

Activist seeks intervention over bridge



Shillong, Sept 14: Social activist Salgra G. Momin from the Garo Hills region has formally petitioned Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma, seeking immediate executive intervention and a thorough investigation into alleged structural defects and substandard work on an under-construction bridge at Dalu Chaipani in West Garo Hills.

In the representation submitted to the Chief Minister, local MP, and senior Public Works Department (PWD) officials, Momin raised serious concerns regarding the overall quality of materials and engineering standards deployed by the executing agency. The petition highlighted visible structural flaws along the project site, cautioning that unaddressed defects pose significant long-term safety risks to daily commuters, local transport operators, and public infrastructure durability in the district.

Urging the state government and PWD leadership to conduct an independent technical assessment, the activist appealed to the administration to enforce strict quality control measures and hold responsible contractors accountable before the project reaches completion. Furthermore, the petition stressed that the Dalu Chaipani route serves as a crucial transit link for trade, agriculture, and inter-district transportation across West Garo Hills. Momin noted that local residents have raised frequent complaints regarding delayed execution and compromised construction standards.

Nagaland education association conducts state workshop on AI and SWAYAM

Alder College program trains teachers on digital tools, SWAYAM

Kohima, Sept 14: The Nagaland Education Association (NEA), in collaboration with the Department of Education, Nagaland University, and the Department of Education, Alder College, organized a state-level one-day workshop on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and SWAYAM for teaching faculty at Alder College, Kohima.

In her welcome address, NEA President Dr. Bweyhunle Khing emphasized the growing necessity of equipping teachers, students, and educational administrators with technical skills to navigate digital tools. Describing education as the foundation of all professions, Dr. Khing remarked that investing in professional development for teachers is vital for building a globally competitive and



peaceful society. She highlighted SWAYAM as an accessible option for working professionals, in-service educators, and students in remote areas to pursue free higher education at their own pace. The first technical session, titled “AI in Education,” was led by Moasunep Kichu, Technical Officer in the Department of IT at NIELIT, Kohima.

Kichu demonstrated prompt engineering, teacher-AI workflows, and practical applications for lesson planning and research. Stating that AI should act as a “co-pilot, not an autopilot,” he stressed that AI tools will not replace educators but will help reduce administrative burdens while human teachers retain core responsibilities for critical

thinking, creativity, and student care. He further urged educators to maintain vigilance regarding data privacy and students’ independent problem-solving abilities.

The second technical session was conducted by Dr. B. Venkata Rao, Associate Professor at Nagaland University, who detailed the opportunities provided by the SWAYAM online learning portal. Dr. Rao highlighted the role of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and the Academic Bank of Credits (ABC) ID in supporting flexible learning, urging educational institutions across Nagaland to appoint dedicated SWAYAM coordinators. The program concluded with an interactive discussion among participating faculty members.

Nitin Nabin urges citizens to light lamp for Modi

New Delhi, Sept 14: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) national president Nitin Nabin appealed to citizens across the country to light an “Aashirwad ka Diya” (lamp of blessings) at their homes on September 17 to mark Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s birthday. Calling upon people to light the lamp between 6:00 PM and 7:00 PM, Nabin urged the nation to offer prayers for the Prime Minister’s good health, long life, and continued leadership.

In a video message posted on social media, the BJP president highlighted that “service to the nation through service to the people” has remained the guiding principle of Modi’s public life. Nabin described the Prime Minister’s 25-year unbroken tenure as a head of government—spanning his years as Gujarat



Chief Minister and as Prime Minister—as unprecedented in modern Indian political history. He noted that under Modi’s leadership, transformational policy decisions and welfare schemes such as the Swachh Bharat Mission, Lakshpati Didi, and startup initiatives have empowered women, youth, and marginalized communities. The appeal forms a core component of the BJP’s month-long ‘Seva Sankalp Abhiyan,’

scheduled from September 17 to October 17. The party will observe the Prime Minister’s birthday as ‘Seva Diwas’ across the country, organizing health camps, blood donation drives, public participation outreach, and youth engagement programs. Nabin emphasized that the campaign aims to unite citizens in renewing their commitment toward achieving the goal of a ‘Viksit Bharat’ by 2047.

