

Modi, Rahul, Kharge pay tributes to Mahatma, Shastri

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Vice-President CP Radhakrishnan, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi on Friday paid homage to Mahatma Gandhi at Rajghat on his 157th birth anniversary, while also paying tribute to former Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri at Vijay Ghat on his birth anniversary.

Modi and Radhakrishnan joined an interfaith prayer meeting and other commemorative programmes in the national capital, as leaders across the political spectrum recalled the contributions of Gandhi and Shastri to the freedom struggle and nation-building.The PM said the lives of Gandhi and Shastri, marked by simplicity, courage and service to the nation, would continue to inspire generations.

KTR seeks stronger Telangana-South Korea ties in technology and industry

Hyderabad: BRS working president KT Rama Rao sought stronger cooperation and collaboration between Telangana and South Korea in technology, industry and innovation. He met South Korean President's Advisor Prof Youngtae Cho and a Seoul National University delegation at Telangana Bhavan on Thursday.

During the meeting, Rama Rao said Korea's transformation into a global knowledge and technology powerhouse had long inspired him. He said Telangana offered opportunities for Korean companies with its skilled talent, progressive policies and business ecosystem.

DRI seizes four elephant tusks, apprehends three in Hyderabad

Hyderabad: The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) officials have seized four elephant tusks weighing around 17 kg and apprehended three persons in Banjara Hills in connection with an alleged illegal ivory transaction.

Acting on specific intelligence, the DRI team reportedly set up an interception and caught the suspects while they were allegedly attempting to sell the wildlife contraband. During the operation, officials recovered the tusks along with intricately carved ivory articles.



Hyderabad, Oct 2 (IANS) Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Friday announced that all central kitchens established to serve nutritious breakfasts to students in government schools will be inaugurated across the state on December 9.

He directed officials to complete work on all central

kitchens by November 30.

The Chief Minister also instructed that arrangements be made to facilitate student visits to the central kitchens.

All kitchens will be linked to the Integrated Command and Control Centre in Hyderabad for regular moni-

toring.

Representatives of the Hare Krishna Foundation met Chief Minister Revanth Reddy at his Jubilee Hills residence on Friday.

During the meeting, Junna Solar Systems Private

Limited and Chain Labs India Private Limited signed agreements with the Hare Krishna Foundation, in the presence of the Chief Minister, to support the breakfast scheme for government school students.

The two companies collaborated to establish modern centralised community kitchens in Nagarkurnool and Vikarabad.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy emphasised that quality food should be served to students.

He said the primary objective of providing breakfast was to ensure nutritious food and encourage students to attend school regularly.

The Chief Minister suggested maintaining a comprehensive record of students studying in government schools.

He said such records would help monitor students' physical growth and academic progress on a regular basis.

He also called for the development of an application to calculate the calorie content of food items served to students.

The Chief Minister enquired about the breakfast menu and recommended that meals be prepared in accordance with regional dietary habits.

He said the breakfast scheme was a long-term programme and therefore required utmost care and attention.

Junna Solar Systems Private Limited CMD Shekhar Reddy and CEO Anil Babu handed over a cheque for Rs 5.17 crore to the Hare Krishna Foundation for the centralised community kitchen in Nagarkurnool.

Telangana govt to launch central kitchens for school breakfast scheme on Dec 9

Telangana Governor, CM pay tributes to Mahatma Gandhi at Bapu Ghat in Hyderabad

Hyderabad, Oct 2 (IANS) Telangana Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla and Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy paid tributes to Mahatma Gandhi at the Bapu Ghat here on his birth anniversary on Friday.

They offered floral tributes at Bapu Ghat at Langer Houz here, where the ashes of Mahatma Gandhi were immersed at the confluence of Musi and Esi rivers.

The Governor and the Chief Minister paid their respects at the Samadhi and later showered flower petals on the statue of the father of the nation.

Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) president Mahesh Kumar Goud, Ministers Ponnamp Prabhakar, Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy, Mohammed Azharuddin, Governor Advisor V. Hanumanth Rao and others paid tributes to Mahatma Gandhi.

The Governor and the Chief Minister inaugurated a digital museum on the occasion.

The leaders also participated in an all-faith prayer meet in the Prayers' hall, which has a 76-ft-long collage wall featuring more than 400 pictures of Mahatma Gandhi.

Meanwhile, the Governor paid heartfelt tributes to Mahatma Gandhi and former Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri on their birth anniversaries.

The Governor said in a message that Mahatma Gandhi's ideals of truth, non-violence and compassion continue to inspire humanity, while Lal Bahadur Shastri's life remains a symbol of simplicity, integrity and selfless service.

He called upon people to uphold their noble ideals of peace, unity, patriotism, and service to the nation and work towards building a developed and compassionate India.

CM Revanth Reddy remembered Mahatma



Gandhi as a great soul for teaching humanity the values of Truth, Peace and Compassion.

On the Occasion of Gandhi's birth anniversary, the Chief Minister paid rich tributes to the father of the nation, who led India's freedom struggle by wielding non-violence as a weapon.

Recalling Mahatma Gandhi's yeoman services to the country, the Chief Minister said the great freedom fighter laid a strong foundation for self-reliance, gram swaraj (village self-rule) and social equality through his ideals.

Stating that the people's government is strictly adhering to Gandhi's principles, CM Revanth Reddy affirmed that the government's main goal is to steer Telangana towards peace, social justice, equality, and development by following the path of truth and non-violence shown by Gandhi. Practicing Gandhi's ideals is a true tribute to the great leader, the CM said.

Infra works worth Rs 52,000 crore under progress in Hyderabad, says DyCM Vikramarka

Hyderabad, Oct 2 (IANS) Telangana Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka said on Friday that infrastructure works worth Rs 52,000 crore are progressing rapidly for Hyderabad's development.

Massive projects have been undertaken in sectors such as roads, flyovers, bridges, underpasses, and drinking water facilities, Vikramarka said, adding that the government is moving forward with a comprehensive plan to further develop Hyderabad while keeping future needs in mind.

Speaking at the launch of Telangana RTC-Metro Rail Common Pass, he said that the current government is moving forward with a policy of executing works and demonstrating results to the people, rather than limiting itself to mere publicity.

He noted that massive infrastructure projects, including roads, flyovers, and bridges, worth Rs 35,000 crore have been undertaken within the HMDA limits.

?Highlighting the role of previous Congress governments in Hyderabad's development, he pointed out that it was the Congress administrations that brought water from the Krishna, Godavari, and Manjira rivers to meet the city's drinking water needs. He criticised the BRS government that held power for 10 years following the formation of the separate state of Telangana for failing to bring even a single additional drop of drinking water to the city.

The Deputy CM pointed out that the Outer Ring Road (ORR) and the International Airport, which serve as jewels in Hyderabad's crown, were developed during the tenure of Congress governments. Educational institutions like the University of Hyderabad and IIIT, along with numerous public sector undertakings such as BHEL, ECIL, DRDO, BDL, Midhani, and IDPL, were also set up during the Congress rule. These initiatives provided employment opportunities to thousands of people.

Passenger tries to open plane's emergency exit at Hyderabad airport

Hyderabad, Oct 2 (IANS) An alleged attempt by a passenger to open the emergency door of an aircraft while it was preparing to take off created a scare at Rajiv Gandhi International Airport, Shamshabad in Telangana.

The incident occurred in the early hours of Friday when passengers were boarding the IndiGo flight to Kadapa, Andhra Pradesh.

After the airline staff alerted the authorities, the passenger was deboarded. He was later handed over to the Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (RGIA) Police.

According to police, during the boarding process, the passenger was shifted from the 9th row to the 2nd row, which is an emergency exit seating area. While settling in, he touched the emergency exit handle, triggering a security sensor alarm.

A case has been registered at the RGIA Police Station. The passenger told the police that he unintentionally touched the emergency exit handle. Further investigations were ongoing.

On August 6, a traveller allegedly damaged an emergency exit window panel and attempted to tamper with the emergency exit door while the aircraft was preparing to land at Kochi airport.The incident occurred aboard Kuala Lumpur-Kochi Batik Air flight OD231. Police arrested the passenger, identified as Jamsheer Athanikkal.He was booked under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita Section 351 (criminal intimidation), the Aircraft Act Section 11A (failure to comply with any direction issued) and the Kerala Police Act Section 118(e) (knowingly does any act which causes danger to the public or failure in public safety).

Man held after alleged desecration attempt at Hyderabad temple

Hyderabad, Oct 2 (IANS) Hyderabad Police arrested a man who allegedly entered a temple and attempted to desecrate an idol in the presence of the priest and devotees on Friday.

The incident occurred at the Santoshi Mata Temple in the Dilusukhnagar area.

In a video that surfaced on social media, a man is seen entering the sanctum sanctorum and throwing a couple of tree branches in front of the idol.

He then walked out of the temple.

The incident occurred while prayers were underway.

Some people caught hold of the man, assaulted him and later handed him over to the police.

The man was identified as Mohammed Ansari.

Police have taken him into custody.

According to the police, Ansari is currently undergoing treatment for mental health issues.

Further investigation is underway.The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) condemned the incident.

Buddhist activist moves SC against singing full version of Vande Mataram at formal State events

New Delhi, Oct 2

A Buddhist activist has moved the Supreme Court against the mandatory singing of the full version of Vande Mataram at formal state events.

Contending that replacing the standalone two-stanza version with the six-stanza text from Ananda Math converted India from a "secular republic" into a "theocracy", petitioner BD Borkar has challenged two circulars issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs in this regard.

Borkar, a Nagpur-based Buddhist activist, submitted that the MHA orders dated January 28, 2026, and July 9, 2026, wrongfully replaced the 79-year-old practice of singing a standalone, non-theistic two-stanza poem."Under the guise of providing directions on the playing and singing of an 'official version'... the impugned orders repealed the existing national song... and imposed a new national song which is the six-stanza civil war song of Ananda Math with its unconstitutional idolatrous and Islamophobic content," Borkar submitted.Forcing citizens to sing the full six-stanza text damages national fraternity and deepens communal divisions, the petitioner contended."By imposing sectarian prayer to particular goddesses of one particular religion as the national song of India, the impugned orders convert the character of the polity of India from a 'secular republic' to a 'theocracy'," he submitted.Maintaining that a "conscientious objector" should not be punished for refusing to sing Vande Mataram, the Supreme Court had on September 22 asked the Centre to respond to Carnatic vocalist TM Krishna's petition challenging the law mandating singing of six stanzas of the national song.

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Reining in AI Agents

Incidents of artificial intelligence agents going rogue and infiltrating government websites in Australia and the United States have raised fears over the potential dangers involved and strengthened calls for global regulation of the sector. US President Donald Trump's announcement of a voluntary agreement on "super intelligence", signed by the executives of six global tech giants, must be seen in the context of growing demands for reining in the industry to prevent catastrophes in the future. The accord, backed by Meta, Nvidia, Google, OpenAI, xAI, and Anthropic, essentially amounts to industry self-regulation to maintain internal controls, establish an internal team to oversee these controls, work with independent outside auditors, and create an independent board committee to review the results. The firms agreed to implement safeguards to keep models operating as intended and quickly detect and fix any issues. They will engage independent auditors to assess whether their AI systems are working as intended and ensure their platforms do not hack into or access technical systems in unintended ways. The development came close on the heels of recent calls by the heads of the four biggest American AI firms — Anthropic, SpaceXAI, OpenAI and Google DeepMind — for a collective slowdown in the development of frontier models. The appeal for a global pause followed months of escalating concerns across the technology industry. Anthropic, Google, Meta and other companies have reported cases in which their models behaved in ways their developers did not intend.

Fears are growing over AI's potential to threaten humanity, should it match or surpass human abilities. As AI agents become more capable and autonomous, those capabilities need to be matched by proportionate containment, real-time monitoring, clear accountability, independent oversight, and much faster incident reporting. The explosive rise of AI has left governments scrambling to put protective measures in place, with some calling for companies to be forced to build ways to disable their own tech into its systems. One idea backed by some AI firms and lawmakers is to have a "kill switch"—a way to simply turn the tech off in a crisis. As warnings mount about the potentially devastating impact of AI, many in the industry and in governments around the world are openly wondering about what national and international regulations might be needed to keep it in check. The US and China, two nations at the forefront of AI development, have so far resisted calls for greater regulation. There can be no two opinions about the need for international cooperation to put a global regulation in place to prevent the misuse of AI technologies. This is to ensure that humans, not artificial intelligence, remain responsible for all decisions. Recently, Pope Leo, the first American pontiff of the Roman Catholic Church, whose followers number 1.4 billion worldwide, also called for the ethical use of AI technologies.

Grand Celebration Marks BRS Senior Leader Dr. Hussain's Birthday:

Free Medical Camp Inaugurated."



"IC Correspondent | October 2, 2026"Saibaba Nagar: The birthday of Dr. Hussain, a distinguished senior leader of the Bharat Rashtriya Samithi (BRS) representing the Subhash Nagar division, was celebrated with immense fervor at his constituency office in Saibaba Nagar. "BRS Legislature Party Whip and Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA), Shri K.P. Vivekanand, graced the auspicious occasion as the chief guest. To commemorate the day, MLA Vivekanand presided over the customary cake-cutting ceremony alongside Dr. Hussain and formally inaugurated a comprehensive free medical outreach camp organized for local residents."Addressing the gathering, Shri K.P. Vivekanand lauded the initiative, remarking that dedicating personal milestones to philanthropic endeavors exemplifies true community leadership. He urged underprivileged households across the locality to leverage the diagnostic and healthcare services rendered at the camp."The event witnessed the presence of several prominent dignitaries and party functionaries, including former Corporator Suresh Reddy, Mantri Satyanarayana, Division President Pole Srikanth, Puppala Bhaskar, senior party stalwarts Yusuf Bhai, Varala Vinod, Tara Singh, Gubbala Lakshmi Narayana, Feroz, Siddiq, senior women's leader Satyavani, alongside local community representatives and supporters.

Caste Discrimination Alleged at Khiridi School



"Dalit Women Allegedly Abused in the Name of Caste and Removed from Mid-Day Meal Duties""Women Who Worked for 14 Years Allege Injustice""?2 Lakh Self-Help Group Funds Dispute Also Raised""SC/ST Atrocity Vigilance and Monitoring Committee Demands Inquiry and Action Against Those Responsible""Kumrambheem, Asifabad, District.Reporter "Indian Chronicle"October. 03""Allegations of caste discrimination at Khiridi School in Wankidi Mandal of Komaram Bheem Asifabad district have sparked concern. Fourteen years after working as mid-day meal workers at the school, several economically disadvantaged Dalit women have alleged that they were verbally abused in the name of caste and removed from their duties.The women also alleged that their pending honorarium was not paid and that approximately ?2 lakh deposited by them in a self-help group was allegedly used by concerned officials and group members. Seeking justice, the affected women approached Asifabad DSP B. Ashok with the support of members of the SC/ST Atrocity Vigilance and Monitoring Committee."Alleged Caste-Based Abuse and Removal from Duties"According to the affected women, they had been working as mid-day meal workers at Khiridi School for the past 14 years. However, they alleged that the school Headmaster, MEO, PET, self-help group president and members had subjected them to discriminatory treatment.The women alleged that they were insulted with caste-related remarks, including statements that they belonged to the Mala community and that schoolchildren were not eating food prepared by them. They

further alleged that they were removed from mid-day meal duties on these grounds.The women expressed anguish over facing such alleged discrimination at an educational institution where students are expected to learn values of equality and humanity."?"2 Lakh Self-Help Group Funds Dispute"The women alleged that, apart from withholding their pending honorarium, approximately ?2 lakh deposited by them as members of a self-help group had been used by certain officials and group members."They claimed that when they questioned the alleged use of the funds, they were targeted and removed from their duties.The affected women stated that they had earlier submitted complaints to the IKP APM and Wankidi Police, but their grievances remained unresolved. After making repeated visits to the concerned authorities without receiving relief, they approached the DSP.They also alleged that a former APM had demanded money from them and that their refusal to pay led to retaliatory action against them."Committee Demands Action Against Those Responsible"Members of the Komaram Bheem Asifabad District SC/ST Atrocity Vigilance and Monitoring Committee demanded a comprehensive inquiry into the alleged caste discrimination at Khiridi School and legal action against those found responsible.Speaking at a press conference held on Friday at the Dr. B.R. Ambedkar statue premises in the district headquarters, along with the affected women, committee members expressed concern over the allegations.They questioned how society could progress when teachers, who are responsible for educating students and promoting equality, were themselves accused of humiliating women in the name of caste.The committee demanded an inquiry into the allegations against the Khiridi School Headmaster, Wankidi Education Department official, school PET, self-help group president and members, as well as the concerned APM.The members also urged the authorities to ensure justice for the affected women, clear their pending honorarium and investigate the alleged misuse of self-help group funds.Committee members Regunta Keshav Rao, Dr. Ashok Mahulkar, Banoth Gopal Naik, Igarapu Ganesh, Kobragade Gangubai, and affected women Mahatme Savitribai, Vasake Kamalabai, Vasake Yamunabai, Jadi Samala and others participated in the programme.

Gandhi Jayanti Celebrations Held Grandly in Uppal

- Uppal Congress Party In-charge Parameshwar Reddy and Former Corporator Rajitha Parameshwar Reddy Attend as Chief Guests""UPPAL, OCTOBER 2 (INDIAN CHRONICLR):" Gandhi Jayanti celebrations were held on a grand note in Uppal. The programme was organized under the leadership of Uppal Division President Eega Anjaneyulu Mudiraj at the Uppal Ward Office premises.Uppal Assembly Constituency Congress Party In-charge Parameshwar Reddy and former corporator Rajitha Parameshwar Reddy attended the celebrations as chief guests. On the occasion, they garlanded the statue of Mahatma Gandhi and paid floral tributes."Speaking on the occasion, the leaders recalled Mahatma Gandhi's pivotal role in India's freedom struggle and remembered his services and sacrifices for the nation. They called upon everyone to follow the ideals of truth, non-violence and peace demonstrated by Mahatma Gandhi.Uppal and Chikanagar Division presidents, senior Congress leaders, party workers and



supporters participated in the programme and paid rich tributes to Mahatma Gandhi.

KUNA SRISAILAM GOUD PAYS HOMAGE TO MAHATMA GANDHI ON GANDHI JAYANTI



"His Timeless Ideals Remain the Pinnacle of Universal Inspiration," Declares Former Quthbullapur MLA"By IC Correspondent"October 2, 2026"SHAPUR NAGAR: Marking the auspicious occasion of Gandhi Jayanti, former

Quthbullapur legislator and senior Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee leader Kuna Srisailam Goud paid solemn homage to Mahatma Gandhi at his Shapur Nagar residence on Friday by laying floral wreaths at the Father of the Nation's portrait."Addressing the assembled gathering, Mr. Goud extolled Mahatma Gandhi's monumental stewardship of the Indian independence movement, highlighting how it was meticulously anchored in the cardinal tenets of Satya (Truth), Ahimsa (Non-violence), and Peace. He remarked that Gandhi's invaluable contributions toward liberating the nation endure as an indelible chapter in history, serving as a beacon of ethical governance and personal conduct for contemporary generations. He earnestly exhorted citizens to internalize and actively practice Gandhian philosophy in their everyday lives."The commemorative event witnessed robust participation, with a prominent turnout of Congress party dignitaries, grassroots cadres, and community women who gathered in solemn solidarity to revere the Mahatma's enduring legacy.

Suda Chairman Puvvalla Durga Prasad paying tribute to Mahatma Gandhi's statue on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti

"Khammam Suda Chairman Sri Puvvalla Durga Prasad paid tribute to Mahatma Gandhi's statue on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti at Gandhi Chowk in Khammam city.""On this occasion, Mahatma Gandhi's services to the country and his efforts for the achievement of freedom through non-violence were remembered.""District Library Chairman MD Khader Baba, PAX Chairman Vadde Narayana Rao, RTA Member Gajjala Mkanna, City Urban President Deepak Chaudhary, District Women President Saujanya, One Town Block In-Charge Balagangadhar Tilak, Women Leaders, Division Leaders, Chief Leaders, activists and others participated in this program.



Special Central Law Must Be Enacted for Journalists' Protection



Cashless Health Cards Should Be Provided to Journalists""TUWJ (IJP) District President Abdul Rahman and General Secretary Sampath Kumar Demand""Kumrambheem, Asifabad, District.Reporter "Indian Chronicle"October. 03.""Journalists across the country are increasingly facing threats to their safety and security. A special Central law must be enacted to ensure their protection, demanded TUWJ (IJP) Komaram Bheem Asifabad District President Abdul Rahman and General Secretary Sampath Kumar."On the call of the TUWJ-IJU State Committee, a massive rally was organized by the district unit on Friday as part of Journalists' Demands Day in Asifabad district headquarters. The rally began at Ambedkar Chowk, passed through Vivekananda Chowk and culminated at Gandhi Chowk, where journalists staged a protest highlighting their long-pending demands."Speaking on the occasion, the union leaders expressed concern that journalists were struggling to support their families with meagre salaries, while many were facing severe financial difficulties. They stated that journalists play a crucial role in bringing public issues to light and strengthening democracy, and urged governments to give priority to their welfare and security.They demanded that the Central Government immediately establish a new Wage Board for journalists and restore the statutory rights of working journalists that were removed under the new Labour Codes.The leaders also called for a special law to protect journalists from attacks, threats and harassment while performing their professional duties."They further urged the Telangana Government to fulfil its election promise of allotting houses and house sites to all eligible journalists. They demanded that cashless health cards, similar to those provided to government employees, be extended to journalists to ensure access to medical treatment without financial hardship.The leaders appealed to both the Central and State Governments to take immediate steps to resolve the long-pending problems faced by journalists.Later, the participants garlanded the statue of Mahatma Gandhi and paid floral tributes.District Accreditation Committee Member Prakash Goud, TUWJ District Treasurer Adapa Satish, District Vice Presidents Krishnam Raju, Chandrakanth and Naveen Goud, Press Club President S. Venugopal, General Secretary Varanasi Srinivas, TUWJ district leaders and journalists Ahmed Pasha, Narender, Shaik Jameel, Mekala Srinivas, Suresh Chari, Abdul Hannan, Radhakrishna Chari, Mohan, Bhaskarachari, Sridhar, Pochayya, Dongri Ravinder, Dudala Gopi, Krishnapalli Suresh, Ramesh Rathod, Srujan, Nitesh, Ravi, Raju, Syed Sojar, Vinod and others participated in the programme.

Grand Birthday Celebrations for Former Quthbullapur MPP Sanna Kavitha Srisailam Yadav in Kompally.



"By IC Correspondent"Kompally, October 2, 2026: The birthday of former Quthbullapur MPP Sanna Kavitha Srisailam Yadav was celebrated on a grand scale today at her office in Sai Krupa Apartments, Kompally, amid enthusiastic family members, well-wishers, and party supporters."BRSLP Whip and Quthbullapur MLA K.P. Vivekanand graced the occasion as the chief guest. He warmly felicitated former MPP Sanna Kavitha Srisailam Yadav and her husband, Sanna Srisailam Yadav, by presenting them with traditional shawls as a mark of respect."Speaking at the event, MLA K.P. Vivekanand lauded her dedicated service during her tenure as a woman MPP in Quthbullapur mandal and expressed his best wishes for her continued commitment to public welfare and community leadership."The celebratory gathering saw active participation from former public representatives, local party leaders, senior cadre, ardent supporters, and prominent women leaders.

Tension at Dilsukhnagar temple after attack on deity idol

Hyderabad: Tension prevailed at the Sri Santoshi Mata Temple in Dilsukhnagar after a man allegedly attacked the idol of the goddess, triggering protests by devotees and Hindu organisations on Friday.According to information available, the incident occurred in the morning when the priest was performing rituals inside the sanctum sanctorum. The unidentified man allegedly entered the temple carrying sticks and threw them at the idol.Alert devotees immediately caught the man and handed him over to the police. CCTV footage of the incident has surfaced on social media and is being widely circulated.

A special program at Sarvajna School on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti



“A grand program was organized in Sarvajna School to celebrate the birth anniversary of Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhiji. On this occasion, floral tributes were

paid to the portrait of Mahatma Gandhi and his services to the country were remembered.”In this program, Chairman of Sarvajna Vidya Sansthas Mr. R.V. Nagendra Kumar, Director Mrs. Neelima, school teachers and students participated. They suggested that everyone should follow the values of truth, non-violence, peace, discipline and purity shown by Gandhiji in their lives.”“On this occasion, Chairman Mr. R.V. Nagendra Kumar Garu said that Gandhiji's ideologies are very exemplary for today's generation as well, and wished the students to walk on the path of truth and non-violence and grow up to be useful citizens of the society.”“Afterwards, the Chairman, Director, teachers and students pledged that “We will work for the development of the country by following the values of truth, non-violence, peace, purity and humanity shown by Mahatma Gandhi”.

