods might get affected because of AI integration in the industry. “Technology has pros and cons. AI will come, you can’t stop it but we should use it as a supporting tool. You can’t be totally dependent on it. And I don’t want that to happen because lakhs of livelihoods can get affected by it. You can’t recreate everything sitting in a room. You can’t replace it with human emotion. I don’t know if AI can replicate that so quickly. Because the AI work that we see, you know that it is AI. It’s not fun. You know it is fake. You can’t be making everything from AI,” he said. Rajkummar has been working on the biopic of Sourav Ganguly for quite some time now and the actor shared that they spent a lot of time in Kolkata for the shoot of the film. They also shot bits of the film inside Ganguly’s home.

“Shot at Sourav Ganguly’s house” “I have met him many times. We shot at his house as well. We also shot at Eden Gardens. We were in Kolkata for a while. I spent a lot of time with him, spoke a lot to him,” he said and added that Ganguly gave him many details about his life that he wasn’t willing to share on camera. “It was very important to know what was happening behind the scenes as well. He was very open about sharing his life with us. He is a legend. He made the Indian team. The team that is renowned today, he laid the foundation for that,” he said. Without revealing much about the film’s content, Rajkummar hinted that the film will cover the bad patches of Ganguly’s life as well. “He saw many ups and downs in his career so how he fought those battles, came out of those battles,” he said.

‘His tongue was frozen’: Ashwini Kalsekar recalls Nana Patekar filming amid snowstorm

Veteran actor Nana Patekar died after suffering a cardiac arrest in Goa on Thursday morning. As the film industry mourns his death, his Vanvaas co-star Ashwini Kalsekar spoke to SCREEN about her experience of working with Nana. Ashwini also recalled his dedication to the craft, sharing how Nana had once performed a scene for Vanvaas amid a snowstorm. Ashwini Kalsekar, who worked with Nana Patekar in the 2024 film Vanvaas, expressed shock over the news of his death. She said, “I am numb. I woke up to this news and initially thought there was some mistake. Then my husband Murali (Sharma) also messaged. Somewhere, he treated us both like his kids. Murali and Nana worked together in Aphan and a few other films. I had not worked with him until Vanvaas, but was a huge admirer.”

Ashwini then shared a childhood memory of her first encounter with Nana, years before they became co-stars. “My father was a banker and used to participate in inter-bank drama competitions. I remember that once, after my father had performed at Sahitya Sangh, I stepped out of the room and saw this man standing there. He was waiting respectfully outside the makeup room, though he seemed a little irritated. I was very young, and when he peeked inside to see if my father was free, I got scared and ran back into the room. That was my first encounter with him.” “He was such a lovely person. I just lost my mother in December; I didn’t want to hear this. I am extremely emotional. We have that one person in life who is like a support system, he was always ready to help,” she added.

“He performed through a snowstorm during Vanvaas” Recalling Nana Patekar’s dedication to his craft, Ashwini Kalsekar also shared how he performed an emotional scene for Vanvaas amid a snowstorm. “What an actor. He was so versatile, a legend. He would notice the smallest details in the script, improvise, and discuss with the director. In the last scene in Vanvaas, there was actually a snowstorm. The roads were shut, and he was making snowballs. All of us were stranded in one place, freezing, and at that time he performed. He lay in the snow and gave 3-4 takes. They wanted a perfect drone shot, and he gave take after take. He was a one-take actor. We couldn’t hear what



he was saying. Only watching him perform, we broke down. All the actors cried so much. We were concerned for him, ran to help him. His tongue was frozen, but he still kept going,” Ashwini shared.

She added, “After the scene, I almost hugged him, and told him, ‘We died seeing you like this; you can never fall, sir.’ And today he has left us. We were in touch, so it is a huge shock. He was a lovely human being and a legendary actor. He knew his craft so well, and he was such a genuine man that he was never afraid of anyone.” Recalling Nana Patekar’s generous nature, Ashwini Kalsekar shared how he once called her to praise her performance in Andhadhun. “I had not worked with him until Vanvaas. Once I was sitting with Murali, he called and wanted to speak with me. I thought Murali was joking. I was baffled.