6th Brillante piano festival showcases Naga music talent in New Delhi

Kohima, Sept 14: The sixth edition of the Brillante Piano Festival, Nagaland’s flagship multi-genre musical platform, officially opens its Delhi chapter to showcase rising Naga pianists and promote cross-cultural collaboration on a national stage. Founded by celebrated pianist and composer Khyochano TCK in 2017, the festival brings together performers, educators, and music enthusiasts across multiple genres ranging from Western classical and jazz to contemporary styles.

The three-day national event features a structured sequence of competitive showcases, workshops, and masterclasses designed to nurture emerging artists. Key competition divi-



sions include Classical, Jazz, and the high-speed “Flying Ninja” technical challenge, alongside the festival’s signature Specially Aabled Musicians (SAM) initiative, which provides inclusive performance pathways for artists with diverse abilities.

Additionally, regional performing contingents—including the Music Academy Kohima (MAK) and the Margaret Shishak School of Music (MSSM) Choir—are scheduled to deliver feature performances highlighting indigenous musical heritage.

PIB press tour offers Arunachal journos glance into innovation and infrastructure

Itanagar, Sept 14: A nine-member media delegation from Arunachal Pradesh successfully concluded a seven-day “Viksit Bharat” exposure tour to Gujarat, organized by the Press Information Bureau (PIB), Itanagar. Led by PIB Itanagar Joint Director Utsav Parmar, the inaugural media tour was designed to provide journalists from the frontier state with firsthand insights into large-scale infrastructure projects, emerging technologies, cooperative enterprise models, and heritage preservation initiatives across Gujarat’s major economic hubs.

Throughout the week-long itinerary spanning Ahmedabad, Dholera, Vadodara, and



Ekta Nagar, the journalists engaged with project leaders, urban planners, and policy experts. At the Dholera Special Investment Region (SIR)—India’s greenfield industrial smart city—the delegation examined master-planned urban infrastructure, semiconductor ecosys-

tems, and interactive robotics applications. The journalists also visited the Sabarmati Multimodal Transport Hub and CEPT University to study integrated transit planning and sustainable urban development strategies that could inform town planning initiatives in Itanagar and

surrounding regions. In addition to technological innovations, the tour emphasized institutional capacity and industrial expansion. The delegation visited the National Forensic Sciences University (NFSU) for briefings on cybersecurity and digital investigation tools, Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya for logistics education, and AMUL’s Anand facilities to study successful cooperative dairy supply chains.

The exposure visit concluded with cultural and historical engagements, including stops at the Kochrab Ashram, the Sabarmati Riverfront, Vadodara’s Pratap Vilas Palace, and Ekta Nagar’s Statue of Unity.

RGU holds workshop on AI and special economics lecture

Rono Hills, Sept 14: The Centre for Development Studies (CDS), functioning within the Department of Economics at Rajiv Gandhi University (RGU), organized a comprehensive academic program featuring a one-day workshop on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and a special lecture on economic metrics.

The workshop, titled “AI in Social Science Research,” aimed to equip scholars with a nuanced understanding of integrating emerging technology into modern academic inquiries. In his address, RGU Vice-Chancellor (in-charge) Prof. S. K. Nayak commended the CDS initiative. He emphasized the importance of using AI tools

responsibly, warning that overreliance on automated systems could compromise researchers’ critical thinking abilities and intellectual independence. He encouraged the department to scale up such training programs for wider academic outreach.

Adding to the discussion, Prof. Nani Bath, Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences, highlighted the rapid global transition toward super-artificial intelligence and noted the massive investments driven by multinational corporations. Expressing concern over the potential misuse of AI simply to shortcut effort, Prof. Bath urged young scholars to leverage AI for generating novel re-

search ideas and expanding analytical frameworks rather than diminishing personal creativity.

Following the workshop, the department hosted a special lecture on “Measuring Economic Inequality: Methodological Issues and Alternative Approaches.” Delivered by Dr. Mofidul Hassan from Gauhati University, the talk explored various theoretical concepts of social welfare and differentiated between structural forms of economic inequality.