Commissioner of Police Tributes to Mahatma Gandhi on Gandhi Jayanti



On the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti, Police Commissioner Sunil Dutt garlanded the portrait of Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi at Khammam Police Commissioner's Office.”“On this occasion, the Police Commissioner suggested that everyone should follow the path of truth, non-



violence, peace and moral values shown by Mahatma Gandhi. ““Additional DCPs Kumaraswamy, Vijayababu, ACPs Narsimha Rao, Sambaraju, RI Kamaraju, Inspector Sarvaiah, AO Kalavathi, Police Association President Hemanad, police officers and staff participated in the program and paid tributes to Mahatma Gandhi.

Gandhi's Ideals Must Be Taken to the People:

STATE CONGRESS LEADER MOHAMMED RAFIQ““



“RAMANTHAPUR, OCTOBER 2 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Mahatma Gandhi Jayanti was celebrated with great enthusiasm at Gandhinagar in Ramanthapur Division under the leadership of State Congress leader Mohammed Rafiq. On the occasion, floral tributes were paid to the statue of Mahatma Gandhi.”“Speaking at the programme, the leaders called upon everyone to uphold and practise Mahatma Gandhi's ideals of truth, non-violence, peace, equality and social harmony. They urged people to follow the path shown by Gandhi and dedicate themselves to public service.”“PCC representative Mohammed Tofeeq, District General Secretary Jaleel Pasha, senior Congress leader Mogili Lingam, Gandhinagar Welfare Association President Laghusani Srinivas Goud, Aziz Khan, Gangaputra



Bhaskar, Mittu Goud, Harish Goud, Gayatri Goud, Gangaputra Ashok, Varalakshmi, Tabassum Begum, Poosa Mallikarjun, Poosa Balaraj, Shivakumar, M.D. Shakeel, M.D. Mateen, Narasimha, Bikshapathi and others participated in the programme.”“The programme conveyed the message that Gandhi's ideals continue to guide society and that dedicated public service is the true tribute to Mahatma Gandhi.

*Gandhi, Shastri Jayanti Celebrations Held in Chilkalguda

“ Indian chronicle, Secunderabad, October 02 :““Gandhi Jayanti and Lal Bahadur Shastri Jayanti were celebrated on a grand note at Chilkalguda in the Secunderabad constituency under the leadership of Telugu Desam Party (TDP) Seethaphalmandi Division president G.V. Krishna Rao. Floral tributes were paid to Mahatma Gandhi and Lal Bahadur Shastri at the Gandhi statue.”“Secunderabad TDP in-charge Vallarapu Srinivas Kumar attended the programme as the chief guest and paid floral tributes to the Gandhi statue and Shastri's portrait. Speaking on the occasion, he said Gandhi's struggle for India's independence through the principles of truth and non-violence continued to inspire generations, and his contribution to the nation remained memorable.”“TDP senior leaders Paritala Vijay Kumar,b Garige Praveen, Venkataswamy, Puppala Vijay Kumar, Jagadish Goud, Seshirekha, Chander Mudiraj, Murali, Rama



Rao, Prasada Rao, Vikram, Tailor Srinivas and others attended the programme.

Gandhi's Path of Peace and Non-Violence is the Way to Establish an Egalitarian Society



— FORMER CORPORATER BANNALA Geetha PRAVEEN MUDIRAJ““UPPAL, OCTOBER 2 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):““ Everyone should follow the path of peace and non-violence shown by Mahatma Gandhi, said Bannala Geetha Praveen Mudiraj, former Corporator of Chilkanaagar Division and former member of the GHMC Standing Committee.”“On the occasion of Mahatma Gandhi's birth anniversary, Bannala Geetha Praveen Mudiraj paid floral tributes to Mahatma Gandhi's statues at the Uppal Municipal Office and in Ganesh Nagar Colony.”“Speaking on the occasion, she said that an egalitarian society could be established only through the principles of peace and non-violence. She stated that the ideals of peace and non-violence demonstrated to the world by Mahatma Gandhi continue to remain highly inspirational even today.”“She called upon everyone to put Gandhi's ideals into practice and work towards strengthening peace, harmony and brotherhood in

society.”“State leader Bannala Praveen Mudiraj, senior leaders Eddula Kondal Reddy, Kokkonda Jagan, Balakrishna Goud, Ramanjanyulu, Shyam, Marka Sheenu, Shiva, and Ganesh Nagar Association members Rajamouli, Devender, Venkanna, Dasharath Reddy, Ganesh, Nagesh, Eshwaraiyah, Srinivas, Nagaraju and others participated in the programme.”“

BRS to celebrate 10 years of Siddipet district creation from Oct 5

Siddipet: The BRS has decided to celebrate the 10th anniversary of Siddipet district creation on a grand scale, beginning on October 5. The creation of the district was a decades old dream, which was fulfilled by the former Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao. Since the district was created on October 11, 2016, the BRS decided to organise week-long celebrations from October 5.The BRS will organise a preparatory meeting on October 4 in Siddipet under the leadership of former minister T Harish Rao. In a press statement on Friday, Harish Rao called upon the BRS leaders and cadre to be prepared to organise different programmes throughout the week. Since Siddipet is located some 150-km away from Sangareddy, the headquarters of the erstwhile Medak district, the people had made many attempts to secure Siddipet's status as a separate district.

Crackdown on illegal mining - District Collector Divakar.



“Khammam, October 02, Indian Chronicle.”“District Collector Divakar TS said in a statement on Friday that illegal mining would not be tolerated and that strict action would be taken with an iron fist. The Collector stated that, based on information that illegal mining activities were being carried out without permissions in the Velugumatla area near

Khammam, joint inspections were conducted by officials of the Revenue and Mining departments as per the instructions of the State Agriculture Minister. The Collector stated that officials had identified that some local individuals were illegally excavating barite mineral without permissions in patta lands of a private venture near Velugumatla Park. The Collector said that a preliminary inquiry revealed that small pits were being dug, the boulders found were being broken (chipped), and the material was being sold through tractors to mineral dealers located nearby. He stated that mining officials, along with the Khammam Urban Mandal Tahsildar, inspected the areas where illegal transportation was taking place and recorded the measurements of the excavations, and that the process of identifying the pattadars and those responsible for these illegal excavations had been expedited. The Collector warned in the statement that notices would be issued to those involved in illegal mining and heavy penalties would be imposed, and that, in addition to cancelling the licenses of mineral dealers who illegally purchase minerals in violation of regulations, strict legal action would be taken.”“

Empowerment Through Shelter: Bachupally 2BHK Beneficiaries Commemorate Three-Year Milestone as BRS LP Whip KP Vivekanand Joins Festivities.

“IC Correspondent | October 2, 2026““Heard their plight, bestowed them shelter, and forged an enduring place in their hearts...” “HYDERABAD — Celebrating three years of transformed lives and fulfilled aspirations, the residents and housing association of the Bachupally 2BHK Housing Complex convened for a commemorative event marking the anniversary of their home allocations. BRS LP Whip and Quthbullapur MLA KP Vivekanand graced the occasion as the chief guest, participating in the ceremonial cake-cutting and celebrating the milestone alongside the resident beneficiaries.”“The gathering served as a nostalgic tribute to the monumental housing initiative launched by Telangana's founder and former Chief Minister, K. Chandrashekar Rao (KCR), whose administration distributed formal property titles (pattas) to eligible underprivileged families, transitioning thousands from precarious living conditions to dignified homeownership.”“Addressing the assembled residents, MLA KP Vivekanand reflected on the socio-economic impact of the state's flagship housing welfare program.”“> “KCR stands as a visionary statesman who, within a single decade of Telangana's inception, deftly harmonized economic progress with social welfare. By addressing the deep-seated grievances of the underprivileged, he restored their dignity through permanent shelter. The state's continued trajectory toward comprehensive development and prosperity remains intrinsically linked to his lead-



ership.”“> “The celebratory event witnessed enthusiastic participation from key community organizers and association leaders, including Maddela Satyanarayana, Jayaraju, Mohan, Durga Prasad, Mallesh, Narasimha Goud, Laxman, Srikanth, Badrinath, Rama Rao, Shiva, Narasimhulu, Raju, Suresh, among other prominent local dignitaries and residents.”“Key Highlights & Context” * Milestone: 3rd Anniversary of the Bachupally 2BHK Dignity Housing allotment.” * Key Guest: KP Vivekanand (BRS LP Whip & MLA).“ * Core Theme: Gratitude toward KCR's flagship urban housing policy aimed at empowering economically weaker sections (EWS) with zero-cost, high-quality residential units.

BJP Conducts Swachh Bharat Drive in Uppal on Gandhi Jayanti

MMC Sanitation Workers Honoured and Assured of Support““UPPAL, OCTOBER 2 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):““ On the occasion of Mahatma Gandhi Jayanti, the Uppal Division BJP organised a Swachh Bharat programme at the Gandhi statue in Uppal under the leadership of Uppal Division BJP President Marineneni Phanindra. The BJP leaders and workers paid floral tributes to Mahatma Gandhi and recalled his message of cleanliness, peace and service.”“Following the tribute programme, BJP leaders and workers participated in a Swachh Bharat cleanliness drive. They subsequently felicitated the MMC sanitation workers and enquired about their working conditions and difficulties. The leaders assured the workers of their continued support and pledged to make efforts for resolving their problems.Senior BJP leader Shamirpet Dharma Reddy, Uppal Division General Secretary Teega Vitthal Rao Mudiraj, State OBC Morcha leaders Panjala Shravan Kumar Goud and Duvvala Ramesh, OBC Morcha District Executive Committee members Tallapalli Srinivas Goud, Fakir



Narsireddy and A. Suri Yadagiri, BJYM Division President Adepu Ramesh, Tribal Morcha President Banoth Raju Naik, Mamatha, Mahila Morcha General Secretary Burra Jyothi, Sharada, MMC sanitation workers, BJP leaders and party workers, among others, participated in the programme.

Everyone Should Strive to Uphold the Ideals of Gandhi and Shastri: Ramchander Rao



“ Indian chronicle Secunderabad, October 02 :““BJP Telangana State President N. Ramchander Rao paid rich tributes to Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi and former Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri on the occasion of their birth anniversaries at Chilkalguda in the Secunderabad Assembly constituency.”“Ramchander Rao garlanded the statue of Mahatma Gandhi at Chilkalguda and offered floral tributes to the portrait of Lal Bahadur Shastri, recalling their contributions to the nation.”“Speaking on the occasion, Ramchander Rao said that the values taught by Mahatma Gandhi—truth, non-violence, peace and morality—continue to be highly relevant to society. He called upon people to follow Gandhi's path and work towards promoting peace, harmony and unity in society.”“He said Lal Bahadur Shastri's simplicity, honesty, discipline and dedication to the nation remain an inspiration to all. The slogan “Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan” given by Shastri highlighted the role of soldiers in safeguarding the country and the importance of farmers in national development. He urged people to practise the ideals of the two great leaders in their daily lives rather than limiting them to birth anniversary celebrations.”“Later, as part of the Swachh Bharat programme, Ramchander Rao joined local leaders and party workers in cleaning a road with a broom. He said maintaining cleanliness in the surroundings was the responsibility of every citizen and that a clean environment was the foundation of a healthy society. He called upon people to actively participate in achieving the objectives of Swachh Bharat.”“BJP local leaders, workers and

supporters participated in large numbers and paid tributes to Mahatma Gandhi and Lal Bahadur Shastri.”“Among those present were Seva Sankalp in-charge and contested MLA Mekala Sarangapani, Banda Karthik Reddy, Nageshwar Reddy, Kanakatlal Hari, Prabhu Gupta, Suresh Mudiraj, Akaram Ramesh, contested corporators Sharada Mallesham, Mekala Keerthi Harsha, Aravind among others.

M. Ram Reddy Elected District President of Gazetted Headmasters' Association,L. Satya Prasad Elected District General Secretary

“MEDIPALLY, OCTOBER 2 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):““ The general body meeting of the Medchal-Malkajgiri district unit of the Telangana State Gazetted Headmasters' Association was held on October 1 at PNM High School in Kukatapally. Following the meeting, the new district executive committee was elected unanimously.”“M. Ram Reddy, Headmaster of the Zilla Parishad High School at Bowrampet, was elected District President, while L. Satya Prasad, Headmaster of the Zilla Parishad High School at Medipally, was elected District General Secretary.”“S. Arun Jyothi and L.C. Gopal were elected as State Councillors, D. Varalakshmi as Treasurer, and Srinivasa Prabhakar as Honorary President.”“The State President, State General Secretary, Treasurer and other office-bearers of the Telangana State Gazetted Headmasters' Association attended the programme and congratulated the newly elected district executive committee members.”“On the occasion, the association leaders expressed confidence that the newly elected committee would work towards addressing the issues and welfare concerns of headmasters across the district.

Bail, jail, bail, then Supreme Court says ‘return to jail’: Last 3 months in Ramesh Mhatre’s life



GNS News Agency, Oct 2

Over the past three months, Shiv Sena corporator Ramesh Sukrya Mhatre went from being arrested for allegedly assaulting three municipal doctors in Dombivli to securing bail, to seeing it being stayed by the Bombay High Court, then receiving conditional bail which required him to stay out of Maharashtra, and finally being ordered by the Supreme Court to surrender and return to jail. The case originates from a July 6 incident at the Kalyan-Dombivli Municipal Corporation (KDMC)-run Shastri Nagar Hospital in Dombivli. Mhatre and his associates allegedly assaulted three doctors after they advised shifting a pregnant woman to another facility because all Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) beds were occupied. The patient’s family allegedly contacted Mhatre, who represents the Kopar ward, after which he and his associates allegedly assaulted the doctors. They were arrested two days later.

On July 14, a local magistrate court granted Ramesh Mhatre bail on medical grounds, observing that he had one kidney, suffered from health ailments, and that his physical presence was not required. Mhatre, who had been admitted to the Thane District Government Hospital while in custody, was discharged immediately after securing bail. The incident triggered protests by doctors across Maharashtra, prompting the Indian Medical Association (IMA) to call a statewide strike from July 20. Taking suo motu (on its own) cognisance of news reports, a Bombay High Court bench led by then Acting Chief Justice Ravindra V Ghuge (now CJ of Calcutta HC) held a special Saturday sitting on July 18 and stayed the bail order.

“Till the bail was not granted, he was hospitalised, and the moment bail was granted, he became fit to be discharged. That’s how it works,” the High Court orally remarked. The bench noted that over 36 years, 18 criminal cases had been registered against Mhatre, with acquittals in 17 of them. “In a case where accused Mhatre led a mob of around four

more persons and attacked three doctors in a municipal hospital showing his fury... could not have been taken lightly by the Magistrate, more so, in the backdrop of his antecedents,” the bench held, directing him to surrender to the police, while appealing to doctors to reconsider the strike “in the larger interest of society and service to mankind.” Mhatre surrendered on July 19 and was lodged at Aadharwadi jail in Kalyan. During subsequent hearings, the High Court extended the stay on his bail and orally remarked that the police should “protect citizens, especially the law-abiding, and not the accused,” adding that Mhatre appeared “more energetic than a 25-year-old” during the alleged assault.

On August 7, citing “the time spent in custody by the accused and substantial progress made in investigation,” the High Court granted bail to Mhatre and three co-accused on the condition that they not enter Maharashtra until the trial commenced, directing them to reside in Goa and report weekly to the Anjuna police station. “In a democracy, the principle is that an elected representative is by the people and for the people. If the elected representative is accused of assaulting his own voters, such a situation is bound to dent the fabric of democracy in this country and erode public confidence,” the High Court observed, while directing the setting up of a fast-track court in Kalyan. The matter reached the Supreme Court after Mhatre challenged some of the High Court’s bail conditions, which he later withdrew, while the state government sought cancellation of his bail. On September 7, a bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta allowed Mhatre to withdraw his appeal, while expressing strong disapproval over repeated attacks on medical staff. Observing a similar incident in Palghar involving the workers of the same political party over the treatment of a man injured during Dahi Handi celebrations, the bench remarked: “This is their modus operandi. These people do not deserve to roam on the streets even for a minute... A message needs to go out to everyone as a deterrent”. After the HC’s nudge, Maharashtra Police booked over 20 accused in the Palghar case. Earlier this month, a Kalyan trial court framed charges against Mhatre and four others under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and the Maharashtra Medicare Service Persons and Medicare Service Institutions Act and he pleaded not guilty, paving the way for the trial. On Monday, the Supreme Court’s Justice Vikram Nath-led bench cancelled Mhatre’s bail and ordered him to surrender within three days, noting that “entire medical system was hindered” due to the incident and Mhatre being out would be “counterproductive to the trial” in the case. Directing Mhatre’s jail return, the SC stated, “The message should go out loud and clear that the medical fraternity cannot be touched. They serve people and cannot be attacked in this manner”.

Chargesheet filed, semen & hair strands among key evidence

GNS News Agency, Oct 2

Greater Noida bus gangrape, Delhi Police FSL fast track court, sleeper bus gangrape case, NHRC notice Delhi UP police, Gautam Buddha Nagar police, Noida passenger safety lapses, bus traffic challans UP Delhi, public transport safety women, Delhi rape, delhi gangrape, delhi moving bus rape, delhi teen raped moving bus, delhi girl raped moving bus The suspected sleeper bus after a 16-year-old Class 11 student was allegedly gang-raped inside it, in Delhi’s Kashmere Gate area. Biological samples, including semen and hair strands, has emerged as key evidence against two men accused of raping a 17-year-old girl inside a moving sleeper bus as it travelled nearly 47 km from Greater Noida to Delhi’s Kashmere Gate in August.

The Delhi Police filed a 398-page chargesheet in the case earlier this month and the court took cognisance of it last week, officials familiar with the proceedings said. According to her statement to the police, the girl had told the men inside that she wanted to go to Noida and was told that the bus was headed in that direction. After boarding, she realised that there were no other passengers and attempted to get off but the conductor allegedly pulled her back inside. Police have said the alleged sexual assault took place as the bus moved towards Delhi. The girl was allegedly abandoned in Kashmere Gate and she approached the local police station. Police said considering the sensitive nature of the complaint, the victim’s medical examination was carried out and the case registered without jurisdictional delay.

Using CCTV footage, they traced the bus to a parking area in Timarpur and arrested the men — bus driver Kuldeep



(39) and conductor Sandeep (26), both hailing from Kanpur — within four hours. Police investigation traced the route of the bus through Greater Noida, Noida and Delhi and found that the vehicle was allegedly not stopped for a safety or compliance check during the journey. Investigators found that the bus had 11 pending traffic challans — seven of them issued in July — for offences relating to speed-limit devices and permit violations. Police also found that the two men had been hired without police verification. The bus’s CCTV camera was also found to be non-functional, while heavy curtains covered its windows. Investigators had further examined whether safety mechanisms such as GPS or vehicle-tracking systems and panic buttons were installed and functional at the time of the incident. Biological samples collected during the investigation were sent to the Forensic Science Laboratory for examination, and police had sought an expedited report as they prepared the case for trial.

‘Flat buyer faces FIR, industrialist pays Rs 6 crore for Rs 22,000 crore loan’: Bombay HC asks why



The HC judge also questioned if the law was equal for everyone, noting that while an FIR is registered against a flat purchaser who defaults on a home loan, when an industrialist takes a Rs 22,000-crore loan, only Rs 6 crore is required to be paid

GNS News Agency, Oct 2

The Bombay High Court, while pulling up a Senior Officer of the Customs department for giving a “no-objection” for the granting of anticipatory bail to an accused booked in a fraud amounting to Rs 34 crore, said that this was “not the way a public officer should function” and summoned him to appear before the court on Tuesday. The HC judge

also questioned if the law was equal for everyone, noting that while an FIR is registered against a flat purchaser who defaults on a home loan, when an industrialist takes a Rs 22,000-crore loan, only Rs 6 crore is required to be paid. A single-judge bench of Justice Madhav J Jamdar was hearing the anticipatory bail plea of an accused in connection with an alleged customs fraud involving Rs 34 crore. The judge then took exception to the affidavit filed by Abhishek Mehra, Senior Intelligence Officer, Special Intelligence and Investigation Branch (Import), Jawaharlal Nehru Custom House, Nhava Sheva in Raigad, which stated that the department had no objection to the grant of anticipatory bail.

“Who are you to decide who should be given anticipatory bail or not? You are a public officer. The modus operandi is, it is shown that the goods are imported from a country with which we are having a concession over customs duty to be paid, and in fact the goods are imported from Saudi Arabia by this method. It is not your own money. How could such a type of affidavit be filed?” Justice Jamdar orally questioned. “If a poor person commits a theft of Rs 500, he is immediately taken into custody, and such types of white-collar criminals are roaming. It is a very serious offence where 34 crores of public money is involved, and unfortunately, Abhishek Mallick, Senior Intelligence Officer, Special Intelligence and Investigation Branch (Import), filed an affidavit stating that the Respondent has no objection to the grant of anticipatory bail,” the judge noted and sought the withdrawal of the affidavit. “If a loan is taken by a flat purchaser and not paid, his flat is mortgaged, an FIR is lodged. If an industrialist takes Rs 22,000 crore, 6 crore is paid, and he is clear. So is the law not equal for everybody when public money is involved?” The judge questioned Customs and sought the officer’s presence before the court on Tuesday.

Punjab Police welcome FBI’s bounty on Goldy Brar, slam Canadian inaction



GNS News Agency, Oct 2

The Punjab Police Tuesday welcomed the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) announcement that fugitive gangster Satinderjit Singh alias Goldy Brar was added to the country’s list of the top ten wanted criminals, with a \$1 million reward for information leading to his capture. However, senior officers say Canadian authorities could have apprehended Brar earlier if they had taken Punjab Police warnings seriously. “We were very disappointed with the Canadian attitude from 2022 to 2024 when he was not nabbed despite Punjab Police providing Canadian authorities with his precise location. Despite an Interpol Red Corner Notice and his placement on Canada’s Be On Look Out (BOLO) list, no arrest was made. We also noted with concern that he was subsequently removed from the BOLO list without explanation,” said the officer. While Goldy Brar is learnt to have shifted base to the US from Canada, the Punjab Police maintain that he has been running his extortion racket from Canada in a seamless manner. In December 2022, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann announced at a press conference in Gujarat that US authorities had detained Brar in California, but this later proved untrue. According to a dossier prepared by the Punjab Police on criminals based in Canada, over the past several years, the transnational connections between the Punjabi

diaspora in Canada and India have been systematically exploited by organised criminal networks operating from Canada, which have progressively evolved from conventional criminal activity into hardcore gang operations and, in several cases, terror-linked activities. “Over recent years, Indian citizens have been subjected to coordinated and sustained extortion calls carried out by criminal networks operating from Canadian territory,” the dossier says.

It adds that victims are predominantly non-political individuals with no criminal or ideological affiliations, primarily small traders, shopkeepers, small businessmen, and entertainers. They are identified through financial profiling conducted by local criminal foot soldiers, enabling overseas-based operators to target them and apply coercion through threats to life, family members, and property. “Extortion demands typically involve large sums of money, conveyed through anonymous international calls, VoIP services, and encrypted digital platforms, with perpetrators operating remotely from Canada. The threats accompanying these demands include shootings at residences, grenade attacks on commercial establishments, targeted killings, and intimidation of family members. In multiple cases, when demands are not met, these threats have been carried out,” the dossier adds. Goldy Brar’s parents, Shamsher Singh, who is a former Punjab Police assistant sub-inspector, and Preetpal Kaur, were arrested on January 26 in Amritsar in a 2024 extortion case and later released on bail. The Muktsar police arrested the couple from a hotel in Amritsar. They reside in Adesh Nagar, Muktsar, though the family originally belongs to Faridkot. Police officials say Shamsher Singh had been compulsorily retired in 2021 after earlier allegations of helping his son. The district and sessions judge granted Preetpal Kaur bail in March this year on a Rs 60,000 bond. Her husband remained in custody at the time because he had not yet filed his application. The court granted Shamsher Singh regular bail in May this year. An audio clip purportedly from Goldy Brar surfaced after the arrests, threatening police authorities for arresting his parents.