Dr. Hassan detailed several quantitative methodologies used to evaluate economic disparity, outlining the specific merits and limitations inherent to each technique.

He cautioned researchers against relying solely on a single metric to draw policy conclusions. While acknowledging the Gini ratio as the standard global tool for measuring overall inequality, he stressed that robust economic analysis requires supplementing it with additional indices, such as the Lorenz curve and the Palma ratio, to capture a complete picture of distribution.

The proceedings were chaired by Dr. Ashi Lama, Associate Professor in RGU’s Department of Economics, bringing together faculty members, research scholars, and students for an engaging interdisciplinary exchange.

Minister Jacob Zhimomi Urges Unity to Drive Nagaland’s Development

Kohima, Sept 14: Nagaland Public Health Engineering Department (PHED) and Cooperation Minister Jacob Zhimomi has strongly emphasized the necessity of unity and collective effort among communities to foster sustainable growth and development across the state.

Speaking at a public gathering, the Minister stated that progress cannot be achieved in isolation and called upon political leaders, tribal bodies, and citizens to set aside divisions and collaborate toward common goals. He underlined that social harmony, peace, and mutual cooperation are foundational prerequisites for economic advancement, improved infrastructure, and better public service delivery in Nagaland. Zhimomi reassured the public of the state government’s com-



mitment to inclusive development while urging grassroots participation to ensure welfare initiatives yield meaningful results.

He further highlighted that youth empowerment, educational enhancement, and infrastructure expansion remain top priorities for the state gov-

ernment’s long-term vision. Addressing the gathering, Zhimomi urged the younger generation to take active roles in community building, cultivate entrepreneurship, and contribute constructively to Nagaland’s progress rather than relying solely on traditional employment avenues.

Poshan Maah launched in Zunheboto

Zunheboto, Sept 14: The Department of Social Welfare officially launched the 9th Rashtriya Poshan Maah campaign in Zunheboto district, aligning with state-wide observances across Nagaland under the central theme “Hamari Anganwadi, Hamari Jimmedari”. The month-long initiative aims to address malnutrition, promote community-led health interventions, and strengthen early childhood development networks across the region.

During the launch event, district officials administered the Poshan Pledge and highlighted key priority areas for the month-long drive, including dietary diversity, the distribution of fresh hot-cooked meals at Anganwadi centers, and early childhood care. Inter-departmental coordination involving health, education, and rural development agencies will drive local activities, including growth monitoring, anemia awareness camps, and demonstrations promoting locally sourced, protein-rich foods.

The district administration called upon local village councils, self-help groups, and community leaders to actively participate in the campaign to ensure sustained nutritional support for pregnant women, lactating mothers, and young children throughout Zunheboto.

Meghalaya Chief Minister inspects new hawkers market in Shillong

Shillong, Sep 14: Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma conducted an inspection of the newly developed Polo Hawkers’ Market in Shillong to assess the progress of vendor relocation and rehabilitation across key urban sectors. Executed under the Meghalaya Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending) Scheme, 2023, the drive aims to strike a practical balance between safeguarding vendor livelihoods and restoring pedestrian access to city footpaths.

During the visit, the Chief

Minister interacted with relocated vendors and handed over financial relief cheques under the Chief Minister’s Urban Livelihood Grant (CM ULG). Under this scheme, verified street vendors holding a valid Certificate of Vending receive a total financial assistance package of ₹20,000—comprising an initial lump sum of ₹10,000 followed by monthly installments of ₹2,000 for five months. Over 400 eligible street vendors are being systematically shifted into designated, organized vending hubs across the city.



Speaking to the press, Sangma emphasized that the state administration is

pursuing a “win-win solution” for both vendors and ordinary commuters. He acknowledged that urban reorganization inevitably brings initial operational friction, but stressed that organized market spaces protect vendors from harsh weather while opening up avenues for institutional credit and long-term business growth. Additionally, the Chief Minister highlighted that compliance with High Court directives regarding public footpath clearance remains a mandatory priority for the government.

The purpose-built Polo

Hawkers’ Market spans a 2,270-square-meter footprint and accommodates 132 structured vending stalls. The facility is equipped with basic civic infrastructure, including public sanitation units, individual stall LED lighting, floodlights, and dedicated waste management systems. Sangma called for cooperation from street vendors operating in other congested localities, such as Laitumkrah and Jail Road, urging them to partner with municipal authorities to ensure smooth urban modernization across Shillong.

Ambassador compliments the new Guwahati airport terminal as he makes his tenth visit



Guwahati, Sep 14 : East and North-east India's Deputy High Commissioner for the United Kingdom Arriving in Assam for his tenth visit, Dr. Andrew Fleming called the trip a “anniversary visit” and emphasized the presence of British infrastructure firms.

According to Fleming, the visit was especially important because a number of top UK infrastructure firms are in Assam this week. Fleming also com-mended the recently opened terminal

at Guwahati's Lokpriya Gopinath Bor-doloi International Airport on X, com-paring it to Singapore and highlighting its Assamese design featuresFleming described the terminal as having “Sin-gapore vibes with an Assamese touch” in his post.

In response to Fleming's post, Hi-manta Biswa Sarma, the chief minister of Assam, welcomed him to the state and expressed his hope that the visit will strengthen ties between Assam

and the UK.“H.E. Fleming, welcome to Assam,” Sarma responded, noting that the trip might be “a new chapter in stronger links between the UK and AssamHe connected the expansion of India-UK cooperation under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's direction to the improvement of bilateral ties. In response to Fleming's comment regarding the airport terminal's green-ery, Sarma explained that the plants are organic and a feature of the termi-nal's architecture. Sarma stated, “Ev-ery plant in the airport is natural and complements the bamboos used in the airport design.”

Bamboo and other regional design features have been incorporated into the architecture of the new terminal at Guwahati airport, which was influ-enced by Assam's natural and cultural surroundings.

Fleming's visit coincides with India and the UK's ongoing efforts to in-crease collaboration in a number of ar-eas, such as infrastructure, commerce, and investment, with Assam aiming to draw in more foreign capital and cor-porate alliances.

Tuensang Nagaland nine people die in two days a possible fake liquor connection is being investigated

Kohima , Sep 14: Over the course of September 10 and 11, nine persons died in the Tuensang area of Nagaland. According to the authorities, there is circumstantial evi-dence linking the deaths to the intake of suspected con-taminated or fake alcohol.

Tuensang town and Chen-dang Saddle village reported the deaths. Police, however, stated that there is no solid scientific evidence linking the deaths to alcohol use. Po-lice stated that while forensic and scientific investigations are still ongoing, “circum-stantial” evidence has sur-faced in a number of cases. The mortal remains have been removed for additional analysis, and post-mortem examinations have either been finished or are still on-going in the cases.

Preliminary investigations revealed that the majority of the deceased had reportedly drunk alcohol prior to ex-



periencing symptoms like nausea, vomiting, blurred vision, severe headaches, and dizziness.A individual who was allegedly discov-ered hanging was one of the fatalities. The situation is being looked into by po-lice as a possible suicide. The deaths of three family members have also been linked to the possible use of counterfeit alcohol. Ac-

cording to police, one of the deceased allegedly bought the alcohol from the location where it was supposedly sold.Tuensang Police con-ducted searches and raids in Tuensang town and the Chendang Saddle area after learning of the deaths. Offi-cers confiscated suspected illicit or contaminated alco-hol from a number of sites. During the operations, over

470 bottles of beer cans and Indian-made foreign liquor (IMFL) were found, ac-cording to the police. The Nagaland Liquor Total Pro-hibition Act, 1989, prohib-its the manufacture, sale, consumption, and posses-sion of alcohol in the state.

The source and type of the reportedly drank alco-hol, as well as the potential participation of individu-als in charge of its sale or distribution, are all being looked into by police in re-lation to the deaths.

Authorities have advised people not to drink alcohol that comes from unidenti-fied or unapproved sources. After consuming alcohol, people are recommended to seek medical assistance right away and notify the closest police station if they have blurred vision, a severe headache, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, or other strange symptoms.