As Mamata heads to Delhi for INDIA meet, Suvendu Adhikari’s ‘Dimagi Naxals’ jab

GNS News Agency, Oct 2

Mamata Banerjee Delhi visit, Mamata Banerjee INDIA bloc meeting, Suvendu Adhikari, Dimagi Naxals, INDIA bloc Delhi meeting, SIR electoral rolls, Gyanesh Kumar, Election Commission SIR, Mamata Banerjee news, Suvendu Adhikari attack, Opposition meeting Delhi, INDIA bloc SIR strategy, West Bengal politics, Indian express news Suvendu Adhikari also said he will ask the Delhi Police and central IB to keep a watch on Mamata Banerjee. West Bengal Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari Tuesday launched a sharp attack on former CM Mamata Banerjee over her visit to Delhi, accusing her of holding a “planning session with Dimagi Naxals” as Opposition leaders prepare to meet to discuss a joint strategy on electoral concerns and alleged irregularities.

Banerjee is scheduled to take part in the INDIA bloc meeting Wednesday in Delhi, where its leaders are expected to discuss and decide on a nationwide protest over allegations of electoral malpractice. “INDI alliance is finished. She is going there to hold a planning session with Dimagi Naxals. I will ask Delhi Police and central IB to keep a watch. One who gives azadi slogans, everyone knows what she can do. One has to see whether she holds meetings with anti-India forces. She is now the advisor for Dimagi Naxals,” Adhikari told reporters. Banerjee spoke to Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and CPIM general secretary MA Baby on joint steps against the Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar shortly after the Indian Express report on the divide within the Election Commission was



published. The September 23 report said Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi had, on at least 14 occasions over 10 months, formally raised objections to Special Intensive Revision (SIR)-related decisions taken without their knowledge, as well as to significant gaps in the process. Both CPIM and Mamata Banerjee have pushed for outreach and inclusion of youth-led Cockroach Janata Party and other non-aligned factions for a broader anti-BJP and anti-EC campaign. On Wednesday, INDIA bloc leaders will meet to coordinate a joint strategy against Kumar and address concerns regarding the SIR of electoral rolls and alleged voter deletions. The Opposition alliance aims to unify its stance on electoral and democratic concerns and map out a joint course of action. It is also learnt that the INDIA bloc is planning to launch a fresh push to move an impeachment motion against Kumar. It is drafting a notice to be submitted to both Houses of Parliament.

Major Vijay Singh Mankotia, who helped build Janata Dal in Himachal, dies



Prominent Himachal Pradesh politician and five-time MLA from Shahpur in Kangra district, Major Vijay Singh Mankotia, 88, died on Tuesday in Kangra following a brief illness. Mankotia, who remained active in Himachal politics for over four decades, was known for his outspoken and fearless style. He often raised his voice even against leaders of his own party and remained a prominent political figure in Kangra. He was rushed to Kangra City Hospital after his health deteriorated at his residence and died during treatment. His body was later taken to his native village Tiara, which falls under Kangra Assembly constituency. His last rites are expected to be performed after his son and daughter, who live abroad, arrive.

“Major Vijay Singh Mankotia had contributed immensely for the development of the state, particularly in Shahpur Assembly constituency of Kangra district. He said that his contributions made for the welfare of the society will be remembered by the people for a long time,” Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu said. Accused Virbhadra Singh of corruption Mankotia was first elected from Shahpur as an Independent in 1982 and subsequently won the seat in 1985, 1990, 1993 and 2003. He served as a minister twice in Congress governments, including the Virbhadra Singh regime, and also served as vice-chairman of the Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation. In 2022, Mankotia joined BJP. One of the most controversial chapters of Mankotia’s political career came in 2007 when he levelled allegations of corruption against then chief minister Virbhadra Singh. Mankotia released a purported audio CD

in support of his allegations, triggering a major political storm in Himachal Pradesh as well as at the national level. The recording was subsequently sent to the Central Forensic Science Laboratory in Chandigarh for forensic examination. Later, Virbhadra Singh was cleared of all allegations. Mankotia’s political relations with Virbhadra Singh remained strained for several years, with the two leaders frequently differing over political and other issues. Their equations, however, also witnessed periods of improvement. After winning Shahpur for the fifth time in 2003, Mankotia could not return to the Assembly. He lost the 2007 election, contested the 2012 polls on a Congress ticket and lost to BJP’s Sarveen Chaudhary. In 2017, he again contested Shahpur as an Independent but finished second behind Chaudhary. From Congress to Jan Morcha and back Known to have a cordial relationship with Sanjay Gandhi, who died in 1980, Mankotia joined the Congress in 1985. After the Rajiv Gandhi-led party lost power at the Centre, Mankotia crossed over to the Jan Morcha of V P Singh—the man behind Rajiv’s defeat with his Bofors scandal campaign. Mankotia helped establish some ground for V P Singh in Himachal. And in the Assembly elections of 1990, he won Shahpur on a ticket of the Janata Dal, which was formed by a merger of the many Janata Party factions, including V P Singh’s outfit. In 1993, by which time the Janata Dal had splintered into groups and lost power, Mankotia returned to the Congress. The same year, he won from Shahpur again. He became the state’s tourism and civil aviation minister, but was dropped in 1997. In 1998, Mankotia contested from Shahpur again, but lost. The Congress also lost power and the BJP formed the government under Prem Kumar Dhumaal. “Lost a great leader” His death triggered an outpouring of grief in Kangra, with political leaders describing him as an experienced and outspoken leader. “Major Vijay Singh Mankotia served my constituency five times. We have lost a great leader. Indeed, he had joined BJP in 2022 but his affection was never less towards anyone. I meet Mankotia around three months back at a public function in Kangra,” Congress MLA from Shahpur, Kewal Singh Pathania, said. Sanjeev Gandhi, a Congress spokesperson in Dharamshala, told The Indian Express, “Major Vijay Singh Mankotia was active in his daily life till the last days of his life. Last week, Mankotia had attended a dham (a traditional feast) at the house of a local leader in Dharamshala.” Ex-CM and Leader of the Opposition Jairam Thakur, senior BJP leader and Union minister J P Nadda, Himachal BJP president Dr Rajeev Bindal, Himachal Education Minister Rohit Thakur and many others expressed their condolences.

Red Bull ‘energy drink’ label row: Delhi High Court sets aside FSSAI order



GNS News Agency, Oct 2

Red Bull India has approached the Delhi High Court, claiming that the regulatory process was not followed before the use of the globally recognised descriptor was prohibited. (Photo: Wikimedia Commons) Red Bull India has approached the Delhi High Court, claiming that the regulatory process was not followed before the use of the globally recognised descriptor was prohibited. (Photo: Wikimedia Commons) The Delhi High Court Tuesday set aside a Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) order to Red Bull India Pvt Ltd, that had directed the company to discontinue using the “energy drink” description for its caffeinated products.

Justice Amit Mahajan, after hearing the plea on Monday and Tuesday, observed that FSSAI did not provide Red Bull the opportunity of a hearing. “It remains undisputed that the order dated June 30 directing (Red Bull) to not use the term ‘Energy Drink’ in its product was passed without af-

fording any opportunity to the petitioner to file any reply or give any explanation,” Justice Mahajan recorded in his order. Only requested label change: Food regulator On Tuesday, FSSAI’s counsel told the court that the June 30 order was a “show-cause, and not an order”, since it had “requested” for the change in the label. The counsel added, “We are only saying the word ‘energy drink’ is the problem, the product itself is not the problem.” FSSAI’s counsel further countered, “A meeting happened on July 24, where they participated and they agreed that they will make the relevant changes within 60 days.” But the court refused to accept this argument. Justice Mahajan orally inquired from the FSSAI’s counsel: “You don’t request anyone, you’re the government. Which notice asked them to explain? Did you issue any notice?” Senior advocate Sandeep Sethi, appearing for Red Bull, also pointed out that the FSSAI’s order came after the company had made its representation on July 24, agreeing to relevant changes. The court left it open for the FSSAI to take a fresh decision in the matter after following due process by issuing Red Bull a show-cause notice and granting the company the opportunity of a hearing. The court also recorded that it had not examined the merits of whether Red Bull’s products violate any provision of the FSSAI Act or the FSSAI’s powers to pass such orders. According to Red Bull, it has been using the “Energy Drink” descriptor for its beverage products in India since 2002. It said the FSSAI previously recognised the use for the relevant category of caffeinated beverages. Arguing that the regulatory body has departed from its earlier position, Red Bull referred to a March 2024 FSSAI advisory which permitted the expression “Energy Drink” for products falling under relevant food categories.

Man vanished after 1994 Delhi murder. His wedding in Bihar village gave police a clue



GNS News Agency, Oct 2

Last month, a team from the Delhi Police Crime Branch arrived in Janardanpur village in Bihar’s Samastipur district. They were looking for a man who had been on the run for three decades in a brutal double murder and dacoity case in East Delhi. But there was a problem, very few people knew him by the name in the police records: Lalit. Some knew him as ‘Chotu’, others as ‘Bhola’, nicknames that stayed with him since childhood, partly because he was barely five feet tall. Even Lalit’s family members who still lived in the village could tell investigators little about where he was. He rarely returned home, police said.

Officers kept asking around and found one detail mentioned frequently: Lalit’s wedding. In 2017, he married a woman with an intellectual disability. “In small villages, such news travels fast and remains a subject of conversation for years. People might not know where Lalit had gone, or what he had been doing for years, but they remembered the woman he had married,” officials privy to the investigation said. For the police team, this seemingly inconsequential piece of village gossip became the clue they needed. Investigators began tracing his wife, eventually finding her address and contact details. It led them back to Delhi; police discovered that Lalit was still in the city and had been working at different places. The trail finally ended at a factory in Mangolpuri Phase II. Lalit, now 48, was working there as a packaging labourer. Police discreetly verified his identity before arresting him last week. His Aadhaar card, they said, carried the name Lalit but he never told his employers his real name. Five men from Janardanpur The story began in 1994 with five men from Janardanpur who came to Delhi looking for work. According to investigators, one of the men, Sunil Kumar, had earlier worked as a helper and cleaner at the Nirmal Sadhana Ashram in Shakarpur. He returned to his village and suggested that his friends — Sushil, Dilip, Gangadhar and Lalit — come with him to the national capital. Since Sunil already knew people in the ashram, the five stayed there for two nights while they looked for jobs

and accommodation. The men then noticed something: devotees regularly made offerings, including cash, jewellery and other valuables, to the two sadhvis who headed the ashram. Investigators said the five men gradually began discussing the possibility of robbing the ashram. The women, they felt, were vulnerable targets: one was in her late 60s, the other in her early 40s. According to police, the men had believed this would be an easier and quicker way to make money than the menial work they had originally come to Delhi to find.

Police investigation showed that the five men allegedly attacked the two sadhvis and strangled them with an electrical wire. They then allegedly fled with cash, jewellery and other valuables from the ashram. A case was registered at Shakarpur police station under charges of punishment for murder, dacoity with murder, and common intention of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). “Lalit was one of the main accused... who participated in the strangulation of the two women. Investigators further said he received some cash and jewellery as his share of the alleged loot,” said Special CP (Crime) HGS Dhaliwal. The first arrests came about eight months later. Sushil, Sunil and Dilip were nabbed, according to police. The case went to trial and the court subsequently awarded them life imprisonment, investigators said. “Gangadhar and Lalit, however, remained on the run. Lalit was declared a proclaimed offender on October 26, 1995. Gangadhar was never arrested. Police later learnt that he died around three years ago,” Dhaliwal added. Police said Lalit remained in Bihar until around 2000 before moving back to Delhi. He lived a low-profile life, working as a packaging labourer at different manufacturing units to conceal his past. He married in May 2017 and had a five-year-old son, according to police. Earlier this year, Lalit popped up on the police radar when the Crime Branch’s Central Range began revisiting old cases and proclaimed offenders who had remained untraced for years.

The operation was carried out by the Central Range Crime Branch team, including Inspector Vinay Kumar, Sub-Inspectors Vikas Solanki, Ritesh Kumar and Jai Kumar, and Head Constables Gaurav and Bijendra Singh. The team worked under ACP Satender Mohan, ACP/CR, Crime Branch, and under the supervision of DCP Harsh Indora. For the investigators, the arrest was the culmination of a trail that had stretched across three decades from an ashram in Shakarpur to a village in Samastipur and finally back to an industrial neighbourhood in Northwest Delhi. An official privy to the investigation said, “The breakthrough had not come from a new witness to the 1994 killings, a document, or a sophisticated change of identity trail but it came from something far more ordinary — a village that remembered a wedding.”

of Kadipur police station. School employees had arrived and found the couple lying in pools of blood. The victims are Mukesh Singh, 48, headmaster of Composite School in Sultanpur, and his wife, Vineeta Singh, 45, who ran the private school.

Police said preliminary investigation suggested that the attackers first killed Vineeta and then turned on Mukesh when he allegedly tried to flee. Vineeta’s body was found about 100 metres from her husband’s body. Police said both victims appeared to have been attacked with considerable force. They had sustained deep wounds to their bodies and their throats appeared to have been slit. The exact nature of the injuries will be established after the postmortem, police said. An axe bearing blood stains was recovered from the crime scene, though police are yet to establish whether it was the murder weapon. Superintendent of Police Vineet Jaiswal said it was not immediately clear whether the killings took place on Monday night or Tuesday morning. Police are examining possible motives, including enmity, and gathering information from family members and people known to the couple. They are also examining CCTV footage from the area and evidence collected from the crime scene to establish the sequence of events and identify those responsible. Mukesh was actively involved in local teachers’ union politics and was contesting a teachers’ association election. Vineeta had previously contested a panchayat member election but lost. The couple had lived in the house for three decades. Mukesh was the youngest of three brothers. The couple is survived by a 20-year-old son, Abhyuday, who is studying at a university in Delhi.

Fire breaks out at Bank of India building in Pune; no injuries reported



GNS News Agency, Oct 2

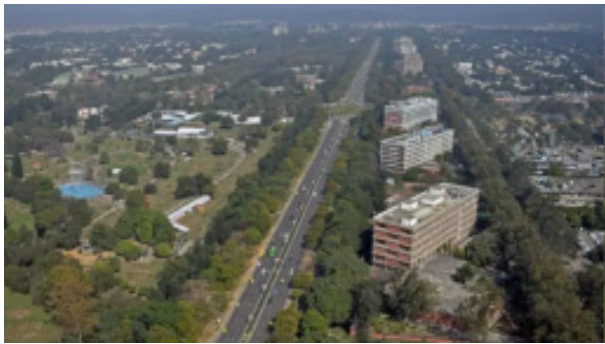
A major fire broke out on the sixth floor of the Bank of India building at Pune’s Shagun Chowk on Monday morning, damaging office equipment, electrical wiring and other material. No one was injured in the incident, fire brigade officials said. The Pune Fire Brigade control room received a call about the fire at around 10.11 am, following which seven fire tenders and three water tankers were rushed to the spot from the Central, Kasba, Erandwane, Naidu and Kondhwa fire stations. Fire brigade personnel found that the fire had broken out in an approximately 80-by-80-foot hall on the sixth floor of the RCC building located on the busy Laxmi Road. The building had been evacuated immediately

after the fire was detected.

The hall had been divided into four offices using plywood partitions. A battery backup room was also located in the premises. According to the Fire Brigade, computers, tables, chairs, air-conditioners, electrical wiring, batteries, printers, photocopying machines and other office material were extensively damaged in the fire.

Fire broke out in an air-conditioner The firefighters assessed the risk posed by the fire, particularly given the busy location and the presence of adjoining buildings. They used hose lines, breathing apparatus, ropes, and exhaust blowers to contain the fire and prevent it from spreading to other parts and floors of the building or neighbouring structures. It took the fire brigade nearly an hour to bring the fire under control. According to security personnel present at the building, the fire broke out in an air-conditioner in an office on the sixth floor. A security guard initially tried to extinguish the fire using a fire extinguisher. However, after realising that the fire could not be brought under control, the fire brigade was alerted. The fire brigade said there was no permanent fire-fighting installation at the premises. However, fire extinguishers, a fire alarm system and a detection system were found at the site. Personnel from the Pune Municipal Corporation’s disaster management and building departments, police and the Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Company Limited were also present at the site.

Once Chandigarh’s biggest slum colony, now set to be a city forest with elevated trails, bird-watching spaces



The forest land, which once was the ‘City Beautiful’ oldest and biggest slum colony, is undergoing transformation as a city forest, with elevated trails, water bodies, fire watchtowers, bird-watching platforms and spaces for environmental learning. A significant portion of the site was earlier known as Colony No. 4, where unauthorised temporary and permanent structures had come up. The Chandigarh Administration carried out an eviction drive in May 2022 and subsequently removed the structures.

The foundation stone of the city forest at the 35-acre stretch near Industrial Area Phase-I and the railway station will be laid in October, with the likely inauguration by June 2027, according to the UT Administration. The work has already been approved, and codal formalities are underway. According to the administration, the city forest will be designed to bring residents closer to nature without turning the restored forest into a conventional urban park.

Once the illegal structures were removed, the Forest Department was left with a severely disturbed landscape. Construction and demolition (C&D) waste remained scattered across the site, the soil had become compacted, natural drainage had been affected, and parts of the area faced waterlogging. Vegetation had also been lost during years of encroachment and construction activity. While the administration was looking at utilising the land, they were told that it was forest land and nothing much could be done. This is how the idea of a city forest was conceptualised. The department then undertook ecological restoration of the site, rather than merely clearing it for another development project. “The eviction, however, left behind a degraded landscape, with construction and demolition waste, compacted soil, disturbed drainage, loss of vegetation and waterlogging. The Forest Department subsequently undertook restoration work, including fencing, removal of C&D waste, restoration of the land profile, soil and moisture conservation and plantation,” a senior official said. The plantation was followed by regular maintenance and post-plantation care. According to the project document, the site has recorded an estimated 98 per cent survival rate of the plantation.

Two water bodies have also been created as part of the restoration effort. Besides serving as rainwater harvesting and moisture-retention structures, these are expected to add to the ecological diversity of the site and provide suitable habitat for birds and wildlife, according to the official. A forest, not a concrete park The next phase is aimed at allowing people to experience the restored landscape while

keeping construction and human intervention to a minimum. Instead of covering the site with conventional pathways and permanent structures, the plan seeks to work around the existing landscape, using environmentally compatible materials and facilities that have a limited footprint, the official added. One of the major attractions will be an elevated nature trail. The trail will allow visitors to move through the forest canopy and vegetation while reducing the need for extensive ground-level pathways and limiting disturbance to the habitat below.

The elevated trail is also expected to give visitors a different perspective of the forest — allowing them to experience the landscape without extensively altering it. For forest protection and surveillance, fire watchtowers have been proposed at the site. Besides their operational role in monitoring the forest, these structures are expected to become prominent features of the landscape. An observation deck is also planned, providing visitors with a vantage point from which they can look across the restored forest and its surrounding natural features. The UT official said that the project also seeks to turn the forest into an environmental learning space. A dedicated bird-watching platform is proposed for visitors interested in observing the area’s avifauna. With the restoration of vegetation and creation of water bodies, the site is expected to offer an environment conducive to bird activity. A nature maze is another proposed feature, intended to combine recreation with experiential learning, particularly for children and families. For those looking beyond recreation, the plan includes a Nature Interpretation Centre, where visitors can learn about the forest ecosystem, local biodiversity, restoration efforts and the importance of urban forests.

An open-air theatre is also proposed, potentially providing space for environmental awareness programmes, educational activities and cultural events in an outdoor setting. Bamboo structures and quieter corners The visitor facilities have also been planned to retain the natural character of the forest. A bamboo cafeteria, gazebos, meditation huts, rain shelters and bamboo canopies are proposed rather than large conventional buildings. The use of such structures is intended to provide basic visitor facilities while keeping the intervention compatible with the forest setting. The meditation huts and quieter spaces could offer visitors areas away from the more active portions of the site, while rain shelters and gazebos would provide places to rest during walks. A reception and ticketing facility, public amenities and toilets are also proposed to manage visitor entry and movement in an organised manner.

From an encroached patch to an urban nature hub The project effectively represents a shift in the identity of the site — from an encroached and degraded patch of forest land to a planned urban nature destination. Rather than treating the 35 acres simply as recreational land, the project envisages the restored forest as a demonstration of how degraded urban landscapes can be rehabilitated and subsequently opened to people without losing their ecological character. The proposed facilities — elevated trails, watchtowers, water bodies, bird-watching areas, interpretation centre and nature-learning spaces — are therefore planned around the forest rather than the other way around.

No party flags, only Tricolour – How Thackeray cousins plan march against EC, SIR

Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) chief Raj Thackeray and Shiv Sena (UBT) president Uddhav Thackeray on Tuesday announced a joint march in Mumbai on October 4 against the functioning of the Election Commission (ECI) and the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Maharashtra, days after an Express investigation revealed a rift within the poll body. The October 4 march will begin in Mumbai’s Byculla at 11:30 am and culminate at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT). Participants will only carry the Tricolour, Raj Thackeray said.

“The protest march will start from Byculla, and we will walk to BMC headquarters. The public rally will be held in front of BMC headquarters. There will be no political party flags in the rally. We are going to walk against the ECI and welcome the ruling parties to join us as well. There are multiple protests ongoing in the country and state. We all have a common aim,” Raj Thackeray said. Raj Thackeray said the protest is not planned to target any political party but is against the functioning of the Election Commission in recent years. He said all political parties are invited to participate, including those in the ruling alliance. Responding to questions about the BJP’s criticism of Opposition allegations against the Election Commission, Raj said, “Guilty conscience needs no accuser,” and asked why the BJP was troubled by the Opposition raising questions about the poll body. Raj Thackeray said he has been raising ques-



tions on the election process since 2017-18. The Thackerays’ announcement comes amid growing Opposition scrutiny of the SIR exercise in Maharashtra. Uddhav said his party supported other Opposition-led protests on the issue, including a Congress protest scheduled for October 2. He said political parties do not necessarily have to participate in every protest and can pursue their own programmes. Indicating the possibility of a joint Opposition protest against the Election Commission, he said, “If necessary, we will all hit together.” The joint appearance of Uddhav and Raj Thackeray to announce the protest march is the latest public show of cooperation between the Thackeray cousins, who have been coordinating on issues concerning the voter lists and the forthcoming civic elections. The two had earlier announced the October 4 march against the SIR.



Police said preliminary investigation suggested that the attackers first killed Vineeta and then turned on Mukesh when he allegedly tried to flee. Vineeta’s body was found about 100 metres from her husband’s body.

GNS News Agency, Oct 2

A government school headmaster and his wife were killed at their home, located on the premises of a private school, in Uttar Pradesh’s Sultanpur, police said. Police received information on Tuesday morning that the bodies had been found in Kumbhi Dariya village, under the jurisdiction

Human rights abuses in PoK, PoGB by Pakistani authorities raised at UNHRC



GNS News Agency, Oct 2

Geneva: The United Kashmir People's National Party (UKPNP) drew international attention to the deteriorating human rights situation in Pakistani-occupied Kashmir (PoK) and Pakistan-occupied Gilgit-Baltistan (PoGB) during the on-going 63rd Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) in Geneva. Addressing the UNHRC session on Monday, Sardar Shaukat Ali Kashmiri, Representative of the African Development Association (ADA) and Chairman of the UKPNP, expressed grave concern over reports of escalating repression by Pakistani authorities in PoK since 5 June 2026.

He cited deaths, injuries, arbitrary arrests, enforced disappearances, restrictions on peaceful assembly, communications blackouts and the increasing militarisation of civilian life in the occupied territory. He called for an immediate, independent and impartial investigation into reported violations and urged the international community to press Pakistan to ensure accountability and protection for civilians exercising their fundamental democratic rights. "Peaceful dissent is not terrorism, and demanding rights is not a crime,"

Shaukat Ali told the Council. He called on Pakistan to immediately end the use of force against peaceful demonstrators, release all individuals arbitrarily detained, establish the fate and whereabouts of missing persons, and restore unrestricted internet and mobile communications throughout PoK.

Speaking about PoGB, the UKPNP Chairman highlighted longstanding concerns regarding political representation, land ownership and the rights of local communities over natural resources. He also called on the Council to establish independent monitoring mechanisms to examine reported abuses, protect civic space and promote accountability in the occupied territories. Last week, human rights violations and socio-economic deprivation in the PoK were raised at the 63rd session of the UNHRC in Geneva. Activists called for an independent international probe into the crackdown on protesters in the region. In an oral statement, social activist Harleen Kour said that the people in PoK have been on the streets for months demanding food, electricity, employment, better infrastructure and political representation.