An Assamese man was attacked in Rani on suspicion of being a witch

Azara, Sep 14: On Sep-tember 8, a man named Dhanjit Bey was allegedly brutally attacked at Nong-taria in the Rani area along the Assam-Meghalaya bor-der on suspicion of practic-ing witchcraft. This incident highlights the persistence of superstition despite progress in contemporary science. Several people allegedly at-tacked Dhanjit because they believed he was to blame for a young person's protracted illness.

Fearing for his safety, he has apparently been residing at an unidentified place af-ter suffering severe injuries. Raju Rongson and Balen Taro claim that Hemanta Taro, a young man from Ja-lukpaham, had been ill for a long time and that his family had relied on traditional heal-ers rather than medical care. They claimed that a tra-ditional healer from the Rani-Bongara region had informed the family that Hemanta's illness was caused by someone in the home, which caused mis-



trust and suspicion among family members.

The two claimed that Hemanta had received tra-ditional care from Dhanjit's relatives, including Rana Bey, Kandhura Bey, Apen Bey, and Garj Bey. Howev-er, it is said that disagree-

ments arose between them and Dhanjit regarding the therapy, which ultimate-ly resulted in accusations of witchcraft against him. Sanjib Rongpi, Anjan Rongson, Pranab Rongson, and Garjan Rongson were among Dhanjit's relatives

who allegedly accused him of witchcraft and called a customary village assem-bly at Jalukpaham Taluk. According to reports, the Taluk counseled the parties to settle the dispute amica-bly rather than using pun-ishment. However, three

sessions were convened while the disagreement persisted. Dhanjit was al-legedly told to pay a pen-alty of two pigs by Septem-ber 8 at the last meeting on September 1.

Dhanjit allegedly suffered severe injuries after being attacked by multiple in-dividuals because he was only able to arrange one pig by the deadline.

Because he was only able to arrange one pig by the deadline, Dhanjit allegedly sustained serious injuries after being attacked by sev-eral people.

According to the victim's brother, the attack was so violent that the family thought Dhanjit had passed away. After that, he was taken to the hospital for medical care, but it is said that the Jalukpaham vil-lagers stopped them in the middle, demanding pay-ment of the fine before he could be admitThey were purportedly advised by the people that Dhanjit should pass away there.

Manipur politicians denounce the murder of four KukiZo residents as barbaric and senseless



Imphal, Sep 14: Nemcha Kipgen, the deputy chief minister of Manipur, and three Kuki-Zo MLAs have called for the identifi-cation and prosecution of those responsible for the deaths of four civilians, including two women, in separate attacks in the districts of Tamenglong and Noney.At L, the four civi-lians perished. The lawmakers made state-ments about Tollen village in Tamenglong district and Longpi village in Noney district. Seineh Singsit and his wife, Lhingiangai Singsit, were slain at L. Tollen, and their six-year-old son, Hemminsang Singsit, suffered serious injuries. Thangvel and Julie Gangte were slain at Longpi, while Nei Esther Gangte

was hurt.

Kipgen his condolences to the grieving fam-ilies and denounced the attacks, especially the ones that targeted women, children, and citizens.She called on all communities to uphold peace and moderation while urging the authorities to find the culprits and make sure they were prosecuted.“No individual or community should take the matter into their own hands; the law must be allowed to take its course,” she stated. Hangshing called for cooperation and group efforts toward peace, security, and justice, saying that the intention-al targeting of women, children, and defense-less civilians is an act of cowardice.

Letzamang Haokip, an MLA for Henglep, called the killings a terrible tragedy and said they highlighted the ongoing insecurity that civilians confront. He called on secu-rity services to find and capture the perpe-trators and take action to stop more deaths. Hangshing called for cooperation and group efforts toward peace, security, and justice, saying that the intentional targeting of women, children, and defenseless civilians is an act of cowardice.Letzamang Haokip, an MLA for Henglep, called the killings a terrible tragedy and said they highlighted the ongoing insecurity that civilians con-front. He called on security services to find and capture the perpetrators and take action to stop more deaths.