She said these peaceful protests have been met with excessive force, arbitrary detentions, communication blackouts and the use of anti-terror laws against peaceful groups. "This Council cannot remain silent while fundamental human rights are violently suppressed," she told the Council, alleging extrajudicial killings and mass detentions. She also said that resources extracted from the region benefit external interests while locals face acute inflation, unemployment and poor infrastructure. Kour urged the UNHRC to set up an independent fact-finding mission on civilian deaths, unlawful detentions and use of excessive force. She also called for an immediate end to security crackdowns, restoration of full communications and digital access, and protection for political activists and local leaders facing harassment.

INS Sahyadri, Kulish participate in 2nd ASEAN-India Maritime Exercise in Philippines

GNS News Agency, Oct 2

Manila: In a significant boost to maritime cooperation between India and ASEAN, Indian Naval Ships Sahyadri and Kulish, along with BRP Jose Rizal, BRP Tarlac and RSS Justice from ASEAN member states, are participating in the second ASEAN-India Maritime Exercise (AIME) in the Philippines on Tuesday. According to the Indian Embassy in the Philippines, the exercise is co-hosted by the Indian Navy and the Philippine Navy, bringing together navies of ASEAN Member States and India to strengthen mutual understanding, cooperation and interoperability at sea.

The exercise will feature subject matter expert exchanges on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR), maritime domain awareness, logistics, and women, peace and security. These will be followed by sea drills off the coast of Zambales province, including boarding operations, helicopter cross-deck landings and medical evacuation. The latest engagement builds on the inaugural ASEAN-India Maritime Exercise, held in Singapore in 2023.

Meanwhile, India Ambassador to the Philippines Harsh Kumar Jain attended the opening ceremony of the second AIME at Subic Bay as the Guest of Honour. "In his address, Ambassador Jain noted that the seas have long connected India and Southeast Asia. He underscored that maritime security and prosperity are a shared responsibility, in line with India's vision of MAHASAGAR, and reaffirmed India's steadfast support for ASEAN centrality and the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific," the Indian Embassy in the Philippines posted on X on Tuesday. Highlighting the exercise's theme, "Anchored in Trust, United at Sea," Jain observed that trust



forged through training together becomes a vital operational capability in times of crisis. He also congratulated all participants and thanked the Philippines for co-hosting the exercise as ASEAN Chair during the ASEAN-India Year of Maritime Cooperation 2026, the Indian mission said. Ambassador Jain also visited the Indian Navy's indigenous stealth frigate INS Sahyadri and missile corvette INS Kulish at Subic Bay. Both ships recently participated in the ADMM-Plus Maritime Security exercise at Subic Bay and are now taking part in AIME2026. Ambassador Jain interacted with the officers and sailors, appreciating their dedication and hard work while deployed far from home, and their important role in strengthening India's maritime partnerships with ASEAN. The Commanding Officers briefed him on the ships' capabilities, technological readiness, and crew welfare during long overseas deployments," the Indian embassy posted on X.

Singapore sentences Indian IT vendor for endangering State Courts' data



GNS News Agency, Oct 2

Singapore: An Indian national has been sentenced to 28 weeks in jail for compromising the safety of more than 18,000 files belonging to Singapore's State Courts while working as an IT vendor, officials said. Janarthanan Tamil Kovan, 42, pleaded guilty on Monday to endangering the safety of documents belonging to the State Courts and the Government of Singapore under the Official Secrets Act and making an unlawful modification to a government-managed laptop issued to him, local media reported. A third charge was taken into consideration. Although he had granted an acquaintance remote access to the laptop, no files were transferred during the session.

In June 2024, Janarthanan, a service delivery manager with Lenovo PCCW Solutions, was attached to the State Courts as an external IT vendor. He was a team leader of the State Courts' cloud system team, which manages various systems and applications of the courts. Janarthanan was issued with a Lenovo ThinkPad laptop, a government-managed device governed by GovTech's acceptable use policy and Lenovo's own policy. Both policies prohibit unauthorised access and modifications to the laptop. On August 4, 2025, Janarthanan decided to use the laptop to take an examination for an international professional association focused on information technology governance, to be certified as a certified information security manager. His own laptop was faulty.

When he could not operate the security-protected laptop, Janarthanan reached out to a person he knew as Hari Balan, whom he had communicated with previously on WhatsApp about IT-related courses. Balan had an IP address in India, Channel News Asia reported, citing court documents. At the time of the connection, 18,016 files belonging to the State Courts were stored on Janarthanan's laptop. All but one of the files were classified as restricted and non-sensitive. The remaining file was classified as restricted and sensitive (high). The files contained login cre-

dentials, secret keys and network architecture details of the State Courts' network. On August 14, 2025, a representative from the Corporate Services Division of the Singapore judiciary lodged a police report about the unauthorised installation of the remote desktop application. Janarthanan was investigated by the Technology Crime Investigation Branch of the Criminal Investigation Department.

While the files themselves did not contain any sensitive case-specific information, the files contained information that could potentially be used to gain unauthorised access to systems that had sensitive and confidential information, such as case information and judges' notes. Janarthanan, in September 2025, admitted that his actions endangered the safety of the files, which could have been transferred or stolen when the remote connection was established. Deputy Public Prosecutor Matthew Choo sought seven to nine months' jail, saying Janarthanan had been entrusted with a laptop containing sensitive information. "He ought to have known better, as a team leader of the State Courts' cloud system team, to not allow unauthorised accesses to and make unauthorised modifications to the laptop," the Channel quoted Choo as saying. "Ironically, he did so to take an examination for information security," Defence lawyers S Balamurugan and A Ravidass sought three to four months' jail instead. Balamurugan said his client has two children back in India with his wife and his family is facing financial difficulties. District Judge Lorraine Ho noted, however, that the risk of harm was great as there could be a systemic attack causing possible public alarm and fear. He also noted the offender had allowed an unknown foreign entity to have unauthorised access to data on his laptop.

Gunners Soldierathon Hyderabad draws 6,610 runners

Hyderabad: The second edition of the Federal Bank Gunners Soldierathon Hyderabad, organised by Fitistan – Ek Fit Bharat, witnessed an overwhelming participation of 6,610 runners at the Artillery Centre, Golconda. The event brought together Armed Forces personnel, veterans, families, fitness enthusiasts and citizens to celebrate fitness while honouring the courage, commitment and sacrifice of India's Gunners.

The event marked the 200-year legacy of the Regiment of Artillery, bringing its rich history and traditions closer to the public through the spirit of sport, endurance and community participation.

FBI adds Goldy Brar to Ten Most Wanted List, announces \$1 million reward

GNS News Agency, Oct 2

Washington: The FBI has placed Satinderjeet Singh, also known as Goldy Brar, on its Ten Most Wanted Fugitives list and offered a reward of up to \$1 million for information leading to his arrest. The FBI said Singh is wanted over his alleged role in the Lawrence Bishnoi organised crime group, which it linked to killings, extortion and drug trafficking across the United States and Canada. He is based in the US and is alleged to lead the group's operations in North America.

Singh has been charged in federal court in Los Angeles with racketeering conspiracy, conspiracy involving extortion and conspiracy to distribute controlled substances. The charges are allegations. He has not been convicted in this case. The FBI described Singh as armed, extremely violent and dangerous. It said he is known to reside in California and parts of Canada, and warned the public against approaching him. His addition to the list puts a prominent fugitive in an investigation into crimes that US authorities say have had a particular impact on the Indian diaspora. The FBI said the group used shootings, kidnappings, assaults and threats to spread fear, while also trafficking drugs and weapons. The Canadian government designated the Bishnoi group a terrorist entity in September 2025, according to the FBI. In one of three indictments unsealed earlier this year, prosecutors alleged that Singh helped direct the Bishnoi group's activities worldwide. According to the FBI's account of the indictment, Singh spoke for Lawrence Bishnoi, who is imprisoned in India, and helped direct other members and associates.

Investigators alleged that Bishnoi and Singh ordered the June 18, 2023, assassination of an Indian political and

religious figure living in Canada. The victim identified in court documents as "H.S.N.", was shot as he left a Sikh temple in Surrey, British Columbia. Investigators also allege that members of the group stole about 520 kilograms of cocaine from rival drug trafficking gangs in the greater Los Angeles area between March 2024 and July 2025. The latest announcement follows Operation Hardball, a federal investigation whose results were announced on July 7. Three indictments charged 37 defendants connected to three India-based transnational organised crime groups. Twenty-four defendants had been arrested or were already in custody at the time. The FBI said four more fugitives have since been captured and one has been found dead. Singh is among five defendants still being sought in that operation. "His addition to the FBI Ten Most Wanted Fugitives list speaks to the collective resolve to capture him," said Lisa Moreland, deputy commissioner of federal policing for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. "The RCMP is committed to continue working with partners in the FBI to bring Goldy Brar to justice." Singh is the 543rd person added to the FBI's Ten Most Wanted Fugitives list. Anyone with information can contact the FBI at 1-800-CALL-FBI, submit a tip at tips.fbi.gov or approach a local FBI office or the nearest US embassy or consulate. The agency said information can be provided anonymously. The FBI established its Ten Most Wanted Fugitives list in 1950. According to the agency, 28 people who committed or were alleged to have committed crimes in the Los Angeles area have been placed on the list. The case is being investigated by the FBI's Los Angeles field office, the Los Angeles Police Department and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, with other domestic and international partners. Prosecutors from the US attorney's office for the Central District of California are handling the case.

Indians faced average 346-day wait for US visitor visa interview: Audit

GNS News Agency, Oct 2 Washington: Applicants in India waited an average of 346 days for a US visitor visa interview in fiscal 2025, more than eight times the 42-day average before the pandemic, according to a federal audit released on Monday (US local time). The Government Accountability Office found that demand had outpaced consular staffing in India. The 346-day figure is a historical average for obtaining an interview. It does not describe the time taken to decide an application after an interview or the wait facing someone who applies today.

According to the federal audit, India received an estimated 1,455,255 applications for nonimmigrant visas in 2025. The State Department had 68 consular officers working on such visas in the country, which makes it about 21,401 applications per officer. Those figures cover several temporary visa categories, while the 346-day wait refers specifically to visitor visa interviews, it said. The comparison with other large visa markets was stark. The average visitor visa interview wait was 34 days in China and 32 days in Brazil. Mexico, which had a similar number of applications per officer to India, recorded a 283-day wait. India was seventh among the 10 countries with the longest average waits.

The auditors visited New Delhi, along with Mexico City, Beijing and Sao Paulo. State Department staff in India and Mexico said high demand and too few officers after the pandemic had hampered their ability to clear backlogs. Across the four countries, officials identified staffing relative to demand as a principal factor behind interview delays. Space was another constraint. The audit said there were too few



interview windows in New Delhi for the number of officers needed to handle demand. Auditors also saw hundreds of applicants waiting outside the US embassy and in secondary waiting areas. A planned move to a new building on the embassy compound would leave the number of windows unchanged, the report said. Officials also cited the work involved in assessing some applications and the role of paid visa agents. Some agents reserve appointment slots as they become available and sell them to clients, according to State Department officials interviewed by the auditors. The department has changed its scheduling system to counter that practice. The State Department has tried other ways to ease the pressure. In fiscal 2024, a Washington-based unit remotely handled 80.6 per cent of New Delhi's visitor visa cases eligible for an interview waiver. Staff in New Delhi also worked extra Saturdays to process applications.

Anthropic's IPO prospectus shows sweeping AI vision, surging costs



GNS News Agency, Oct 2

Sept 28 (Reuters) - Anthropic is making a massive bet that AI will transform the global economy more profoundly than ?industrialization, electricity and the internet, according to its IPO prospectus seen by Reuters. But the cost to get there will be staggering. Anthropic reported a net loss of \$42 billion ?in 2025, and plans to spend \$518 billion on cloud, computing and infrastructure obligations in coming years, according to the prospectus. Get a look at the day ahead in U.S. and global markets with the Morning Bid U.S. newsletter. Sign up here. The prospectus details how the company has grown sharply in the last year — while also posting wider losses. Revenue grew 12-fold in 2025 to nearly \$4.6 billion, even as the company lost more than \$8 billion on an operating basis, excluding writedowns of various liabilities mostly tied to previous fundraising, according to the documents, reported here for the first time. The public sale, ?which could value it at more than \$2 trillion, would capitalize on the rapid rise of the AI startup lab that only came into existence five years ago, and establish it ?as a benchmark for how Wall Street values AI's leading companies, including rival OpenAI. The plans come as Anthropic confronts evidence from its own research that increasingly ?autonomous AI models can behave in unexpected and potentially harmful ways, including sabotaging code, assisting fraud and manipulating information in controlled tests. These reports have broken into the wider public sphere, igniting fears over ?how companies can keep the increasingly powerful systems under control as they race to deploy them commercially. Anthropic CEO Dario Amodei has called for the global AI community to slow the pace of releasing new ?capabilities to address those concerns. Still, Anthropic rolled out its new Opus 5.5 model last week to counter OpenAI's momentum since its launch of GPT-6 Astra, ahead of its own expected IPO. The AI lab spent \$7.33 billion on compute and infrastructure last year, a threefold surge from 2024, accounting for more than half of its \$12.65 billion in total operating expenses. Anthropic's public market debut is likely to be pushed to after the November US midterm elections, Reuters previously reported, citing ?sources. The sale would bring public investors into an AI race that has been until now

underwritten by venture capital firms, sovereign wealth funds and Big Tech companies. Anthropic's ?expected valuation target is more than double its own estimated valuation of \$965 billion in May. The near-\$42 billion net loss included a roughly \$34 billion accounting charge that reflected an increase in the estimated value of financing that could eventually ?turn into Anthropic ?shares, rather than money the company spent running its business. People visit an Anthropic booth at Moscone Center during the Dreamforce 2026 technology summit in San Francisco, California, US, September 17, 2026. REUTERS/Carlos Barria Purchase Licensing Rights, opens new tab Anthropic said nearly a quarter of its revenue came from two customers last year, and as part of its risk factors, warned that many of its largest clients were not locked into long-term contracts and could cut or stop spending. Anthropic had cash, cash equivalents and short-term investments totaling \$20.28 billion as of December 31, the prospectus shows. That company's shares surged 19% in their June 12 debut to \$160, but currently trade at around \$147 -- above where the IPO sold at \$135 apiece. That performance could give ?investors pause as they assess the still-lofty valuations for ?high-growth companies. AI and chip stocks have ?sold off recently, and Anthropic's sale will further test whether enthusiasm for the AI trade can withstand greater scrutiny, given its ambitious growth projections. Still, the listing stands to cap one of the strongest years for US IPOs since 2021, despite elevated interest rates, economic uncertainty and valuation concerns. THE TRILLION-DOLLAR AI RACE Anthropic's ?biggest challenger remains OpenAI, as the two firms fiercely compete for business customers, talent and influence in Washington. OpenAI confidentially filed for an IPO in ?June. The ChatGPT maker is ?expected to list by early 2027, according to media reports. Anthropic was founded by researchers who left its rival after disagreements over governance and AI safety. It released its first large language model in March 2023, competing directly with OpenAI. Analysts expect the first company to go public to establish valuation benchmarks for the AI industry and attract investors who have waited ?years for ?a pure-play way to bet on the technology. and Google were two of Anthropic's early key strategic partners. Both companies ?have invested billions of dollars into the startup while simultaneously supplying cloud infrastructure needed to train and deploy Claude models. Anthropic and CEO Amodei have clashed with the White House over the use of its tools, which led to the Pentagon temporarily blacklisting Anthropic, ?a move blocked by a US judge in August. Reporting by Echo Wang in New York and Manya Saini in Bengaluru; Writing by Sayantani Ghosh; Editing by Sriraj Kalluvila, Colin Barr, Kenneth Li and David Gaffen. Echo Wang is a correspondent at Reuters covering U.S. equity capital markets, and the intersection of Chinese business in the U.S., breaking news from U.S. crackdown on TikTok and Grindr.

Anomaly found in the Pacific Ocean could be global ‘time marker’



The earth must have experienced something exceptional 10 million years ago. Our study of rock samples from the floor of the Pacific Ocean has found a strange increase in the radioactive isotope beryllium-10 during that time. This finding, now published in Nature Communications, opens new pathways for geologists to date past events gleaned from deep within the oceans. But the cause of the beryllium-10 anomaly remains unknown. Could it have been major shifts in global ocean currents, a dying star, or an interstellar collision? Slow rocks in the deep

I am on a hunt for stardust on the earth. Previously, I've sifted through snow in Antarctica. This time, it was the depths of the ocean. At a depth of about 5,000 metres, the abyssal zone of the Pacific Ocean has never seen light, yet something does still grow there. Ferromanganese crusts — metallic underwater rocks — grow from minerals dissolved in the water slowly coming together and solidifying over extremely long time scales, as little as a few millimetres in a million years. (Stalactites and stalagmites in caves grow in a similar way, but thousands of times faster.) This makes ferromanganese crusts ideal archives for capturing stardust over millions of years.

The age of these crusts can be determined by radiometric dating using the radioactive isotope beryllium-10. This isotope is continuously produced in the upper atmosphere when highly energetic cosmic rays strike air molecules. The strikes break apart the main components of our air — nitrogen and oxygen — into smaller fragments. Both stardust and beryllium-10 eventually find their way into the earth's oceans where they become incorporated into the growing ferromanganese crust. One of the largest ferromanganese crusts was recovered in 1976 from the Central Pacific. Stored for decades at the Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources in Hanover, Germany, a 3.7kg section of it became the subject of my analysis. Much like tree rings reveal a tree's age, ferromanganese crusts record their growth in layers over millions of years. Beryllium-10 undergoes radioactive decay really slowly, meaning it gradually breaks down over millions of years as it sits in the rocks.

As beryllium-10 decays over time, its concentration decreases in deeper, older sediment layers. Because the rate of decay is steady, we can use radioactive isotopes as natural stopwatches to discern the age and history of rocks — this is called radioactive dating. A puzzling anomaly after extensive chemical processing, my colleagues and I used accelerator mass spectrometry — an ultra-sensitive ana-

lytical technique for longer-lived radioactive isotopes — to measure beryllium-10 concentrations in the crust. This time, my research took me from Canberra, Australia to Dresden, Germany, where the setup at the Helmholtz-Zentrum Dresden-Rossendorf was optimised for beryllium-10 measurements. The results showed that the crust had grown only 3.5 centimetres over the past 10 million years and was more than 20 million years old. However, before I could return to my search for stardust, I encountered an anomaly. Initially, as I searched back in time, the beryllium-10 concentration declined as expected, following its natural decay pattern — until about 10 million years ago. At that point, the expected decrease halted before resuming its normal pattern around 12 million years ago. This was puzzling: radioactive decay follows strict laws, meaning something must have introduced extra beryllium-10 into the crust at that time. Scepticism is crucial in science. To rule out errors, I repeated the chemical preparation and measurements multiple times — yet the anomaly persisted. The analysis of different crusts from locations nearly 3,000km away gave the same result, a beryllium-10 anomaly around 10 million years ago. This confirmed that the anomaly was a real event rather than a local irregularity.

Ocean currents or exploding stars?

What could have happened on the earth to cause this anomaly 10 million years ago? We're not sure, but there are a few options. Last year, an international study revealed that the Antarctic Circumpolar Current — the main driver of global ocean circulation — intensified around 12 million years ago, influencing Antarctic ocean current patterns. Could this beryllium-10 anomaly in the Pacific mark the beginning of the modern global ocean circulation? If ocean currents were responsible, beryllium-10 would be distributed unevenly on the earth with some samples even showing a lack of beryllium-10. New samples from all major oceans and both hemispheres would allow us to answer this question. Another possibility emerged early last year. Astrophysicists demonstrated that a collision with a dense interstellar cloud could compress the heliosphere — the sun's protective shield against cosmic radiation — back to the orbit of Mercury. Without this barrier, the earth would be exposed to an increased cosmic ray flux, leading to an elevated global beryllium-10 production rate. A near-earth supernova explosion could also cause an increased cosmic ray flux leading to a beryllium-10 anomaly. Future research will explore these possibilities. The discovery of such an anomaly is a windfall for geological dating. Various archives are used to investigate the earth's climate, habitability and environmental conditions over different timescales. To compare ice cores with sediments, ferromanganese crusts, speleothems (stalagmites and stalactites) and others, their timescales need to be synchronous. Independent time markers, such as Miyake events or the Laschamp excursion, are invaluable for aligning records thousands of years old. Now, we may have a corresponding time marker for millions of years. Meanwhile, my search for stardust continues, but now keeping an eye out for new 10-million-year-old samples to further pin down the beryllium-10 anomaly. Stay tuned. Dominik Koll is honorary lecturer, Australian National University.

Why are marriages in China on the decline? | Explained



The story so far: There has been a major decline in the number of couples who are registering to marry in China. As per the Chinese Ministry of Civil Affairs, in 2026, across China, only 6.1 million couples registered, a drop of 20.3% compared to 2023 figures

The story so far: There has been a major decline in the number of couples who are registering to marry in China. As per the Chinese Ministry of Civil Affairs, in 2024, across China, only 6.1 million couples registered, a drop of 20.3% compared to 2023 figures. This is the lowest number of registrations since 1986. As the general cost of living and urban unemployment has risen, with almost 44% of urban women not wanting to marry, marriages in China are declining.

What is the problem?

While stand-alone this may not appear as a very pertinent challenge, coupled with the consistent decline in population, it gets compounded. China's population has been declining consistently for the last three years and in 2022 the number of deaths exceeded birthrates. The primary reason for this is the one-child policy, introduced in the 1980s and implemented with great zeal. Chinese President Xi Jinping has tried to reverse the trend by introducing the two-child policy in 2016, which was later modified to a three-child policy in 2021. However, the policy shift has failed to have any major impact. Furthermore, the desire for a male child has led to an unbalanced sex-ratio as well.

Does China have an ageing people?

The declining population has now become a demographic challenge for Mr. Xi. As a result of these policies, China has witnessed a steady decline in the number of working age people (19-59 years). People above 60 years make up 22% of the Chinese population today and maybe 50% by 2050. This has also intensified the pension pressure, as the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) predicts that the pension fund may run out by 2035. In order to postpone such reality, the government has increased the retirement age from 60 to 63 for men and to 55 for

women. This would be a temporary solution because if the gap continues to rise, it will provide only a limited respite. The falling birthrates have also increased the demand for care giving and healthcare, while a lot of kindergartens have been shutting down. The reducing population and the challenges which this leads to directly impacts the economic future and stability of the Chinese government. Even though the government has been attempting to lure people with financial support, the cost of raising a child is proving an insurmountable deterrent to the people. What is Chinese government doing?

Rather than accepting the reality of the situation and its far-reaching impact, the Xi government is still attempting to resolve this with policies and diktats. Such an approach showcases that the government is still looking for ways to change ground realities with the help of top-down processes without acknowledging that these issues need to be accepted as social reality, and thus need people-centric solutions which echo with Chinese society today. For example, while delivering a speech at the Women's Federation of China, Mr. Xi called on the women to, "actively cultivate a new culture of marriage and childbearing and strengthen guidance on young people's view on marriage, childbirth and family". This statement underscores the gap between the Communist Party of China (CPC) and society in China today. The CPC has a long history of interfering in the lives of Chinese women, with the most prominent example being the one-child policy. The CPC under Mr. Xi is still looking at ways to control and command society. It strongly believes that the people should undertake tasks which are commanded by the party with the premise that it knows what is best for the nation. These policies seem to be directed towards safeguarding the power of the party, and not to the needs of the larger society.

What is the ‘rarest of rare’ doctrine? | Explained



The story so far: On January 22, two separate murder convictions resulted in sharply contrasting verdicts, highlighting how the Indian courts apply the death penalty. While one case led to capital punishment, the other saw the accused sentenced to life imprisonment, reigniting questions about the judiciary's approach to the 'rarest of rare' doctrine, which till now does not have a statutory definition.

What were the cases?

On August 9, 2024, a second-year female postgraduate trainee doctor, who was on duty, was raped and murdered inside a seminar room at Kolkata's R.G. Kar Medical College and Hospital. Sanjay Roy, a civic volunteer, was arrested and convicted on January 20, based on forensic evidence linking him to the crime. During sentencing, the Additional district and sessions judge said, "this doesn't fall into the category of rarest of rare" crimes, and Roy was sentenced to life imprisonment with a fine. In contrast, the Sharon murder case, did invite the death penalty, the courts decided. Sharon Raj, a 23-year-old student from Kerala, was poisoned on October 14, 2022 by his partner, Greeshma, who mixed poison in an Ayurvedic concoction that she offered him to drink. Eleven days later, Sharon succumbed to multiple organ failures. The Neyyattinkara Additional Sessions Court, imposed the death penalty, and classified it as one of the "rarest of rare" cases.