The Manipur government asks civil society organizations to stop protesting

Imphal, Sep 14: In re-sponse to their demands for the state's National Register of Citizens (NRC) to be up-dated, the Manipur adminis-tration on Sunday requested Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to cease their current agitations, which included closing Central and state government offices. Both ruling Bharatiya Janata Par-ty (BJP) MLAs, Thokchom Radheshyam Singh and Sapam Ranjan Singh, state government spokespersons, claimed that the public was suffering and being incon-veniened by the closure of central and state government offices as a result of CSO agitations, such as the Cam-paign for Justice and Fair Delimitation (CJFD).

They appealed to all con-cerned not to add more misery to the sufferings and inconveniences of the public. Addressing a press conference, Radheshyam Singh said that the state government is fully aware of the CJFD's demand and the people of Manipur also want the NRC be conducted before the Census-2027.

He continued by saying that Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh has in-formed the Central govern-ment of the Manipur Assem-bly's recent determination to update the NRC prior to the 2027 Census.Radheshyam Singh stated that the Union Home Ministry has already been informed of the discus-sion that took place in the House on the final day of the



recently concluded Assem-bly session over the NRC's foundation year of 1951. He said that following the cam-paign by the members of the Manipur Assembly in New Delhi, the Chief Minister, too, conveyed the Central leaders about the people's desire.

Consequently, the Union Home Ministry has also postponed the Census pro-cess, the spokesman said.

Against this backdrop, the CJFD has intensified its agi-tation by calling for the clo-sure of government offices. Such an agitation may lead to various undesirable in-cidents and affect the func-tioning of the state govern-ment, he added.Radheshyam Singh also appealed to the CJFD not to intensify the agitation and also urged the organisations not to con-

tinue such activities for a prolonged period, as pro-tracted agitation in the state could cause greater incon-venience to the people.

He appealed all the sec-tions of the public “to give peace a chance in Mani-pur” and to support the endeavours of the current government in restoring normalcy in the state.The spokespersons also made it clear during the press meet that state Home Min-ister Konhoujam Govin-das Singh along with some other MLAs are camping in New Delhi for the past few days to pressurise the Centre regarding the updation of NRC, 1951.

They also expressed that it is highly hopeful that Centre will act as per the wishes of the people of the state.

Agartala's Ganesh Puja celebrations are growing with 94 pujas this year and increased security



Agartala, Sep 14 : Ac-cording to police, Ganesh Puja celebrations in Agar-tala have grown dramatical-ly this year, with 94 pujas planned throughout the city as opposed to 68 last year. Six police stations in Agar-tala, which is part of the West District, are hosting the 94 pujas, according to a senior police official.Ac-cording to police, Ganesh Puja celebrations in Agar-tala have grown dramatical-ly this year, with 94 pujas planned throughout the city as opposed to 68 last year.

Six police stations in Agartala, which is part of the West District, are host-

ing the 94 pujas, a senior police official told The of-ficial stated that the AD Nagar Police Station is or-ganizing 30 pujas, followed by the West Agartala Police Station with 22 and the East Agar-tala Police Station with 18. Nine pujas are overseen by the New Capital Complex and Amtali police stations, while six are con-ducted by the Airport Police Station.

An extra 120 police of-ficers have been stationed throughout the city and in the vicinity of the puja lo-cations due to the rise in festivities.The official stat-ed that the AD Nagar Po-

lice Station is organizing 30 pujas, followed by the West Agartala Police Station with 22 and the East Agar-tala Police Station with 18. Nine pujas are overseen by the New Capital Complex and Amtali police stations, while six are conducted by the Airport Police Station. “Since the number of pu-jas has increased, we have deployed additional police personnel across Agartala city and in and around the puja venues. We are also conducting regular vehicle checking, naka checking and keeping a close eye on the overall situation,” the official said.

The Small Grants Program helps more than 11,000 people

Dispur, Sep 14: During the first two years of its five-year project, the GEF-Small Grants Program (SGP) in Assam and Meghalaya has helped over 11,000 peo-ple, primarily farmers, and improved the management of over 17,000 hectares of land, according to officials.

The program's goal is to enable communities, espe-cially those in vulnerable and underdeveloped areas, to take joint action for con-servation and sustainable development.