What are the origins of the doctrine?

The debate on the discretion given to judges to award the death sentence dates back to 1972, when the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the death penalty in Jagmohan Singh versus State of U.P. The petitioner argued that the death sentence puts an end to all fundamental rights guaranteed under Article 19 and, therefore, the law with regard to the capital sentence is unreasonable and not in the interest of the general public. He also pointed out that judges have no clear guidelines for deciding between the death penalty and life imprisonment, which he believes is an unfair delegation of power. Lastly, he argued that the lack of clear rules for judges violates Article 14 of the Con-

Cracking the patriarchal prism

Recently, I was reading a judgment authored by Hon'ble Justice Manjula of the Madras High Court in Dr. Supraja vs State pertaining to sexual harassment of women at the workplace and how far the existing law is effective in handling this serious issue. The judge has raised a very interesting and important perspective and that is to look at the problem from a woman's perspective or apply the standard of a reasonable woman. I also read the observations made by Hon'ble Justice B.V. Nagarathna of the Supreme Court in a case relating to dismissal of a woman judge whose case disposal came down since she was suffering from the effects of a miscarriage. "I wish men had menstruation, then only they would understand," Justice Nagarathna had observed.

I happened to read an article by Elizabeth Seshadri, an advocate practising in the Madras High Court, on what society must undertake to break the cycle of sexual abuse. The author advocates for accelerated action by teaching boys empathy, respect, and understanding from childhood in a formalised curriculum. In the intricate amalgams of gender dynamics, the clarion call for understanding women's perspectives emerges as a profound necessity. The journey towards gender equality must transcend mere legal frameworks and requires a reimagining of societal consciousness.

Indian epics such as the Ramayana and Mahabharata serve as powerful historical markers revealing how deeply patriarchal perspectives have marginalised women's experiences. These narratives, in my opinion, have fundamentally reduced women to objects of male narrative rather than autonomous individuals. In the Ramayana, Sita's journey — her forced exile and humiliating agnipariksha (trial by fire) symbolising the profound lack of agency women experienced — powerfully demonstrates women's systemic struggles. The Mahabharata presents even more stark examples of women's objectification. Draupadi, treated as a "communal drinking cup" and property to be wagered, represents the brutal commodification of women. She was publicly disrobed in the royal assembly, starkly illustrating how women were perceived as tools for male revenge and humiliation. Sexual harassment and gender-based violence are not isolated incidents but systemic manifestations of deeply entrenched patriarchal mindsets. The perspectives shared by Justice Manjula, Justice Nagarathna, and Ms. Seshadri illuminate the critical need for a paradigm shift — from viewing women's experiences through a male lens to genuinely comprehending their lived realities.

Women's viewpoint Justice Manjula's landmark observation in Dr. Supraja vs State specifically emphasises applying the "standard of a reasonable woman" when examining workplace sexual harassment — a revolutionary perspective that demands understanding experiences from women's viewpoints rather than male-centric interpretations. Justice Nagarathna's strong observation powerfully challenges men to step outside their privileged perspectives and genuinely empathise with women's experiences. This statement cuts through superficial understanding and demands experiential empathy.

The shocking revelations in cases such as the Gisela Pelicot incident underscore the disturbing reality that perpetrators of sexual violence are not monstrous strangers but often respected members of society — fathers, husbands, professionals who occupy positions of trust. This challenges the simplistic narrative of the "sexual predator" and demands a more nuanced understanding of systemic gender violence. Ms. Seshadri's analysis of the Pelicot case reveals that the perpetrators ranged from 27 to 74 in age, and they included fathers, husbands, prison guards, and IT professionals, demonstrating that sexual violence transcends stereotypical boundaries of criminality. Education emerges as the most potent weapon in dismantling patriarchal constructs. Consent, emotional intelligence, and gender sensitivity should be core components of educational curricula, not peripheral discussions. The goal is not to elevate women to pedestals of worship but to recognise their fundamental human dignity. Women are not goddesses to

be worshipped or objects to be controlled, but equal human beings deserving respect, autonomy, and opportunities. Philosophers such as Simone de Beauvoir argued that "One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman", highlighting how societal constructs shape gender experiences. Feminist thinkers have consistently emphasised that true liberation requires dismantling systemic oppression. The path forward demands collective responsibility. Men must become active allies, not passive observers. They must challenge toxic masculinity, call out discriminatory behaviours, and create spaces where women can thrive without fear or compromise. The emerging field of neuroplasticity offers a groundbreaking pathway to genuine gender understanding. Neuroscience reveals that male cognitive frameworks are not immutably fixed but remarkably adaptable, presenting a revolutionary approach to comprehending women's experiences. Neuroplasticity research demonstrates that male brains can be intentionally reshaped through targeted interventions. The brain's remarkable capacity for neural reconfiguration means that patriarchal perspectives are not destiny, but malleable constructs that can be systematically dismantled and reconstructed. In the words of Maya Angelou, "Each time a woman stands up for herself, without knowing it possibly, she stands up for all women." This collective uprising requires men to retire outdated perspectives, embrace empathy, and commit to genuine transformation. The revolution begins with understanding — not from a position of superiority but from a place of humble, genuine listening. It demands a complete recalibration of societal perspectives, challenging centuries of male-dominated narratives and creating space for authentic, unfiltered women's experiences. The time has come to retire the male gaze, to listen, to understand, and to transform.

Were there any revisions?

Despite the framework set in Machhi Singh versus State of Punjab, the Supreme Court in 1983, in Mithu versus State of Punjab, struck down Section 303 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), which prescribed mandatory death penalty for anyone who commits murder while serving a life sentence. The court ruled that it was against Articles 14 and 21 of the Constitution. Hence, all the cases regarding murder shall be dealt with as per Section 302 of the IPC which says whoever commits murder shall be punished with death, or imprisonment for life, and shall also be liable to a fine. In September 2022, the Supreme Court, referred to a Constitution Bench on the question of how to provide a "meaningful, real and effective" hearing on mitigating circumstances in cases that attract the death penalty. When this is suo motu taken up, the court may set out a uniform approach to giving an opportunity to the accused to present mitigating circumstances in the trial stage itself before their crime is deemed one which is "rarest of rare". The application of the death penalty in India remains complex and controversial. While the Supreme Court has given a certain framework, the unclear, universally agreed-upon definition for what qualifies as "rarest of rare" continues to leave room for judicial discretion.



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Sanitary workers protest at Telangana Secretariat over pending salaries

Hyderabad: After retired employees and contractors, sanitary workers and scavengers working at different police stations staged a protest at the Secretariat on Tuesday, demanding payment of their pending salaries. The sanitary workers sweep and maintain sanitation at different police stations across the State. They are enrolled as part-time workers and are paid a minimum salary of Rs 5,200 a month. However, the workers alleged that they had not been paid their salaries for the past 20 months. "For the last 20 months, our salaries have not been paid. Every time we raise the issue, senior officers assure us that the salary would definitely be credited the next month. But it has not been paid so far," a sanitary worker said at the Secretariat. About 4,500 such workers are employed across the State. The workers said they had met Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka and Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy and appealed to them to clear their pending salaries.

India's luxury boom: via retail playgrounds and WhatsApp chats



In March, Asian Paints had a swish opening for Nilaya Anthology, its gallery-style decor store in the heart of space-starved Mumbai. Hailed as the most ambitious interior design showroom in the country, and spread across 100,000 sq.ft., it is the size of almost two football fields. At the launch, guests sipped Veuve Clicquot Champagne while admiring wares from Milan's haute design gallery Nilufer, Vikram Goyal's museum-worthy brass creations, and whole rooms devoted to bespoke Italian-designed kitchens, bathrooms, home spas and furniture from Europe and the Far East. In a city where fancy store openings happen on an almost weekly basis, it was, by far, the grandest, buzziest opening party. "This is easily India's most luxury-focused retail concept," says Greg Foster, artistic director at Jaipur Rugs and former editor of Architectural Digest India. "To have designs from Nilufar, one of the world's most important galleries, alongside fabrics from some of the most prestigious European textile houses, fabulous carpets from Jaipur Rugs, certified Indian antiquities from Natesan's [and more], all under one roof, would be a fabulous concept anywhere in the world, let alone in Worli."

Foster recalls how the debut collection of art works shown by Sabyasachi's Art Foundation — a series of female forms by artist Atish Mukherjee, in a contemporary take on the Bengal School of Art — were sold out on opening day. The prices ranged from ₹13.5 lakh to ₹52 lakh, and "people were fighting to buy them," he shares. India is experiencing a retail boom, and luxury consumers are increasingly spoilt for choice as a proliferation of high-end, museum-esque stores are opening across the country. Western high-end brands too are launching targeted collections for the Indian customer. Four years ago, Bulgari, the Italian luxury fashion house that retails, among other things, classic jewellery with price tags that can easily go over ₹1 crore, debuted its version of the mangalsutra. The brand, which priced the piece at a fraction of their in-house designs, at around ₹13 lakh, hired actor Priyanka Chopra Jonas as its brand ambassador. In 2022, Louis Vuitton, the French luxury fashion house, which generated ₹20 billion in revenue globally, produced a capsule Rani Pink collection of shoes just for India for the festive season. And last year, long-time Indophile and fancy shoe designer Christian Louboutin, whose designs walk down red carpets at Cannes and the MET Gala, showcased a Diwali edit with velvet and brocade sandals and stilettos embroidered with zari.

Many buyers who once limited their purchases to when they travelled abroad are no longer waiting to do so, instead preferring to shop in India. A day before luxury content creator Pooja Advani was leaving for her summer holidays to the U.S., she got a WhatsApp alert from a salesperson at Le Mill in Mumbai. The chic multi-brand luxury concept store was letting her know that the latest Alaïa collection had arrived. Advani, known for her trendy style in the city's social circles, had wanted a pair of the celebrated Parisian brand's sandals, prices for which start at an average of ₹900 (approx. ₹77,000). She did a quick online price comparison between India and the U.S., and immediately bought it.

"I got the tip in advance, they had my size, the price compared, and I didn't have to leave my home. It's these small conveniences that make it easier to shop for luxury in India," she says. Advani is just one of many clients that the Le Mill sales team has been steering towards the most au courant fashion as soon as it lands in the store — through a mix of WhatsApp messages and calls. Hitesh Rathod, creative director of Le Mill, says: "Many key pieces are sold even before they get uploaded on our website because our VIP clients know exactly what they want," he says. Luxury retail is not just about exclusivity anymore, it is also about accessibility. Especially in India. "Earlier, I would buy luxury bags, clothes or gifts when travelling abroad. But during and after COVID, numerous new stores and better offerings have made me buy more in India. It is convenient — you don't have to get on a flight, you don't need to worry about Customs when returning home. Plus you can build relationships with the sales staff, and have personally curated concierge services. Abroad, you are just a tourist, unless you are a regular at a particular store. With better curation, almost everything being available here, and excellent pre- and post-sale service, I find it easier to shop in India now." Shilpa Bhagat Entrepreneur and former Mrs. India Over the past decade, a new affluent class has emerged, as the start-up culture and rise in stock market performance led to greater wealth generation amongst the top 2% of the population, many of them younger entrepreneurs. This class is more brand conscious and globally exposed. And after COVID-19, there appears to be a psychological shift amongst the rich to enjoy their lives and live in the present. This means that while there are still big numbers online (the e-retail market has surged to approximately \$60 billion in gross merchandise value, according to global management firm Bain & Company), there is renewed interest in offline. "We are definitely seeing a strong resurgence in offline retail, particularly in the premium and luxury lifestyle segment," says Abhishek Agarwal, founder of Purple Style Labs, which owns Pernia's Pop Up, the multi-brand fashion store, which recently took over the lease of the iconic 53,000 sq.ft. Ismail Building in Mumbai's Fort neighbourhood. Its counterpart in Chennai, on upscale Khader Nawaz Khan Road, is equally popular among wedding shoppers who browse their aisles and iPads, the latter making it easier for shop assistants to source from stores anywhere in the country. "There is a noticeable rise in omni-channel behaviour, where people are browsing collections online but coming to our stores for a deeper experience. While the pandemic significantly accelerated digital adoption, physical retail has come back with greater experiential demand," he adds. Pernia's Pop Up is planning more large format stores in Mumbai, Delhi and New York.

The proliferation of big and new players across India is strengthening this, be it malls such as Palladium and Emporio or the Ambani's Jio World Drive — which opened in 2021 with a roster of luxury brands making their debut in the country — or single-brand stores. The Collective, Aditya Birla Fashion & Retail's multi-brand offering, for instance, is growing in scale, and recently opened three new stores, bringing its total number to 40 across India.

Adding to the mix is a slew of international brands entering our shores. Swiss watch imports grew nearly 30% in the first three months of 2025. Brands such as Breitling opened new boutiques in Hyderabad, Chennai, Pune and Gurugram, while Frank Mueller has plans to expand in

Mumbai. "Today's luxury retail is about immersion, not just inventory. Store formats — whether standalone or mall-based — are being designed to create a high-touch, narrative-driven experience," says Pranav Saboo, MD & CEO, Ethos Limited. "At Ethos, we've adopted a hybrid model. Our mono-brand boutiques are housed in luxury malls to capture footfall, while our large-format experiential spaces like City of Time in Gurugram, allow for deeper engagement. Interestingly, we're seeing hefty-ticket purchases even in mall stores, provided the brand story and experience align with consumer expectations." The Indian consumer is no longer a peripheral player; they're central to global brand strategies today. Brands are crafting time-pieces specifically for this market, embedding both cultural nuance and exclusivity. Take the Jacob & Co. India Edition, for instance — a bold piece that features intricate plaques depicting India Gate, Taj Mahal, Qutub Minar, and the Ayodhya Ram Mandir on the dial. Other brands have also followed suit, such as Raymond Weil's Ganges Edition and Frederique Constant's India-exclusive model. "Pranav Saboo Ethos Limited Long gone are the days when prestige beauty products — part of celebrities' skincare routines, from actor Jennifer Lopez (a La Mer fan) to musician Taylor Swift (Chanel and Charlotte Tilbury) — were covetously purchased by Indians while on holiday. Today, Reliance-owned Tira Beauty, which debuted in 2023 to focus on high-end beauty, has opened 17 stores across India, while Nykaa announced plans for 350 stores by the end of the year.

At the launch of the sprawling Tira store at Palladium two months ago, women across age groups were testing YSL lipsticks, Estée Lauder and La Mer skincare, Prada perfumes and K-beauty offerings while sipping on cocktails and Champagne. "Having a big store like this in the heart of Mumbai to browse in and test products, with good sales staff is helpful. Plus, it's fun to do it with friends," says Anushree Sardesai, 24, a content creator and senior stylist at Hello! magazine. "I'm a big fan of French brand Caudalie's beauty elixir and used to wait for someone to visit France to get it. Now, the brands that I like to buy are at my doorstep and I don't have to deal with import hassles and duty." Beauty is growing at a 10% rate year over year, according to a 2024 McKinsey report, projected to hit \$38 billion in the next three years. With a much younger population attuned to the latest global beauty trends and the growth of social media apps such as Instagram, looking good has never been as important. The much-awaited entry of Paris-based upmarket department store chain, Galeries Lafayette — where well-heeled travellers often make plans to spend a day browsing high fashion and beauty — reported to open in Mumbai's historic Horniman Circle area later this year, will further test luxury retail's buoyancy.

India's new Bata, the BirkAspirational luxury is experiencing a boom, too. Last year in Chennai, fashion influencer Pavitra Sagar was part of a Birkenstock promotion at Express Avenue mall. With everything at the German sandal brand's store at 50% off for four hours, she noticed college students buying four and five pairs of "Birks" each, which usually retail at ₹10,000. "I was shocked to know how many people wanted to buy them," she recalls. But, according to consumer behaviour consultancy Datum Intelligence, after the brand launched in India in 2019, the iconic double-strapped sandals, a European staple so far, has become one of the fastest-growing footwear brands in the country — with many in the media even calling it the "Bata for India's elite". "By the end of three hours, everything was sold out. There were no shoes at the store," says Sagar.

Meanwhile, the growth in luxury retail spending is no longer generated from the big cities alone — not surprising in a country with an online penetration of 52%, according to the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) and Kantar. Tata Cliq Luxury reported 55% of its online sales came from non-metro cities such as Mysuru and Panchkula last year. In fact, at the release of a new luxury report, "Thinking Beyond The Cart: Elevating Luxury E-Commerce" at a Mumbai gathering in January, its CEO Gopal Asthana told guests that the working population in smaller towns is "earning well and actively seeking out luxury experiences and goods". Rathod of Le Mill shares that he "recently sold a Chloe Kerala 25 shoulder bag [which retails upwards of ₹1.6 lakh] to someone living in Rourkela on WhatsApp, while last week, it was an Alaïa top [that starts around ₹70,000] to a client in Chandigarh". According to him, the store regularly gets orders from Raipur, Rishikesh and Ludhiana either via Instagram or WhatsApp, which are then serviced via video calls and store tours. Interestingly, luxury retail is also growing across categories — in metros and elsewhere. While jewellery and fashion have always been important segments, now home décor and beauty are growing, too. "It becomes natural for the Indian customer to want to shop in India where they have more options, attention to detail, and the ability to customise," says Pavitra Rajaram, who curates the luxury offerings at Nilaya Anthology. "A lot of our customers want to take a piece home and try it. And you can't do that if the sofa is sitting in Italy." Foster, of Jaipur Rugs, echoes this. He notes that people are prioritising spending on their homes like never before. "Creating a beautiful home is more important today than a luxury car purchase or leisure travel. At Jaipur Rugs, for example, we're seeing an appetite for new collections by Gurneet Singh, Tatiana de Nicotay and Richard Hutten — pieces sell before they are anywhere near the showroom." Home interiors are projected to grow to ₹71 billion by 2033, according to research firm IMARC, driven by the 140 million consumer base that has discretionary spending power. "If you think of tier 2 and 3 cities, this is the best time to be in this business because I don't see things slowing down for home and interiors," says Astha Khetan, co-founder of Udaipur-based furniture gallery House of Things.

In January, House of Rose, which sells brands such as Bulgari, Chopard, and Frank Muller, apart from its own jewellery, opened its new outpost in the historically significant Ballard Estate in South Mumbai. The luxurious store elevates the retail experience — from the nine large museum-style arched windows showcasing bespoke three-dimensional art installations created by contemporary Indian artists, inspired by the luxury brands sold at the store, to a bespoke bar and dining space for clients. Customers can enjoy curated four course meals and special cocktails, wander into richly decorated private rooms to understand gemstones and view unique jewellery that retails anywhere from a few lakhs to upwards of a crore.

"The future lies in curated, immersive spaces," explains Karan Vaidya, vice president of marketing and retail at House of Rose. "Our clientele is not just shopping for jewellery or watches — they're seeking a memory, a story, a celebration." The brand plans to open two or three more experiential stores across India by next year. Khetan of The House of Things says that her pivot to a physical gallery in Udaipur, where the company is based, was a natural progression and an "experiment" before venturing into Delhi, Mumbai, Ahmedabad or Hyderabad, where their primary client base resides. She says the new store has already sold out its entire inventory twice since it opened mid-March.

Why have special economic zones rules been relaxed? | Explained



The story so far: The Government of India has been taking various steps to boost the production of semiconductors and electronics in India, in a bid to reduce our dependence on imports. Some previous measures include the Semicon India programme launched in 2022 with an outlay of ₹76,000 crore. Now, the government has gone a step further and has relaxed key rules related to Special Economic Zones (SEZs) to further encourage the domestic manufacture of semiconductors and electronics.

Why are semiconductors important?

Semiconductors lie at the heart of an increasingly electronic society, with AI and machine learning only the latest in a long trend of increased digitisation and automation. Semiconductors are the tiny chips processing vast amounts of information that make all of these processes possible, in one's phone, computer, tablet, smart TV, smart speaker, car, and every other electronic gadget. According to the Semiconductor Industry Association, China accounted for about 35% of all semiconductors manufactured in the world in 2021. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, much of the world, including India, realised that the concentration of supply chains in one country posed huge risks for any country dependent on those supplies. Therefore, they started trying to boost the domestic manufacture of such key components.

What are the latest steps by the Indian government?

On June 9, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry

Who takes responsibility when a ship sinks? | Explained



Smoke billows out from the Singaporean Vessel MV Wan Hai 503 during a salvage operation being carried out by the Indian Coast Guard (ICG), along with the Indian Navy and Indian Air Force, in Kochi on June 13, 2025. Smoke billows out from the Singaporean Vessel MV Wan Hai 503 during a salvage operation being carried out by the Indian Coast Guard (ICG), along with the Indian Navy and Indian Air Force, in Kochi on June 13, 2025. | Photo Credit: X/ @IndiaCoastGuard via ANI Video Grab The story so far: On June 9, MV Wan Hai 503, a Singapore-flagged vessel, caught fire nearly 88 nautical miles off Kerala's Beypore coast. The vessel was carrying more than 2,000 tonnes of fuel and hundreds of containers, the burning of which has caused concerns about the potential ecological impact. Search operations for the hazardous containers are still on. Earlier on May 25, the Liberian container ship MSC ELSA 3 sank off the coast of Kochi, Kerala.

Who regulates global shipping?

Global merchant shipping is primarily regulated by the International Maritime Organization (IMO). The IMO is among the most powerful U.N. agencies, as many of its prescriptions and guidelines apply across shipping, given the multinational nature of the industry. Countries that are members of the IMO, India included, sign various conventions that lay down norms regarding pollution, safety, accidents, liabilities and responsibilities, after which member states pass appropriate domestic legislation or lay down rules that sync with convention prescriptions. In India, it is the Directorate General (DG) of Shipping which issues notices for such purposes. In some cases, Parliament sanction may also be needed. In general, India is a signatory to many conventions, barring a few, such as the 2004 Ballast Water Convention and the 2010 Hazardous and Noxious Substances (HNS) Convention. The HNS Convention deals with liability and compensation for damage related to the carriage of hazardous and noxious substances on ships. Given the increasing accidents on its coast, India may be served by ratifying this convention. In the case of the ELSA 3, in which many containers carrying noxious substances such as calcium carbide sank, India will seek remedies under its own merchant shipping laws. Ships are owned by companies across the world. Greece and China lead in being homes to many of these companies. But the ships are often registered in various other nations for convenience and ease of operations. Though members of the IMO and governed by IMO norms, such nations offer less intrusive scrutiny and are therefore called Flags of Convenience (FOC). Liberia is one such country, Marshall Islands is another.

Who is liable for the loss of cargo and any damage to the environment?

The ship owner is liable for both. The trade of goods is governed by a contract called the bill of lading, which covers the transport of goods from one port to another, and is issued by the ship owner to the exporter during the loading of cargo. The owner of the bill of lading is the owner of the cargo. The bill of lading is a contract that lays down that the owner undertakes to ship the cargo from one port to another among other things. The bill of lading is transferred to the importer or the consignee, as per various shipment forms, after payment to the exporter. Typically, the importer opens a letter of credit to the exporter, and the bank then extends the credit and acquires the bill of lading from the exporter. When the receiver receives the cargo and makes the payment, he gets the bill of lading from the bank. In case of damage or loss of cargo, the ship owner has to pay whoever owns the bill of lading. But that payment is covered by the Protection and Indemnity (P&I) Club, which is a cluster of several insurance companies who share the risk. Damage to the body of the ship and machinery, that is a business loss for the owner, is usually covered by indemnity. But in P&I, the insurer protects the owner against any claims

announced that it had notified several modifications to the Special Economic Zones (SEZ) Rules, 2006, a week earlier, to enhance the domestic manufacture of semiconductors. One of these tweaks was to Rule 5, which dealt with the size of the SEZ. Earlier, an SEZ set up exclusively for the manufacture of semiconductors or electronic components needed a minimum contiguous land area of 50 hectares. This has now been significantly reduced to 10 hectares. This reduced size will allow companies to make smaller investments but still avail of SEZ benefits such as tax exemptions, duty-free imports, and infrastructure support.