As the GEF-SGP's seventh Operational Phase (OP7) came to an end on Monday, implementing partners in the reported that efforts are being made to broaden the program's scope and close the gap between formal policy and grassroots prac-tices. The Environment, Forest and Climate Change Ministry, in collaboration with the UNDP, is imple-menting GEF OP7 of the SGP in India. The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) is the National Host Institution, while the Tata Institute of Social Scienc-es (TISS), Guwahati, is the knowledge partner is one of three focus regions under OP7, alongside central semi-arid areas and coastal regions.“The OP7 aimed to enable communities and organisations in some of the

most vulnerable and least developed areas to take collective action through a participatory landscape planning and management approach aimed at enhanc-ing socio-ecological resil-ience through innovative livelihood options produc-ing local and global envi-ronmental benefits,” said Abhinandan Saikia, project lead, SGP Project-TISS Guwahati. Sharing the pro-gramme's achievements during its first two years, Dipankar Saharia, senior director at TERI, said more than 11,000 lives had been impacted, with farmers ac-counting for 61 per cent of those reached.Over 17,000 hectares have been brought under improved manage-ment, while 2,800 hectares have been restored.

The interventions have covered 250 villages across 11 districts of Assam and Meghalaya and added 182 kW of renewable solar ca-pacity, officials said.

Saharia stressed that the programme should not simply become a source of funding for organisations, but should help establish community-driven ap-proaches that can continue after the grant period ends. Saikia said the programme was also propriate technol-ogies and modern innova-tions.

The success of the BRICS summit boosts the BJP's confidence and helps it fend off attacks from the opposition

New Delhi, Sep 14: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given the government and the BJP newfound confidence by successfully holding the BRICS conference. It is being praised as a great accomplishment for the Modi government that this important international meeting was successfully organized after the G20 in just three years. The BJP anticipates that this will aid in the party's recovery from recent political losses. The government and the BJP have not had a good few months. The NEET paper leak protest and the ensuing "Cockroach Janta Party" uproar have stifled the political momentum created by a historic victory in West Bengal and a hat-trick of victories in Assam. The resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan was viewed as a major blow to the government. Aggressive attacks by the Congress party regarding police action against protesters at Jantar Mantar effectively washed out the parliament's monsoon session. During that session, the government could not pass any major constitutional amendment bills and the tabling of the joint parliamen-



tary committee (JPC) reports on three such bills had to be deferred. Against this backdrop, the successful hosting of the BRICS Summit has once again demonstrated India's formidable presence on the international stage. The issuance of a joint statement by member nations - despite their internal differences - is being regarded as a major achievement for Indian diplomacy and PM Modi's leadership. Furthermore, the strong condemnation of the Pahalgam terror attack in this joint statement marks a significant diplomatic success. In a similar vein, winning China's and Russia's support for India's

application for a permanent seat in the UN Security Council is a significant accomplishment. Other noteworthy outcomes of the summit include discussions aimed at ending the Russia-Ukraine war, PM Modi's third consecutive year of bilateral meetings with the Chinese president, talks between the UAE and Iran (who had been at odds for months) on the sidelines of the event, and the friendly reception given to the Iranian president. Despite some reservations, the Opposition Congress party has also praised this announcement. With this event, India has once again shown that not only has its reputation grown internationally, but it is

also perfectly capable of hosting such large-scale events as the fastest-growing economy. India's bid to host the Olympics in 2036 will benefit from this. PM Modi continued to be the focal point of the entire event as the head of state of the host country. Over the course of the three days, his tremendous energy and warm rapport with other world leaders were clear. During this time, he had many informal conversations in addition to bilateral meetings with fifteen leaders of state or government. His encounters with Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian, Chinese President Xi Jinping, and Russian

President Vladimir Putin captured the attention of the entire globe. This was not the first time PM Modi shifted the focus of domestic discourse through international meetings and events. The successful hosting of the G20 Summit in September 2023 had already showcased the Modi government's foreign policy prowess to the world. Prior to this, there were several instances where roadshows featuring visiting foreign dignitaries were organised in states heading to the polls. This represents a highly successful experiment in leveraging diplomacy to serve domestic political interests. The government and the BJP now have to decide how to take advantage of this BRICS summit's success. BJP leaders claim that the month-long "Seva Sankalp Abhiyan" (Service Pledge Campaign), which kicks off on PM Modi's birthday, September 17, would heavily highlight the BRICS event's successful hosting. On October 7, he will have served the public for 25 years. Among his foreign policy accomplishments will be the successful BRICS Summit.