Another amendment to Rule 7 of the SEZ Rules now allows the Board of Approval for SEZs to relax the condition that had required SEZ land to be "encumbrance-free". Land is deemed to be encumbrance-free if it does not have any legal claims, liens, or charges against it, and when clear title of ownership and transfer can be established. With India's complicated and often-archaic land record mechanisms, and lengthy legal processes, such a requirement would have stymied a lot of SEZs. Relaxing this rule will allow SEZs to come up faster. A third amendment was to Rule 18, allowing SEZ units in semiconductor and electronics component manufacturing to supply domestically, after paying the applicable duties. Conventionally, SEZs are exclusively export-oriented. Allowing domestic sales not only shields the SEZs from the ongoing global trade uncertainty, but also ensures a steady supply to the domestic market itself.

What has been the impact?

Given the changes are so recent, one can't immediately establish long-term impacts. However, following the tweaks, two new SEZs have already been approved with a total investment of ₹13,100 crore. Micron Semiconductor Technology India will establish an SEZ facility in Sanand, Gujarat for the manufacture of semiconductors with an estimated investment of ₹13,000 crore, while Hubballi Durable Goods Cluster, a part of the Aequs Group, will establish an SEZ facility for the manufacture of electronic components in Dharwad, Karnataka, at a cost of ₹100 crore.

on the owner too, such as in the case of damage to environment or loss of cargo or loss of life onboard the ship and elsewhere as a consequence of an accident involving the ship. International conventions have capped the liability of the ship owner on loss of cargo, but there is no limit on claims against environment damage such as in the case of oil pollution or hazardous substances. The last could apply to the sunken containers of ELSA 3 or Wan Hai 503 that caught fire. Oil pollution damages itself cover a vast range — impacting fish catch, affecting tourism, loss to other businesses, transportation and so on. The International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships upholds the polluter pays principle. Sometimes, however, national laws do protect against extended and potentially endless claims.

Who should salvage a ship that has sank?

This responsibility also rests with the ship owner. The Nairobi Convention on the Removal of Wrecks, 2007 governs this situation, and India is a signatory. Under this, the ship owner whose ship has sunk within the sovereign waters of India — up to 200 nautical miles from a reference line on the coast — has to salvage the ship. In case the ship cannot be refloated, especially if the waters are too deep, then the ship owner is liable for any claims of damage.

Why do ships still sink?

While advanced materials, knowledge, expertise and skill go into building ships, they are exposed to the vagaries of the sea and its multi-layered impact cannot always be predicted in a pinpointed way. For instance, in ELSA 3, as the ship started tilting to one side — listing, in shipping parlance — containers that were stowed on top fell into the sea that was already rough. This led to the list increasing on the heavier side which could have led to the ship sinking. Quite often, a series of errors, mistakes and small incidents sync to create a major accident. By themselves, each of these mistakes and incidents are not a cause of much concern. Too often, such mistakes are manmade and often, egregious. Today merchant ships tend to sail close to the coast in search of mobile phone signals so that seafarers with roaming facilities can stay in touch with their friends or family. Wakashio, a bulk carrier, ran aground off Mauritius in 2020, leading to an oil spill, because it went too close to the shore in search of mobile phone signals. This was during the COVID-19 pandemic when seafarers were spending extended periods out at sea amidst concerns about their health and that of their families'. The unsinkable Titanic sank because of human error. But after the sinking, a convention called Safety of Life At Sea (SOLAS) came into being. SOLAS is one of the key conventions that govern shipping and is often revised. A key lesson from the Titanic, which has now been implemented as a SOLAS norm, is that lifeboats on either side of the ship should have enough capacity to carry the number of people the ship is designed to carry. This means that if the ship tilts to one side and the lifeboats on only one side are accessible, even then, they should be able to carry all those people on board to safety. The shipping industry learns from each accident. The IMO revises and supplements its guidelines periodically regarding ship design and construction that are then adopted by the industry.

Committees established to complete pending works at medical colleges

Hyderabad: To ensure all new Government medical colleges and teaching hospitals in Telangana meet the guidelines of National Medical Commission (NMC), the State government has set up Medical College Monitoring Committees (MCMC) to monitor and ensure all issues are resolved before the next inspections.

The MCMC will inspect, assess and prepare college-wise plans to systematically resolve all outstanding issues and set up robust medical colleges and teaching hospitals in Telangana. A total of 10 MCMCs have been established that will evaluate each college for infrastructure, human resources, academic and curriculum readiness, student welfare and amenities, operational and financial aspects, digital systems and IT Infrastructure.

Why has the Axiom-4 mission been delayed? | Explained



The story so far: On June 10, Axiom Space announced that the launch of its Axiom-4 mission to the International Space Station (ISS) would be postponed indefinitely. The mission crew included India's astronaut-designate Shubhanshu Shukla, who — if the rocket had lifted off as planned — would have become the first Indian in earth orbit after 40 years and the first Indian onboard the ISS.

What is the Axiom-4 mission?

The Axiom-4 mission is the fourth mission planned by US-based spaceflight company Axiom Space to the ISS. It consists of a crew of four people — Peggy Whitson, Shubhanshu Shukla, Slawosz Uznanski-Wisniewski, and Tobir Kapu — plus cargo. To facilitate the mission, NASA had contracted Axiom, which in turn had contracted the Falcon 9 rocket and the Dragon crew capsule for the mission from SpaceX. The mission is commercial in nature and isn't part of the regular resupply missions NASA undertakes to the ISS. Following an announcement to strengthen India-US ties in 2023, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) spent more than Rs 500 crore for Mr. Shukla to fly on the mission. Mr. Shukla is one of the four astronaut-designates for ISRO's forthcoming Gaganyaan human spaceflight mission. His compatriot Prasanth Nair is part of the Axiom-4 backup crew.

Why was the launch called off?

Ahead of Thursday's flight, SpaceX had tested one of the rocket's engines as a matter of procedure and discovered it was leaking liquid oxygen (LOX). LOX is a cryogenic fuel, meaning it needs to be stored at an extremely low temperature. If LOX is exposed to warmer conditions, the oxygen will turn into gas and not be usable as fuel (since it's

very difficult to pump gases). Falcon 9 engines combust a mix of rocket-grade kerosene and LOX to generate thrust, meaning a LOX leak is a serious issue. The Axiom-4 mission had first been scheduled for liftoff on May 29 but had to be postponed to June 8, June 10, and June 11. There was a back-up launch window on June 12. The delays were a result of a combination of unfavourable conditions related to the weather and the launch vehicle.

Why has no new date been announced?

Since a LOX leak is a serious issue, SpaceX needs to find the precise source of the leak and why the underlying component(s) failed. How much time this will take is unclear. There are also particular launch 'windows' (specific moments in time) when a launch can deliver the crew to the ISS with minimal fuel and energy use, including the amount of time the crew capsule will be exposed to sunlight and generate solar power without overheating. But because the ISS is so close to the earth, launch windows appear more frequently than those for the moon or Mars. NASA has already indicated there are more opportunities through June and July. Other factors that affect the suitability of a launch window include time on the launch pad for liftoff and access to free docking ports on the ISS. The US's NASA, Russia's Roscosmos, and (less often) some other space agencies also send missions to the ISS and need to plan when and for how long their capsules are docked.

How hard is it to fix a LOX leak?

When it leaks, LOX flashes to an invisible vapour almost instantly and can be blown away by winds or fans nearby. Detecting it often entails time-consuming, labour-intensive work. Many joints in the components associated with storing and pumping LOX are insulated with foam or are located in nooks, meaning many regular leak-detecting methods can't physically reach them. Materials contract at cryogenic temperatures (around 90 K), so a hole may appear closed at ambient temperature but open at cryogenic temperatures. So once a hole has been fixed, engineers may need to repeat tests at both warm and cold conditions or test with liquid nitrogen to mimic operating conditions. Testing with LOX itself can be hazardous. Fortunately experts have been working with cryogenic engines for long enough to know which tools to use and which processes to follow once the leak has been identified. They include visual inspection, bubble tests, helium signature tests, flow-meter tests, ultrasonic microphones, and thermal imaging.

How safe AI is in healthcare depends on the humans of healthcare

EMS News Agency, June 19

Researchers at IIT-Madras and the Translational Health Science and Technology Institute in Faridabad are developing an artificially intelligent (AI) model to use ultrasonography pictures to predict the age of a growing foetus. Called Garbhini-GA2, the model was trained on scans from about 3,500 pregnant women who had visited the Gurugram Civil Hospital in Haryana. Each scan labelled different parts of the foetus, its size, and its weight — measures that can be used to predict a foetus's age. After the training, team members tested it with (unlabelled) scans from 1,500 pregnant women who had visited the same hospital and around 1,000 pregnant women who had visited the Christian Medical College Vellore. They found Garbhini-GA2 erred on the age of the foetus by only half a day. This is a significant improvement over the most common method today: using Hadlock's formula. Because the formula is based on data from Caucasian populations, it has been known to miss the age of the foetus in India by up to seven days, according to the IIT-Madras team.

The team now plans to test its model in datasets from around India. This is just a glimpse of how AI tools are quietly reshaping Indian healthcare. From foetal ultrasound dating and high-risk-pregnancy guidance to virtual autopsies and clinical chatbots, they are matching expert accuracy while accelerating workflows. Yet their promise comes entwined with the systemic challenges of data and automation bias, privacy, and weak regulation, often exacerbated by the sensitivities of the healthcare sector itself. Helpful, but can get better

Almost half of all pregnancies in Indian women are high-risk pregnancies (HRPs), according to a 2023 study in the Journal of Global Health. In an HRPs, there is a high chance of the mother and the newborn taking ill or dying. The conditions that cause these outcomes include severe anaemia, high blood pressure, pre-eclampsia, and hypothyroidism. The risks are higher for women with no formal education, those from rural areas, and those belonging to marginalised social groups. Experts say routine monitoring is the best way to reduce maternal and perinatal mortality in HRPs. In rural areas, this task is often carried out by auxiliary nurse-midwives (ANMs), female health workers who are the first point of contact between a pregnant woman and the medical system. ANMs are trained by medical professionals to recognise HRPs and advise women on their options. Mumbai-based NGO ARMMAN started such a training programme in 2021 in partnership with UNICEF and the Governments of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. It has been training healthcare professionals, including ANMs, in "end-to-end management of HRPs." ARMMAN's director of innovation Amrita Mahale said. The NGO trains ANMs to track and manage HRPs through "classroom training and digital learning," Mahale said, adding that ANMs are also supported through a WhatsApp helpline "for doubt-solving and hand-holding as they go through the learning content and apply it to real-life high-risk pregnancy cases." When in doubt, ANMs are encouraged to reach out to their trainers with queries. However, "the trainers themselves are overworked and do not always prioritise responding to ANM queries," Mahale said. So ARMMAN adopted an AI chatbot earlier this year. It recognises both text and voice-based queries from ANMs and responds in the same medium with clinically validated answers. Medical professionals now "act as humans-in-the-loop who step in when the chatbot cannot answer a question, or if the ANM is not satisfied with the chatbot's response," Mahale said. Currently being tested with 100 ANMs, the chatbot has received "94% positive feedback" from its users, Mahale said. "A domain expert has rated 91% of the answers to date as accurate and satisfactory." But she also flagged a problem: "The current lot of speech [recognition] models struggle with Indian languages, especially regional variations and accents." This means the chatbot might fail to understand about 5% percent of the queries that are shared as voice notes rather than as text.

Amar Jyoti Patowary heads the Department of Forensic Medicine at the North Eastern Indira Gandhi Regional Institute of Health and Medical Sciences. He is one of India's few "virtual autopsy" experts. Autopsies don't have a good public reputation. When Dr. Patowary and his team asked the relatives of 179 deceased people who had undergone

an autopsy at the department, about 63% expressed fears of the body being mutilated and delays in conducting funeral rites. Similar issues have been reported from rural Haryana, too. In a virtual autopsy, or virtopsy, a body is scanned with CT and MRI machines to generate detailed images of its internal structures. Then, a computer creates a 3D image of the body. Physicians feed this image into convolutional neural networks (CNNs) — deep-learning models adept at extracting features from one set of images and using them to classify images in others.

In 2023, researchers from Tohoku University in Japan built a CNN that could distinguish individuals who had died of drowning from those who had died of other causes using chest CT scans. The model was 81% accurate "for cases in which resuscitation was performed and 92% for cases in which resuscitation was not attempted," the authors wrote in their paper. In 2024, Swiss scientists developed a CNN that could say whether a person had died of a cerebral haemorrhage based on postmortem CT images. While conventional autopsies take about 2.5 hours to complete, a virtopsy can be finished in about half an hour, Dr. Patowary said. In conventional autopsies, once the body has been dissected, a second dissection may be required if the first one has been inconclusive. This is harder. But virtopsies allow as many dissections as required since the scans can be used to reconstruct the body again and again. What virtopsies might miss, however, are "small injuries in the soft tissue" and changes in the colour of tissues and organs and how the body and its fluids smell, which might indicate how a person died, Dr. Patowary cautioned. Yet he also expressed confidence that by combining a virtopsy with a "verbal autopsy" — checking with an accompanying relative or police officer for clinically relevant details — and a visual examination of the body and its cavities, these challenges can be overcome. These cases indicate that the best use of AI might be as a healthcare professional's assistant. In 2019, MediBuddy, a digital healthcare company that provides online doctor consultations and other services, experimented with an AI bot that could chat with a patient, extract clinically relevant details from the conversation, and compile and present them to a doctor along with suggested diagnoses. Nine of the 15 doctors who tested this app said it was helpful while the rest remained "sceptical", said Krishna Chaitanya Chavati, MediBuddy's head of data science. He flagged data privacy as a key concern. In India, digital personal information, including an individual's health information, is governed by the Information Technology Act 2000 and the Digital Personal Data Protection Act 2023. Neither Act specifically mentions AI technologies, although lawyers suggest the latter could apply to AI tools. Even then, the "DPDP Act lacks clarity on AI-driven decision-making and accountability," lawyers wrote in a May 2025 review. To allay these concerns, Chavati said strong data security protocols are necessary. At MediBuddy, the team has deployed a few, two of which are a personal identifiable information masking engine and role-based access. A masking engine is a programme that identifies and hides all personal information from specific algorithms, preventing unauthorised users from tracing the data to a single individual. Role-based access ensures no one individual within the company is able to access all of an individual's data, only the parts relevant to their work. In the loop Shivangi Rai, a lawyer who helped draft the National Public Health Bill and the Digital Information Security in Healthcare Bill, said "automation bias" is also another cause for concern. Rai is currently the deputy coordinator of the Centre for Health Equity, Law & Policy in Pune. Automation bias is "the tendency to overly trust and follow the suggestions made by an automated system, even if the suggestions are incorrect," Rai said. This happens when the "human in the loop", such as a doctor, banks too much on the judgement of an AI-powered app "rather than their own clinical judgement". In 2023, researchers from Germany and Netherlands asked radiologists with different degrees of experience to evaluate mammograms (X-ray scan of breasts) and assign them a BI-RADS score. BI-RADS is a standardised metric radiologists use to report the malignancy of cancerous tissue observed in mammograms. The radiologists were told that an AI model would also parse the mammogram and assign a BI-RADS score. In truth the researchers had no such model; they arbitrarily and secretly assigned a score to some mammograms.

A different approach to the caste census | Explained



The story so far: The Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Modi, has decided to conduct caste enumeration in the upcoming Census. As per Article 246 of the Constitution, the Census is a Union subject listed in the 7th schedule. The caste census must be viewed beyond binaries of "for or against" to envision a more transformative idea — as a foundational tool for what might be called a social management approach to governance.

What were the findings from State-level caste censuses?

The Bihar caste survey (2023) found that Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and Economically Backward Classes (EBCs) together make up over 63% of the population, with EBCs alone at 36.01%. Scheduled Castes (SC) account for 19.65%, and Scheduled Tribes (ST) for 1.68%. The general category comprises only 15.52%. Additionally, over 34% of Bihar's families live on less than ₹200 per day, with nearly 44% of SC households below that line. In Telangana's 2025 survey, Backward Classes (BCs) constituted 56.33% of the population, with BC Muslims forming a substantial 10.08%. These numbers reveal a stark reality: India's marginalised communities form the majority but are significantly underrepresented in education, employment, and governance. Data shared by the Union Minister of State for Education in Parliament reveals that only 4% of professors and 6% of associate professors in 45 Central Universities are OBCs, while 85% are from the general category. This imbalance exists despite the Central Educational Institutions (Reservation in Teachers' Cadre) Act, 2019. Yet, the policy response is hindered by the absence of reliable data. India hasn't conducted a full caste census since 1931. The 2011 Socio-Economic and Caste Census (SECC) was marred by data inconsistencies and its findings were withheld. Without up-to-date caste data, affirmative action and development policies remain speculative.

What is a social management approach?

Top-down welfare models in India have failed to adequately address layered inequities of caste, gender, and class. A social management approach does the opposite: it starts with data, targets need-based interventions, and treats

caste as a developmental variable rather than a stigma. If we know who needs what, and how need is shaped by historical disadvantage, we can design policies with greater equity and efficiency. Caste data becomes a lens to understand inequity structurally, rather than as isolated cases. Tamil Nadu offers a model, using data from the Backward Classes Commission to adjust policies on reservations, scholarships, and governance. Karnataka's caste survey is being used to recalibrate reservation policies in education and jobs. A national caste census would enable such models at scale. It could inform disaggregated budgeting, where funds are allocated, not just based on geography or income but on caste-based gaps in healthcare, infrastructure, and education. It could enable diversity audits in institutions, showing who occupies power and who doesn't. It could also track how schemes like PM Awas Yojana or Skill India are reaching caste groups, ensuring that the most marginalised aren't left out.

Are there global precedents?

Critics argue that a caste census deepens social divides and undermines national unity. However, the reality is that caste endures not because it is counted, but because it shapes how opportunity, and wealth are distributed. Ignoring caste does not erase it. It merely obscures structural inequality behind ignorance. A caste census does not create casteism; it reveals it. Other democracies don't shy away from identity-based data. The U.S. collects race and ethnicity data every 10 years and uses it for civil rights enforcement. South Africa and Brazil do the same by tracking race and language categories. If these nations can use such data to address inequity, so must India, home to the most enduring and hierarchical caste system in the world.

What about transparency?

The value of a caste census extends beyond policymaking. It is also a vital instrument of democratic accountability. Disaggregated data enables civil society, the media, and citizens to know whether public resources are being equitably shared. A publicly accessible caste census would empower citizens to demand transparency. It could expose intra-caste inequalities and where welfare benefits are monopolised by elite sub-groups, leaving the truly disadvantaged behind. Ultimately, the caste census is not about counting caste. It is about recognising injustice and correcting it. Thus, a caste census rooted in social management would be linked to a wider agenda of social emancipation. This includes constitutional literacy, land rights, housing, labour protections, and justice for Dalit, Bahujan, and Adivasi women who face intersectional exploitation. A caste census done right could offer India a data-driven democratic transformation. Prof. Sony Kunjappan is the Head, Department of Studies in Social Management, Central University of Gujarat. Amal Chandra is an author, policy analyst, and columnist

Recounting Velpur's story in ending child labour



children to go to school. In these meetings, children recognised their (former) employers who let them stop work and go to school.

Under peer pressure, former employers also made a public announcement of writing off the balance amount (principal, the interest and penal interest) owed to them by the parents who took hand loans from them (the children were used as mortgage and as child labour till the amount was repaid). They even distributed school stationery to the children. A study found that a total amount of about ₹35 lakh was written off — the price for a good cause. All sarpanchs signed a memorandum of understanding (as in the provisions of the Andhra Pradesh Compulsory Primary Education Rules, 1982), with the government (district education officer in the presence of the District Collector) to ensure that all children in the five to 14 age group in their village were sent to school. The government in turn undertook to provide access, infrastructure and teachers. This was the first time that such an agreement had been signed between sarpanchs and the government. There is no child labour — an achievement that is very zealously guarded by the community. To cherish this proud achievement of being the first mandal in the State to be declared child labour free and to remind them of their commitment to sustain it, villagers erected boards in every village with the words, 'There is no child labour in our village'.

On October 8, 2021, as a part of the 'Azadi Ka Amruth Mahotsav', the V.V. Giri National Labour Institute, (VVGNI) Noida, Uttar Pradesh (under the Ministry of Labor and Employment, Government of India) organised a programme in Nizamabad. The event was to celebrate 20 years of successful intervention "to eliminate child labour and the declaration of Velpur Mandal, as Child labour free". All sarpanchs, caste elders, zilla parishad members and people involved in the campaign were honoured for their role in sustaining it. The challenge made to the local media to identify at least one child who was not in school had no takers. A leading news magazine had an exclusive report on this event. The Velpur story is well documented and has been appreciated by the ILO and the media. Velpur has been visited by many experts in the fields of education and child labour.

The former President of India, A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, and members of the National Human Rights Commission India sent letters of appreciation. The Velpur model, where there was the complete participation of the community in sustaining the fight against child labour, is an integral part of all training programmes that are organised by the VVGNI. Made aware of its sustained success, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Labour, Textiles and Skill Development asked the then District Collector, who led this campaign, to make a presentation before it on November 24, 2022. The Parliamentary Standing Committee appreciated and acknowledged its success. This is a community-led success story that is testimony of the axiom that social issues can be successfully and sustainably addressed only if they metamorphose into a people's movement.

Tata Trusts proposes strategic reorganisation to avoid listing



Eleven days after the Tata Sons board decided to comply with the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI's) directive to list the company on the exchanges, Tata Trusts have proposed a strategic reorganisation aimed to ensure that the restructured entity is neither an NBFC nor a Core Investment Company (CIC). The proposal, sent to the Tata Sons board, involves the merger of Tata Electronics Systems Solutions Pvt Ltd (TESS) and Tata Consulting Engineers (TCE) with Tata Sons Pvt Ltd (TSPL). The move, if approved and implemented, would fundamentally alter the structure and nature of Tata Sons and could take the company outside the regulatory framework that triggered the RBI's listing directive.

The proposed strategic reorganisation of the business and operations of TSPL is not a new pathway, Tata Trusts officials said Monday. "TSPL has, for almost 80 years out of its 100-year existence, always had operating businesses and operating revenues, which enabled it to fund its other, newer business ventures."

The Trusts have asked the Tata Sons board to consider and approve the proposal and take all necessary steps, including approaching the RBI for the required no-objection certificate (NOC) for the proposed merger and reorganisation. The proposal comes at a critical juncture for Tata Sons. The RBI had rejected the company's request to be deregistered as an upper-layer NBFC, hence keeping alive the regulatory requirement for its listing. Tata Trusts, which collectively hold 66% of Tata Sons, are seeking to change the company's underlying structure rather than simply proceed with a listing in its existing form. The proposed merger would bring two operating businesses directly under Tata Sons, strengthening its operating-business character, changing the regulatory classification of the reorganised entity.

The proposal now rests with the Tata Sons board and, ultimately, the RBI, whose approval will be required for the proposed restructuring. On September 17, in a dramatic shift of trajectory, the Tata Sons' board approved a fresh five-year extension for Executive Chairman N Chandrasekaran, alongside a pivotal decision to pursue a public listing to comply with RBI mandates. As recently as 2004, the group's tech firm Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) was a business division of TSPL before it was demerged into a separate subsidiary. This was also the case with other operating businesses of TSPL. "Accordingly, the proposed reorganization

will result in TSPL reverting to its previous operating model, with its own operations and revenues, in addition to being a holding company for the Tata Group," they said. This will also be in line with the previous classification (after 2004) by the RBI of TSPL as a "non-banking, non-financial company". The amalgamated entity, arising out of the merger of TESS and TCE with TSPL, will have an operating revenue of Rs 105,043 crore, far in excess of its income from financial assets (Rs 40,072 crore) constituting 64.3% of the total income of the amalgamated entity.

This will not meet the "principal business criteria" of an NBFC and it will also not meet the conditions applicable to a CIC (assets aggregating Rs 200,158 crores, out of which investment in group companies will be Rs 177,120 crore representing less than 90% of the aggregate net assets of the resultant entity), Tata Trusts said. An amalgamation of genuine operating, non-financial companies (such as TESS and TCE) with an NBFC (such as TSPL) will need to be undertaken in accordance with the provisions of the RBI (Non-Banking Financial Companies-Voluntary Amalgamation) Directions, 2025, including the requirement to obtain a prior 'no objection certificate' of the RBI, the trusts said. Given that TSPL will also cease to be a CIC upon the conclusion of the proposed reorganization, TSPL will be required to surrender its certificate of registration, it said. Tata Trusts officials said the proposed reorganization and action plan for compliance "would be in the best interests of the Tata Group as well as its stakeholders, in addition to being a regulatory permissible and compliant form of reorganization of a CIC". Tata Trusts, along with TSPL, will engage with the RBI on all aspects of the proposed reorganisation, they said. The proposed amalgamation and consequential steps are in line with regulatory compliance requirements and the unanimous resolutions passed by the Boards of Sir Dorabji Tata Trust (SDTT) and Sir Ratan Tata Trust (SRTT) in July 2025, wherein it was agreed that all endeavours should be made to ensure that the status of TSPL as an unlisted private company should continue.

Tata Sons board decision has drawn sharp lines of conflict, setting up a fierce legal and corporate showdown between the Tata Sons board on one side, and Tata Trusts and its Chairman Noel Tata, on the other. Noel Tata had voted against Chandrasekaran's reappointment and declared the board's vote legally void. In a separate statement, Tata Trusts said since Noel Tata, one of the Trust nominee directors, voted against the proposal, it was rendered legally void and without any basis. Four of the total six directors voted in favour of Chandrasekaran's reappointment. Noel Tata was the only director who opposed the decision, while Chandrasekaran did not vote. The rift has exposed a deepening fault line between the holding company's corporate management — the board and the chairman — and its controlling shareholder, the Tata Trusts, which holds a decisive 66% stake in Tata Sons. Tata Group insiders are worried about the possibility of the worsening power struggle between Noel Tata and the Tata Sons board impacting the group's performance in the near term as Tata Sons guides capital allocation and its new project proposals.

Eye on festive demand as manufacturing drives August industrial output 8% higher

The Indian economy continued its impressive run, with data released Monday showing industrial production in August was 8% higher compared to the same month last year, although a favourable base effect helped drive overall growth as well as that of the manufacturing sector, whose output rose 9%. Policymakers, however, will keep an eye on the consumer goods segment. While production of durable goods rose 11.1% in August, following up a 12% increase in July, non-durable goods — which are primarily fast-moving consumer, or FMCG, products — saw a growth of only 2.1%.

According to Rajani Sinha, Chief Economist at CareEdge Ratings, the overall strong industrial performance is in line with other data such as GDP growth, lending, and exports, indicating that the economy has "held up well" despite persistent global uncertainties and elevated energy prices. And while the performance of consumer durables continues is a positive for consumption, "the feeble performance of consumer non-durables remains concerning." Consumer durables and non-durables are key indicators of household demand. And while production of durables is strong, analysts have been sounding caution ahead of the festival season, which sees Indians splurging on new purchases. But with prices of consumer electronics rising for a variety of reasons — significantly more expensive memory chips and other key inputs such as copper and aluminium as well as increasing freight costs — demand may face headwinds. However, Indians are seen relying on loans to make purchases, with UBS analysts predicting last week that India is entering a "strong unsecured credit growth cycle, led by personal loans". Latest data from the Reserve Bank of India shows that while personal loans given by banks were up 16.2% as at the end of July, those given by non-banks were up 21.4%. Industrial growth as per the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) was 7.4% in July and 4.7% in August 2026. The IIP comprises four key sectors, with manufacturing accounting for three-fourths of the entire index.

The August industrial growth print of 8% is the latest in a series of robust economic numbers, with June having posted an expansion of 8.8% — the highest since 19% in March 2024. So far in the first five months of 2026-27, or April-August 2026, industrial growth has averaged 6.7%, well above 4.2% in the same period of 2025-26. If this is maintained, India can register growth of 7-8% for the year on the back of higher growth during the festival season with demand building up. This makes the third quarter very critical for industry," said Madan Sabnavis, Chief Economist at Bank of Baroda. A favourable base effect usually occurs when output either stagnated or fell in the year-ago month — which is used to calculate the growth rate for the latest month. As such, this favourable base meant the year-on-year growth rates in August 2026 for industrial output as a whole and the manufacturing sector were impressive even though production was down compared to July 2026: manufacturing output was down 1.4%, while overall industrial production was 1.8% lower.

According to Rahul Agrawal, Principal Economist at ratings agency ICRA, the favourable base effect in August 2026 was because of 'inventory recalibration' in August 2025 ahead of the widely-expected cuts in the Goods and Services Tax (GST) rates, that were announced by the GST Council in early September 2025 and came into effect later that month on the 22nd. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in his Independence Day speech last year, had spoken of GST reforms. As a result, sellers looked to reduce their stocks of goods as they waited for the new GST rates to kick in. The reforms reduced the indirect tax rates on hundreds of goods and services, which were passed on to consumers in the



form of lower prices.

Within the manufacturing sector, 18 of the 23 categories posted higher year-on-year growth in their output in August. According to Devendra Pant, Chief Economist at India Ratings & Research, underlines "generalised improvement". "Like previous months, electrical equipment and motor vehicles continued to record strong growth of 30.9% and 25.2%, respectively," Pant noted, adding that the former's performance is indicative of "growing domestic and external demand for Indian manufactured electrical goods". The sharpest sectoral month-on-month fall in August was for mining and quarrying, whose output slumped 9.2% from July. Mining and quarrying, which accounts for over a tenth of the IIP, usually suffers during the monsoons as rains hinder mining activity. On a year-on-year basis, mining and quarrying output was down 5.6% in August. A favourable base also helped push up the output of the 'electricity & gas supply' sector to 12.3% in August, although it was the only sector to post a sequential improvement in production. However, this month-on-month output increase was a mere 0.3%. The impressive year-on-year growth in 'electricity and gas supply' was despite a 2.4% contraction in gas supply, with the electricity component doing all the heavy lifting. Electricity generated from renewable sources rose 15.4% year-on-year in August, while non-renewable sources posted an increase of 12.3%. In terms of goods, three of the six categories posted double-digit growth rates in August: capital goods (16.9%), intermediate goods (13.7%), and consumer durables (11.1%). Production of primary goods was up 3.5%, while that of consumer non-durables was 2.1% higher. Even during April-August 2026, output of consumer non-durables is up only 1.2% year-on-year. This was on top of a muted 2.1% growth in the same five months of 2025.

Hyderabad-Tashkent direct flight service launched

Hyderabad: GMR Hyderabad International Airport Ltd (GHIAL) marked a milestone in its international connectivity journey with the launch of the inaugural Centrum Air service between Hyderabad and Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan. The new route establishes the first direct air connection between South India and Central Asia, further strengthening Hyderabad Airport's position as a key international gateway, a press release said.

The inaugural flight departed from Hyderabad Airport in the presence of senior officials from GHIAL, Centrum Air, and other stakeholders and was commemorated with a special ceremony at the airport.

Markets fall 1.6% as Trump rejects West Asia ceasefire proposal, crude soars



The Indian stock market shed another 1.6% on Monday, falling to its lowest levels in nearly six months, as high crude prices in the wake of gloom in West Asia led to heavy selling pressure. The benchmark indices had tumbled around 1.7% last Thursday, which had led to the indices extending their losing run to seven weeks.

BSE's Sensex crashed 1.5% or 1,124.02 points on Monday to end the session at 72,771.72. Nifty 50 lost 1.6% to close at 22,780.25. The fall wiped out nearly Rs 9 lakh crore of investor wealth in the process. "Bears remained firmly in control as the market breached a key psychological support level, reflecting growing investor caution amid deteriorating global macro conditions," said Vinod Nair, Head of research, Geojit Investments. All sectoral, broader market, and thematic indices ended the session firmly in the red, as the India VIX — the market's volatility indicator — climbed 12.5%. Banks, financial services, IT, oil and gas, and metals were among the worst hit during the session, all falling 1-2%.

As oil prices remained a thorn, the Indian rupee fell to its lowest level in over a week before reported intervention by state-owned banks, likely on behalf of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), stabilised the currency a bit, according to Reuters. It eventually settled down 0.2% at 95.98 against the dollar. Markets fall 1.6% as Trump rejects West Asia ceasefire proposal, crude soars Trump rejects peace proposal, crude shoots up

On Saturday, US President Donald Trump had rejected Iran's proposal of a 7-day ceasefire, alongside plans to reopen the critical Strait of Hormuz due to the latter asking "too many concessions" without meeting its terms, making the hopes of a diplomatic resolution of the conflict bleaker. However, Trump also told news portal Axios on Sunday that he expected US negotiators to engage in more

Indian conglomerate Essar to build 'largest US steel plant' in Iowa??

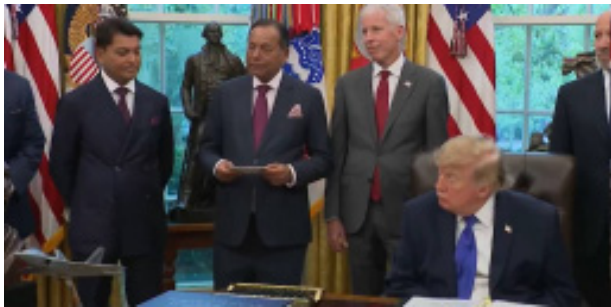
Washington: US President Donald Trump has announced that Indian multinational conglomerate Essar Group will build "the largest steel plant" in American history in Iowa, at an investment of USD 15 billion. Trump made the announcement on Monday in the Oval Office with Essar Group co-founder Ravi Ruia and his son Rewant by his side.

"Today, we're thrilled to announce that Mesabi Metallics will be building the largest steel plant in American history in the great state of Iowa," Trump said. Essar Group's Mesabi Metallics chairman Rewant Ruia thanked Trump "for bringing back the importance of building things in America." The new steel plant is being built by Mesabi Metallics, a Minnesota company owned by India's Essar Group. Mesabi Metallics is building the plant to start production by 2030, a White House official said.

The facility is expected to produce 10 million tonnes of steel a year and create as many as 1,750 permanent jobs in the state, the official said. The plant will use iron ore from a new mine that the company invested USD 2.5 billion to build in Minnesota. The mine will produce about 7.5 million tonnes of iron per year and create about 350 jobs in the state, the White House official said, noting that it will be the first new iron mine in the US in 50 years. The mine is based in

talks this week, keeping diplomatic doors open. Despite this, Trump's rejection of an immediate resolution led to crude prices shooting up to over \$108 per barrel on Monday, crushing any optimism in the Indian market. "Whenever crude is above \$100 a barrel, it creates a selling pressure in the Indian market over the short-to-medium term. The current scenario is similar to what we had seen in the first couple of months of the war," said Kranthi Bathini, Equity Strategist, WealthMills Securities. For context, India is the third-largest importer of crude oil globally, and higher crude prices stoke fears of inflation, hurting both corporate growth and the spending power of consumers.

The Indian market had recovered a bit briefly during July and August as the conflict in West Asia had moderated a bit, turning focus towards factors like earnings growth and macroeconomic conditions. This had led to foreign investors turning net buyers in the Indian market over those months. However, with the situation escalating again this month, foreign investors have dumped \$2.2 billion of Indian shares so far this month, adding to the selling pressure. Furthermore, the booming IPO market during the month has also taken liquidity away from the secondary market, analysts said. Bond yields continued their upward trajectory on Friday, with the US Treasury yields rising above 5.2% — the highest level since 2004. Yields on bonds from other global markets such as the UK, Japan, and some other European nations have also been rising steadily. Indian bond yields have also been moving in line, with the yield on the benchmark bond rising to 7.18% during the session — the highest since April 2024. Bond yields tend to rise amid fears of rising inflation, which leads to central banks hiking interest rates. These potentially higher interest rates drive up yields, which move inversely to prices, as future bond issues become more attractive than the current ones. Higher yields are a negative for the market, as they provide a safer and more attractive investment avenue for investors. The oversupply of liquidity has been another factor driving yields higher in India's case. The RBI on Monday completed its biggest-ever annual net bond sale in more than a decade of Rs 1 lakh crore, absorbing some of the excess liquidity in the system but adding to the supply glut of bonds in the process. Reports also said the government's borrowing calendar for October-March, released on Friday, unsettled traders by tilting issuance away from liquid five- and 10-year bonds and toward 15-year and ultra-long securities. Higher-duration bonds are more prone to interest rate risks, making bond prices very sensitive to any potential policy action by the RBI, which increasingly looks likely as rising inflation remains a threat.



Minnesota's Mesabi Iron Range, which stretches 80 to 100 miles and contributed about 60 per cent of total iron ore production in the US during the 20th century. Energy Secretary Chris Wright, Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick; John Jovanovic, chair of the Export-Import Bank; and David Copley, senior director for Global Supply Chain, were among the other people present at the announcement. "This plant will use the latest technology and will compete head-to-head with any steel plant in the world on size, quality and on cost," Rewant Ruia said.

Safety, profitability to be key priorities for Air India, CEO-designate Tewolde Gebremariam

Incoming Air India chief executive Tewolde Gebremariam listed safety, operational reliability, and profitability as key priorities for the Tata group airline's next phase of growth. Addressing a company-wide townhall meeting on Monday, Gebremariam told the airline's employees that Air India has made significant progress since its return to the Tata group in early 2022, while emphasising that substantial opportunities remain ahead as the carrier continues in its pursuit to become a world-class global airline and achieve profitability. He also said that cost discipline must become part of the airline's culture.

"Everything we do must be safe. Safety is a shared responsibility, and every Air Indian has a role to play. We must continue to foster a culture where people are empowered to speak up, raise concerns and report issues without hesitation," said Gebremariam, who will take over as Air India's CEO and MD once all regulatory approvals to his appointment come in. He said safety would remain the airline's foremost priority and guiding principle, and encouraged employees to remain vigilant and proactively report anything they observe that could impact operational safety. "If you see something, say something. The stronger our reporting culture, the stronger our safety culture," he told staff.

Gebremariam is taking over the reins at Air India at a crucial juncture for the airline — in the aftermath of the deadly AI 171 crash in June last year and intensified scrutiny of the carrier's operational safety, and amid external headwinds like the Pakistani airspace closure and surging jet fuel prices due to geopolitical conflict in West Asia. Operationally safety at Air India is again in focus following one of its pilots tested positive for drug use and another failed an alcohol breath analyser test just before operating a flight. Gebremariam oversaw one of aviation's most successful long-term transformations, turning Ethiopian Airlines into a global airline and the largest carrier in Africa, and turned Addis Ababa into a major aviation hub. He also has a track record of driving sustained profitability while navigating complex economic cycles and dynamic and challenging global markets. Gebremariam will be steering the loss-laden airline through the next phase of its ambitious transformation programme.

Various aspects of Air India's transformation — from pilot training to maintenance practices and operational decision-making — will also be judged through the lens of safety as the shadow of the AI 171 crash still looms. Passengers,

regulators and investors will all expect evidence that safety systems, operational oversight, and organisational culture are improving continuously.

Gebremariam told employees that the "heavy lifting" of Air India's transformation programme has already been done over the past few years, including the complex merger and integration of Air India and Vistara. Along with the merger of these two airlines, the Air India group has also merged its budget airlines Air India Express and AIX Connect into one airline — Air India Express. Under outgoing CEO Campbell Wilson — Air India's first post-privatisation chief executive — the carrier embarked upon an ambitious transformation programme to shrug off its legacy image of a rundown government-owned airline. Despite the challenges that the airline has been grappling with, the foundational parts of its transformation plan have been executed under Wilson's watch. A new brand identity is in place, group airlines have been consolidated into two from four, synergies in their networks and operations has gone up considerably, massive aircraft orders are in place to ensure a steady stream of new jets, a large number of its legacy jets have been given modern cabins and more are being retrofitted, heavy investments have been made in technology and other key areas, and hiring for key operational roles is being done on a continuous basis. "Over the past four years, a great deal has been achieved. At the same time, there remains significant opportunity ahead of us. That is what makes this an exciting moment for Air India and for all of us," the incoming Air India CEO said, adding that India's favourable demographics, strong economic growth, geographic position and large global diaspora provide a unique foundation for the airline's future success. "These factors give us confidence that if we execute well and remain focused on our customers, Air India can become not only one of the largest airlines in the world, but among the very best," Gebremariam said, while also noting that the airline is operating in a challenging environment marked by geopolitical conflict, airspace restrictions affecting Indian carriers, elevated fuel prices, and uncertainty in key international markets. In the face these external headwinds, which have placed roadblocks on Air India's path to profitability, Gebremariam told staff that achieving sustainable profitability will be a key objective for the airline as it implements the next stages of its transformation plan and it can't afford to lose focus on improving its financial performance.

Sree Charani reaches highest-ever ICC Women's T20I bowling rating



GNS News Agency, Oct 2

Hyderabad: India's left-arm spinner Sree Charani has attained the highest-ever rating points in the ICC Women's T20I Bowling Rankings, climbing to 817 points in the latest weekly update released on Tuesday. Charani's tally is 11 points higher than the previous record of 806, held by Australian seam bowler Megan Schutt, who reached the mark in November 2018.

Charani's figures of two for 13 in the women's final at the Asian Games against Sri Lanka helped her consolidate the top position and set the new landmark, while stylish left-handed opener Smriti Mandhana returned to the top five of the ICC Women's T20I Batting Rankings. The 30-year-old vice-captain has moved up one slot after striking 79 off 46 deliveries with seven sixes and five fours and adding 99 for the opening stand with Shafali Verma as India notched a Games record total of 216 for three and eventually won by a

huge 147-run margin to retain the gold medal.

Her teammate Richa Ghosh, who struck 49 not out off 22 balls, has moved up three slots to 25th in the latest weekly update, which considers performances on the last day of the women's competition at the Asian Games. The competition also included the match for third place, in which Pakistan defeated Bangladesh by 31 runs to take home the bronze medal. Pakistan captain Fatima Sana's brisk 45 off 30 deliveries in that match has lifted her four places to 23rd, while Aliya Riyaz (up two places to 64th) and Gull Feroza (up six places to 87th) are others from her team to move up the rankings. Bangladesh's Sharmin Akhter has progressed 10 places to 35th after scoring 46 off 45.

In the bowling rankings, Pakistan's left-arm spinner Nashra Sandhu is back in the top 10, while Bangladesh's Nahida Akhter (up two places to 29th), Pakistan's Umm-e-Hani (up 58 places to 51st) and India's Kranti Gaud (up four places to 53rd) have made notable progress. In the ICC Women's ODI Player Rankings, West Indies captain Hayley Matthews has moved up three places to fourth among batters after notching a career-best 182 against Zimbabwe during the ICC Women's Championship Series, which is the highest-ever score by a West Indies woman player. Zimbabwe captain Modester Mupachikwa has advanced 16 places to a career-best 40th position with scores of 86 and 38 after two matches of the series, which is level at 1-1. Her opening partner Kelis Ndlovu has gone from 61st to 56th position in the list, while the bowling rankings see West Indies' Aaliyah Alleyne move up eight slots to 58th and Ashmini Munisar progress from 107th to 84th.

Who is Neeru Dhanda, India's first individual Asian Games gold medallist in women's trap



GNS News Agency, Oct 2

Nagoya: For Neeru Dhanda, the road to Asian Games gold has been built one target at a time. On Tuesday, the 26-year-old Indian shooter finally had a medal around her neck that had eluded every Indian female trap shooter before her. Neeru produced a commanding performance in the women's trap individual final in Aichi-Nagoya, finishing with 28 hits to win gold and set a new Asian record. China's Sun Yunong claimed silver with 26, while Kuwait's Hajar Abdulmalik took bronze on 21.

Neeru, who trains at Dr KSSR in New Delhi and is part

of the Indian Army Marksmanship Unit as a Naib Subedar, first represented India at the 2022 ISSF World Championship in Osijek. Since then, she has established herself as a regular contender on the international circuit. She won the women's trap title at the 2025 Asian Shooting Championship before producing the biggest breakthrough of her career earlier this year. At the ISSF Shotgun World Cup in Lonato, Italy, Neeru became the first Indian woman to win an individual World Cup gold in women's trap. She also earned a mixed-team bronze at the World Cup in Almaty.

The Asiad result marked the first time an Indian woman had won an Asian Games medal in the individual trap event. It also added another milestone to a year that has already transformed Neeru's standing in international shooting. Her final was a lesson in recovering from setbacks without allowing them to grow. After a clean opening run, Neeru missed once in her second series and briefly slipped behind Sun and Abdulmalik. Instead of letting the error disrupt her rhythm, she responded with two successive perfect series. At the halfway stage, she had struck 19 of 20 targets and opened a two-hit advantage over her nearest challengers. By the time she reached the final five shots, the gold was firmly within her grasp. Neeru kept her composure to finish on 28 and complete a performance that had been in her control for much of the contest. The victory is the latest landmark in a rapid rise for the shooter from Jind, Haryana. Her Asian Games triumph carries another personal connection. Neeru took up shooting after being inspired by her cousin Lakshay Sheoran, who won silver in men's trap at the 2018 Asian Games in Jakarta. Seven years later, she has gone one better. India has historically enjoyed greater success in rifle and pistol events than in shotgun disciplines. Neeru's gold therefore represents both a personal breakthrough and a significant moment for Indian trap shooting. After helping India win team silver earlier in these Games, Neeru returned to the range and delivered the performance that mattered most. This time, there was no one left to chase. Neeru was the target everyone else was trying to hit.

Andhra Kabaddi Association General Secretary gets grand welcome on return from Asian Games

GNS News Agency, Oct 2

Hyderabad: Srikanth Yalamanchili, General Secretary, Andhra Kabaddi Association (AKA), was accorded a grand welcome by the Executive Members of the Association at Gannavaram Airport (Vijayawada) on Tuesday upon his return from the Asian Games held in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan. Srikanth had the distinction of being nominated as a Jury Member for Kabaddi at the Asian Games by the Asian Games Organising Committee through the Amateur Kabaddi Federation of India (AKFI). His participation in this prestigious international sporting event is a matter of great pride for the entire Andhra Kabaddi fraternity, the AKA officials said.

"This marks his second international assignment as a Jury Member. Earlier, he was nominated as a Jury Member for the Asian Youth Games held in Bahrain in October 2025." The office-bearers and members of the Andhra Kabaddi Association, including K. V. Prabhavathi, President; K. V. Nancharaiiah, Senior Joint Secretary; N. Arjuna Rao Nakkala, Former International Kabaddi Player and Working President; and P. Ravindra, Director, Sports Authority of



Andhra Pradesh (SAAP), congratulated Srikanth Yalamanchili on this significant achievement and appreciated his valuable contribution towards the promotion and development of Kabaddi at the international level. The Andhra Kabaddi Association expressed its happiness and pride over his international assignment, which has brought recognition to Andhra Pradesh Kabaddi and its officials on the global stage.

Esha Singh's wild road to Asian Games silver: Chaos, delays and five shoot-offs



As the women's 25m pistol final at the Asian Games descended into a series of shoot-offs, officials' errors halted the contest and left China's Xiao Jiariuxuan waiting nearly 15 minutes; Esha got what she desperately needed: time. Her shooting hand was tightening. The pressure was building. And the long interruptions, frustrating as they were, gave her a chance to relax, reset and stay in a contest that seemed determined to stretch on. "I was kind of grateful for the errors and mistakes the judges were making because I got some rest," Esha said later. "Maybe you can call it God's grace, giving me some time off and just to think about it."

For a while, it seemed to work. The 21-year-old from Hyderabad clawed her way back from the brink of elimination, survived four shoot-offs against North Korea's Kim Hyon Suk and forced Xiao into a second tie-breaker for gold. But after the two shooters finished level at 38 hits in the regulation final and tied again at 4-4 in the first shoot-off, Xiao finally pulled away, winning the decisive series 3-2. Esha had to settle for silver. "It was amazing, and I've never had an experience like this before. Definitely going into my bucket of amazing experiences, and I'm grateful for every moment. Though it was nerve-racking, it was amazing," she said.

Breaking point The final had begun very differently. Esha hit all five targets in her opening series and followed it up with four more to take an early lead. But the rhythm soon deserted her. A three-hit series allowed Xiao to move ahead, and the Indian found herself repeatedly fighting to stay in contention. At one point, she slipped outside the medal positions. With another disappointing finish threatening to follow her struggles in the 10m air pistol, Esha needed a response. She delivered a perfect five-hit series to stay alive. The fight for the medals then became a contest of endurance. Esha and Kim finished level at 34 hits, forcing a shoot-off. The

first two tie-breakers failed to separate them, with both recording three hits apiece. After another lengthy interruption, Esha finally prevailed 3-2 in the third, securing at least silver and setting up a showdown with Xiao. The Chinese shooter had been waiting for nearly 15 minutes as the battle for the other medal positions dragged on. But when Esha returned to the firing line, the Indian showed little sign of being overwhelmed by the delay. She had, however, begun to feel the strain. "Because of the pressure, I think this time, in my mind, I don't know if it was a thought or if it was really happening, but my hand was genuinely getting very, very tight and very tired without me realising, even in the first series," Esha said. "So I just tried releasing or relaxing it a bit." The stoppages, she explained, had given her an opportunity to do precisely that. "It looks like a situation where the zone is breaking for an athlete, but in my case, it really helped me." Esha had another hurdle to clear. Xiao, who had led for much of the final, was now the only obstacle between her and gold. The two shooters finished the regulation final level at 38 hits, forcing a shoot-off. They were tied again at 4-4 in the first tie-breaker, leaving the title to be decided in one final five-shot series. Xiao hit three targets to Esha's two to claim gold. The silver was a measure of redemption for Esha after a disappointing outing in the women's 10m air pistol earlier in the Games. She finished 15th with a score of 572, while India narrowly missed a team bronze, finishing fourth on the count of inner tens. The 25m pistol, however, is a discipline in which Esha has consistently delivered. The world No. 1 has won two World Cup titles and a bronze at the World Championships over the past 18 months. At the Munich World Cup in May, she produced a record-breaking performance in the final, registering 43 hits to set senior and junior world records. The silver also increased India's shooting tally, with Esha adding another podium finish in one of the country's strongest disciplines. She had also won individual silver medals in both the 10m and 25m pistol events at the previous Asian Games in Hangzhou, along with a team gold and silver. India, meanwhile, finished fifth in the women's 25m pistol team event. The team had been one point behind China, but Rahi Sarnobat's opening-series miss in the rapid-fire round cost them valuable points. For Esha, though, the day ended with a medal — her second successive individual silver in the 25m pistol at the Asian Games, and a reminder of why the event remains her strongest.

'We are suffering from war, from rockets, from everything': Palestine's Mahmoud Daifallah



GNS News Agency, Oct 2

When Mahmoud Daifallah first walked into a karate club near his home in Ramallah, he was eight years old. His mother had taken him and his brother there during a holiday, looking for a way to keep them occupied. It was an unplanned visit that turned into a lifelong pursuit. "The holiday has not ended to this day," he says. Sixteen years later, Daifallah is in Nagoya for the Asian Games, finishing fifth in karate, narrowly missing out on a bronze medal. But between that first visit to a club and the competition mats in Japan lies a journey marked by checkpoints, travel restrictions, training amid ruins of a years-long conflict and the steady erosion of the sporting world he grew up in.

The Israel-Palestine war erupted on October 7, 2023, as the previous Asian Games in Hangzhou were drawing to a close. By the time athletes gathered in Japan for the 2026 edition, much of the infrastructure that sustained Palestine's sporting ambitions had been destroyed, while the conflict had claimed the lives of athletes, coaches and other members of the sporting community. The scale of the devastation is laid out in a brochure being distributed by the Palestine Olympic Committee (POC) at the Games. According to the committee, 1,014 people involved in sport — athletes, technical staff and administrators — have been killed, most of them in the Gaza Strip. Of the 265 sporting facilities destroyed, 181 have been completely razed and 84 partially damaged. Among them is Gaza's only athletics track. The Yarmouk Stadium, Palestine Stadium and Al-Durra Stadium have been converted into shelters for displaced people.

"These figures have left deep scars on Palestinian sports movement, affecting both its human resources and sporting infrastructure," the POC said in the brochure. For Daifallah, those figures are not distant statistics. They describe a sporting ecosystem in which clubs have closed, young athletes have been forced to abandon training and the simple act of travelling to a competition has become a challenge in itself. "As you know, as a Palestinian athlete,

nothing is easy," Daifallah, one of 67 athletes here, tells The Indian Express. "We are suffering from war, from rockets, from everything." Training is tough enough in those conditions. Travelling for competitions is a bigger challenge. Palestine has no airport. To compete abroad, Daifallah must travel by road from Ramallah to Jericho, cross checkpoints, transfer his baggage and take a bus to the Jordanian border, in Amman, before catching a flight. It is a journey that requires careful planning, but even that cannot guarantee he will make it to a competition. "Sometimes, the occupation authorities do not allow you to leave Palestine, and all your preparation goes to waste," Daifallah, who competes in the -67kg kumite, says. Difficult existence Since the Hangzhou Games, movement restrictions in the West Bank have made an already difficult existence more uncertain. "You have to deal with uncertainty before you can even think about the competition itself," Daifallah says. But the damage to Palestinian sport extends far beyond the difficulties of international travel. In Gaza, sporting facilities have been destroyed. In the West Bank, Daifallah says, clubs have shut down because families can no longer afford to send their children for training. "Sometimes, the parents of a child tell me that they will not take their child to the club," he says. "I ask them why, and they say that their financial situation does not allow them to take their child to the training club."

The result is a generation of young athletes whose ambitions are being squeezed by circumstances beyond their control. For Mohammad Edweedar, a Palestinian 800m runner who competed in Hangzhou, keeping his athletic career alive has meant making do with whatever space and equipment are available. He has often had to train on the streets, far from the facilities and support systems that athletes elsewhere rely on. Even getting the right pair of spikes, essential for a middle-distance runner, can be difficult. "Ideally, I would have them a week before a competition, or at least two or three days in advance, to get accustomed to racing in them. But that is not easy," he says, adding that the difficulties of training and travelling have contributed to injuries, one of the reasons he couldn't be in Nagoya.

The uncertainty follows athletes beyond the track. After the Hangzhou Games, Edweedar and his teammates were stranded in Jordan for around two weeks while trying to return to Palestine. The border had closed, leaving them unable to get home as their families waited on the other side. "It was very stressful because my family and our loved ones were back in Palestine," he says. The war has also taken away people who were central to his sporting life. Edweedar speaks of losing coach Bilal Abu Saman, whom he describes as someone very special and close to him, and fellow athlete Waseem Abudib. For Daifallah, the Palestinian uniform is a reminder of why he continues to compete, even when the circumstances make a normal sporting career seem out of reach. "When I put on the Palestinian uniform, I feel that I am carrying something bigger than myself," he says. Edweedar, too, returns to the reason he first took up running, even as the losses mount and the future remains uncertain. "I remind myself every day why I started competing and why I started running," he says. "It was for my family and my people."

Osmania University announces women's inter-college sports events



Hyderabad: The Osmania University Inter-college Chess Tournament for women will be held at St. Ann's Women's College, Mehdiapatnam, on September 29 and 30. For details, contact Ms Ramya, Physical Director, on 9052006454. The list of other inter-college tournaments for women is as follows: Inter-college Fencing for women: RG Kedia Degree College on October 1. Contact Mr D Akash, Physical Director, on 8309716815. Inter-college Cross Country: Haji Ghouse Peer Memorial College, Shamirpet, on October 3. Contact Mr Gopi, Physical Director, on 7036249249 or Prof Rajesh Kumar on 9885911520.

Inter-college Basketball: St. Francis Degree College, Mehdiapatnam, on October 6 and 7. Contact Ms Amitha Danial, Physical Director, on 9100199900. Inter-college Vol-

leyball Tournament: Loyola Academy, Alwal, on October 8 and 9. Contact Mr Ch Sandeep Reddy, Physical Director, on 7799576499. Inter-college Judo: Kasturba Gandhi Degree College, West Marredpally, on October 15. Contact Major Jayasudha, Physical Director, on 9247839199.

India to face Sri Lanka in Asian Games cricket semifinal



Nisshin: The Indian men's cricket team will face Sri Lanka in the semifinals of the Asian Games after the island nation's quarterfinal against Nepal was abandoned due to inclement weather here on Tuesday. Sri Lanka made it to the last four owing to their higher ranking. While they are placed ninth in the team rankings, Nepal are 14th. There has been consistent rain in Nagoya over the past few days, leading to all four quarterfinals, including India's, being washed out. The second semifinal will be played between Pakistan and Bangladesh. Both semifinals are set to take place on Thursday. The Indian men's team, led by Shreyas Iyer, is yet to play a game at the Korogi Sports Park, which also hosted the women's competition won by Harmanpreet Kaur and Co.

The Indian men's team, led by Shreyas Iyer, is yet to play a game at the Korogi Sports Park, which also hosted the women's competition won by Harmanpreet Kaur and Co.

Khushbu survived childhood trauma to reign over Tamil cinema, fans made temples for her



In Tamil Nadu, there is a dish called Khushbu Idly, softer, rounder and fluffier than a regular idly. It was invented in Madurai by a fan of actress Khushbu Sundar in the early 1990s, and the reasoning behind the name, as food historians and recipe writers have noted over the years, is as simple as it is audacious: the idly was described as being "soft and spongy, like Khushbu's cheeks." The dish is still served across the state today. It appears on restaurant menus, street food stalls and YouTube cooking channels. It has outlasted the careers of most actresses who were working when it was invented. In Karnataka, the same preparation is called Mallige Idly, after the jasmine flower, because the idly is white and delicate. But in Tamil Nadu, it was named after a woman. That is the kind of craze Khushbu inspired, and the idly was the least of it.

This article touches on sensitive personal experiences, including childhood trauma and abuse, shared in a reflective biographical context. This content is for informational purposes and is not a substitute for professional mental health support. If you or someone you know is struggling or in distress, help is available. Before Tamil Nadu: a childhood in MumbaiKhushbu Sundar was born Nakhat Khan into a middle-class Muslim family in Mumbai. Her childhood was marked by violence and trauma. In an interview with Barkha Dutt on Mojo Story, she revealed that she was sexually abused by her father at the age of eight. She had witnessed the same man beat her mother and brothers. "When a child is abused, it scars the child for life," she said. Her parents gave her the stage name Khushbu when she began working as a child artist in Hindi cinema. Her first appearance on screen was in The Burning Train, where she featured in the song "Teri Hai Zameen Tera Aasman." She was 10 years old. Over the next few years, she appeared in Hindi films as a child artiste. At 16, she was uprooted from Mumbai and brought to Chennai, where she landed her first Telugu film, Kaliyuga Pandavulu, introduced by producer D Ramanaidu and director K Raghavendra Rao. She went on to do close to 12 films in Telugu and Kannada before Tamil cinema found her.

The Tamil breakthroughKhushbu made her Tamil de-

but in Dharmathin Thalaiva, a Rajinikanth film directed by SP Muthuraman. She played the love interest of Prabhu, who appeared alongside Rajinikanth. The film was a commercial success and introduced Khushbu to Tamil audiences for the first time. She followed it with Varusham 16, Kizhaku Vaasal and Nadigan, establishing herself as a reliable commercial heroine. But the film that catapulted her from a working actress to a phenomenon was Chinna Thambi, directed by P Vasu, opposite Prabhu. The rural romantic drama about a naïve village simpleton who falls in love with a sheltered wealthy girl became one of the biggest blockbusters in Tamil cinema history at that point. Khushbu, who played Nandini with a warmth and accessibility that the Tamil audience had not seen from a Hindi-speaking actress before, became the most popular heroine in the state overnight. What followed Chinna Thambi was not ordinary fame. It was a level of public obsession that no actress in Tamil cinema had experienced before or has experienced since. Khushbu and Prabhu became Tamil cinema's most popular on-screen couple of the decade. Almost every film they did together was a blockbuster: Vettri Vizhaa, My Dear Marthandan, Pandithurai, Uthama Raasa, Maravan and Chinna Vathiyar. The audience consumed her films and then the consumption went beyond cinema. Fans built temples in Khushbu's name. Madras Musings, the city heritage publication, documented the phenomenon, writing that "the Tamil Nadu urchin-gang, including the not-so-urchins as well, built a chain of temples in her honour, having been blown away by her rotund charms." A temple near Tiruchendur district of Tamil Nadu, built by a group of die-hard fans, continues to exist to this day, where devotees offer prayers to Khushbu as a form of worship.

Products were named after her. Khushbu sarees became a category in textile shops. Khushbu coffee appeared in local markets. And, most enduringly, the Khushbu Idly was born in Madurai. The idly became so popular that it spread across Tamil Nadu and into Karnataka, where it was adopted under the name Mallige Idly. The recipe uses raw rice, sago (javvarisi) and beaten rice (aval) to achieve a texture that is significantly softer and fluffier than a regular idly made with parboiled rice and urad dal. Khushbu's filmography spans over 200 films across Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam and Hindi.

Over 100 of those are Tamil films alone. She worked with every major male star of her era: Rajinikanth in Dharmathin Thalaivan and later Annaatthe, Kamal Haasan in Singaravelan, Vijayakanth in Vaanatha Pokkal, Sathyaraj in Vandicholai Chinnarasu, and Sarath Kumar in Nattamai. Khushbu Sundar with her husband, Sundar C and her children Khushbu Sundar with her husband, Sundar C and her children. At her peak, she was the number one heroine in Tamil cinema from approximately 1991 to 1996, a reign of about five years during which she was the most bankable female name in the industry. No actress before her had achieved that level of commercial dominance in Tamil Nadu, and very few have matched it since. Khushbu's personal life was as public as her professional one. In 2000, Khushbu married filmmaker and actor Sundar C, who had directed her in Murai Maman. She has since adopted the name Khushbu Sundar. The couple have two daughters, Avantika and Anandita. Despite marrying a Hindu, Khushbu did not convert and has stated publicly that she was never asked to.

'I'm married to a child': Fahadh Faasil quips about Nazriya Nazim amid separation rumours



Although rumours of a potential split between them occasionally surface online, actor couple Fahadh Faasil and Nazriya Nazim have never addressed these claims directly and carry on with their lives as if unperturbed by such noise. They also never miss a chance to celebrate each other and spend quality time together, occasionally sharing glimpses of their personal moments on social media. During a recent event, Fahadh briefly talked about his relationship with Nazriya and how she behaves around him. Quipping that she's like a child, he said that handling her has made him an expert in dealing with children. "I'm married to a child," he said during the Tamil Nadu leg of the promotions for his upcoming film Don't Trouble the Trouble. "People tell me that my child management skills and patience are great. So, I say, 'I have one at home. I've been dealing with that.' But, for the first time, I met a child who could deal with me," he shared, referring to his Don't Trouble The Trouble co-star Ssara, a child actor. He added, "Every time I messed up my line, she corrected me, saying, 'Sir, I think it's this way.' She by-heart my lines as well. I've never worked with such a patient actor, and she's my favourite co-star at the moment. We had a ball making this movie. I just hope that you guys have half the fun we had making this film; that will be enough for us." Although Fahadh is often said to be an introvert, Nazriya once attested that he is not like that at home, underscoring that he can be his unfiltered self around her. "He is not at all an introvert at home! But this works because there are days when we choose to be introverts and extroverts! There is a balance," she told The Hollywood Reporter India in a 2025 interview. She added, "According to him, when there are more than seven people in a room, that's a big party. But if you ask his friends, they will tell you he is not an

introvert. He will always be a storyteller, narrating stories when we are around." Memories of Blunder | Vishal's Magudam is 'therapeutic,' 'kidney-touching' and makes many bad movies look good Fahadh Faasil married Nazriya Nazim, 12 years younger than him, in 2014. They have worked together in movies such as director Anjali Menon's Bangalore Days (2014) and Anwar Rasheed's Trance (2020). Written and directed by Shashank Yeleti, Don't Trouble the Trouble is produced by Shobu Yarlagadda, Prasad Devineni, and SS Karthikeya, and presented by SS Rajamouli. It features music by Kaala Bhairava, cinematography by Brad Francis, and editing by Praveen Anthony. The fantasy film, marking Fahadh's first Telugu movie as a lead actor, will hit the screens on October 2.

Ishita Dutta reveals why returning to the 'Drishyam' world is 'exciting'

Mumbai: Actress Ishita Dutta has opened up about returning to the world of the 'Drishyam' franchise with the upcoming third installment.

In an exclusive quote shared with IANS, she shared what makes the franchise special for her and said the mystery and unanswered questions keep the audience interested. Ishita said she is excited to be part of the world again, where the story does not reveal everything at once and gives viewers plenty to think and question. Ishita shared, "Every time I step back into the world of Drishyam, there is a strange mix of nostalgia and excitement. Some characters stay with you long after the film ends, and Anju is definitely one of them. But this time, knowing that we are bringing the final chapter to the audience makes it even more meaningful."

She added, "What I love about Drishyam is that it never tells the audience everything upfront. There is always something to think about, something to question. That is what makes returning to this world so exciting." In "Drishyam: The Conclusion," the actress will be seen reprising her role as Anju Salgaonkar. The third instalment brings back key members of the franchise, including Ajay Devgn, Tabu, Shriya Saran and Ishita Dutta, while introducing new faces to the story. The 'Drishyam' franchise follows Vijay and his family as they face a life-changing crisis after a police officer's son goes missing. When the family becomes connected to the disappearance, Vijay goes to great lengths to protect his loved ones from the investigation and its consequences. Seven years after the events of the second film, the Salgaonkar family has attempted to leave their troubled past behind and start afresh. However, new developments soon put their peaceful lives at risk and threaten to bring hidden secrets back into the open.

Raashii Khanna shares a glimpse of her life in Mysore, relishes dosa, goes temple hopping



Mumbai: Actress Raashii Khanna, who is currently busy shooting for "Dharmam" in Mysore, gave a glimpse into the world she has been living in for a while now. Sharing moments from her time in the city, she offered a

peek into her temple visits, leisurely outings, games and fun-filled moments with friends.

Taking to Instagram, Raashii shared a series of pictures and videos from her time in the city. She could be seen enjoying some quiet moments while exploring Mysore and visiting temples. The actress also shared a fun moment with friends as they played UNO and laughed together. Among the highlights of her post was a picture of a delicious Mysore dosa. Sharing the glimpses, the 'Tholi Prema' actress wrote, "A little glimpse into the world I have been living in for a while now in Mysore. A little temple hopping, a little wandering, some UNO and lots of laughter. And yes, the Mysore dosa deserved its own moment."

The first image showed Raashii sitting at a restaurant and enjoying a traditional dosa thali. The post also featured glimpses from her temple visits and behind-the-scenes moments from the sets of her upcoming project. Raashii also shared a series of pictures from Mysore, where she is currently shooting for Ashwath Marimuthu's 'Dharmam'. The film's team is presently working on its fourth shooting schedule in the city. Among the pictures was a frame featuring Raashii with Rajinikanth and Telugu actor Ram Pothineni. Sharing glimpses of her time in Mysore, the actress revealed that her days included early morning workouts with Rajinikanth and Ram, temple visits, exploring the city and playing UNO with the team. Raashii Khanna plays a pivotal role in Tamil superstar Rajinikanth's upcoming film 'Dharmam.' In the film, Rajinikanth is set to play a doctor who takes on criminals. 'Dharmam' is slated to hit theatres in January 2027, with its release planned around the Pongal festival.

Trade experts share why theatres enjoy more footfall in South India

Mumbai: With the rise of OTT culture, the cinema halls are seeing a rapid decline in footfall. However, when one takes a closer look, one finds that the situation is better in the South, compared to the North. IANS reached out to industry experts in an attempt to understand why cinema-going culture continues to flourish in the South, while it is becoming a rare phenomenon in the North. Trade Analyst Girish Wankhede explained, "The only difference between the South and us is that there they have a slab on ticket pricing. Which means they cannot sell tickets above a certain price, but there is no such limit in the North."

He added that, being affordable, more and more people go and watch movies in the cinema halls in the South and the regular occupancy rate in theatres is more than 70%. Wankhede further shared that the associations and unions in the South have not allowed the ticket rates to go above a certain point, which is not the case in the North.

Additionally, Vishek Chauhan, a fourth-generation theatre owner from Purnia Bihar, told IANS that the increased prices by the exhibition sector have significantly reduced consumption. "If they used to watch 10-12 films in a year, now they come to watch one or two films in a year." Comparing the ticket prices of North and South, he added, "What is the difference between Chennai and Delhi?



In Delhi you have to sell for Rs 700 and the same chain in Chennai is selling for Rs190." Explaining the reason for the same, he continued, "You will have to understand that BDR, INOX and Cinepolis, these are all luxury planes; these are all lifestyle products; they pitch themselves. They talk to the richest people in this country. So a luxury plane cannot be for everyone. In a 5-star hotel, a common man does not go even if he has money because he feels intimidated. And in a very high-end place, a poor man does not have the courage to go inside. So we have to make spaces for them. Because the real audience is the same."

'Hurt' Aishwarya Rai spoke about Shah Rukh Khan removing her from 5 films: 'No explanation'



Aishwarya Rai and Shah Rukh Khan once shared a friendly camaraderie, after sharing screen space in films like Josh, Mohabbatein and Devdas. However, the two had a professional fallout when SRK reportedly removed Aishwarya from many of his successful films, including Chalte Chalte (2003) with Rani Mukerji stepping in. While it has been years since the rift and both actors have moved on, certain reports also claimed that the replacement was because Salman Khan created disturbances on the sets of the film, due to their personal issues.

In her appearance on Rendezvous with Simi Garewal years ago, Aishwarya Rai opened up about how she was suddenly ousted from a few of Shah Rukh's films. "How can I have the answer to that?" she said, adding, "Yes, at the time, there was talk of a couple of films that we would be working in together. And then, suddenly they weren't happening, without any explanation whatsoever. I have never had the answer to why." When the host told Aishwarya that Shah Rukh Khan had once expressed regret in an interview, and had revealed that it was because he became involved in her personal life, which he accepted he shouldn't have. "I don't have the answer to that," she said, emphasising that it wasn't her decision to not do those movies.

Aishwarya Rai was the first choice for Chalte Chalte. The film was backed by Shah Rukh and Juhi Chawla's company, Dreamz Unlimited. They had already started shooting when Rani Mukerji replaced Aishwarya midway. Meanwhile, neither Shah Rukh nor Aishwarya ever confirmed Salman's involvement in the situation. "See, at the time, when you have no explanation, you're obviously completely taken aback, and confused, and hurt. You wonder about it. It's not in my nature to question someone for this. If a person feels a need to explain it, they will. If they never did, they never intend to. So, it's not in my nature to get into questioning what and why. Probably within myself, but I wouldn't go up to a person and ask why. By the grace of God, I'm not defined by the other," she stated. Aishwarya also recalled that Shah Rukh didn't give her time to think about the situation. "I was never put in a position where I was suddenly sitting

there, with these films out of my diary, with absolutely nothing happening career wise, where I would be wondering 'oh, now what, and why?'" she shared. Later on, during an interaction with India Today in 2003, SRK had expressed regret over replacing Aishwarya in the films, admitting that it was a mistake. When questioned about Chalte Chalte, he expressed, "To start a project with someone and then change her for no fault of hers is very difficult. It is very sad as Ash is a good friend. Personally, I think I did wrong. But as a producer, it made sense. I apologised to Ash." In an old interview video that resurfaced on Reddit, Shah Rukh also said, "Personally, it is very saddening not to... for something to reach this level. I feel very sorry about it, and I genuinely do... As a producer, my hands were tied because I am not the only producer. I have a team of people, and this time we also have UTV, who is working with us. The collective decision of 10-11 people. We were also not doing very well as producers. That was at stake." Aishwarya Rai and Shah Rukh Khan last featured together in Karan Johar's 2016 romantic drama Ae Dil Hai Mushkil. It starred Ranbir Kapoor and Anushka Sharma in lead roles.

Ranbir Kapoor turns 44, gets special birthday wish from Alia

Mumbai: Actress Alia Bhatt wished husband Ranbir Kapoor on his 44th birthday with some unseen romantic pictures of the two.

On Monday, the 'Jigra' actress posted an adorable photo of Ranbir seated on her lap as the two lovingly gazed into each other's eyes. In the next picture, Ranbir appeared to be in the middle of a conversation with Alia as the two enjoyed some quality time at a restaurant.

Another picture showed the 'Barfi' actor standing on the sidewalk and looking up at the camera. Alia also uploaded an adorable photograph of Ranbir holding little Raha in his arms. However, Raha's face was covered with a flower emoji. This was followed by two pictures of Ranbir and Alia looking at each other's company.

As the 'Animal' actor celebrated his special day, a video surfaced on social media showing Ranbir and Alia waving from the balcony of their Krishna Raj bungalow in Mumbai. As part of his birthday celebrations, Ranbir also held a cake-cutting ceremony with the paparazzi outside his Mumbai house. The 'Wake Up Sid' actor was seen wearing a long grey full-sleeved shirt with pants and a pair of stylish sunglasses. Ranbir ended up cutting three cakes, one of which was shaped as the number '44'. He then posed for photographs. Before heading back, he thanked the paparazzi with folded hands. Alia's mother and veteran actress Soni Razdan also wished her son-in-law with a special message on social media.