65 people are detained as police raid a hotel in Maharashtra over an illegal party

Thane, Sep 14: As part of a stepped-up campaign against dangerous buildings, unauthorised construction, and violations of building codes, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) on Saturday carried out 33 demolition actions in all 12 zones of the city and sealed five properties, according to officials. During the day's enforcement campaign, the civic authority also issued 29 show-cause notices, bringing the total number of demolition operations completed over the previous two days to 58. Due to violations of the Delhi Master Plan and construction bye-laws, the MCD sealed four homes and demolished twenty-five on

Friday. The latest action included demolition of dangerous structures in Nehru Vihar and Gandhi Vihar. An unauthorised RCC panel constructed over a terrace room in Sector 3, Rohini, was also removed and its reinforcement cut using a gas cutter, officials said. In Satbari, Sainik Farms, Bhajanpura, Shahdara, Dwarka, Kakrola, Tihar Village, Rajouri Garden Extension, Paschim Vihar, and Jamia Nagar, the MCD also intervened. Following the collapse of a five-story building in Satya Niketan last week, which resulted in the deaths of seven people, there is increased inspection of dangerous and un-

authorized structures, which coincides with the increased enforcement effort. In the wake of the tragedy, the civic authority has also increased its inspections of paying guest (PG) accommodations. Nearly 47,000 people are housed in about 2,251 structures that operate PG facilities throughout the city, according to the most recent survey data. The civic organization stated that it was compiling the poll results and will respond to infractions in line with the relevant regulations. The MCD stated that it would keep up its enforcement campaign against unsafe structures, unapproved construction, and building code infractions.

Two men on bikes shot and killed a gym trainer in Delhi, firing fifteen rounds

New Delhi, Sep 14: About fifteen shots were fired in the vicinity of a 28-year-old gym trainer who was shot and killed on Monday morning in Fatehpur Beri, south Delhi, according to police. Around ten in the morning, two attackers on bikes attacked the victim, Vijay, in Aya Nagar village. Before riding off on a motorcycle, the attackers are said to have opened fire on him. Senior police officials rushed to the scene shortly after the firing, which caused panic in the region. Police believe a personal rivalry may have been involved in the incident. Inves-

tigators are trying to identify the two attackers while also looking into the circumstances surrounding the incident. Residents are especially concerned about the incident because there was supposedly a similar firing in the vicinity a few months prior. In order to ensure peace and order and stop any further escalation, security forces have been stationed in Aya Nagar. As they continue to look for the attackers, police teams are now scanning the available CCTV footage and collecting additional evidence.

As the West Asia crisis worsens, tanker rates to India increase by 150%



New Delhi, Sep 14: According to three persons familiar with the situation, daily charter hire rates for tankers to India have more than doubled to \$250,000 in roughly two weeks as rising conflicts in the Red Sea and Strait of Hormuz drive up the cost of carrying oil to the third-largest oil importer in the world. According to the individuals, rates have increased by 150% from roughly \$100,000 since Houthi forces took over Yemen's Mocha port, which is located close to the Bab el-Mandeb Strait. The cost of imports has grown due to a 20% increase in insurance premiums and a 50% increase in bunker fuel prices, which have reached \$900 per ton. Iran-backed Houthi forces seized Yemen's Red Sea port city of Mocha last week and have since advanced toward the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, reaching the strategically located Perim (Mayun) Island and further threatening shipping through the key Red Sea chokepoint, according to Reuters and other reports. The development comes as traffic through the Strait of Hormuz remains severely disrupted, raising the risk of further pressure on shipping and energy supplies in the region. "The situation has completely reversed over the past week," said Anil Devli, CEO of the Indian National Shipowners' Association (INSA). "Seafarers are now worried to take the Strait of Hormuz route. There was some movement earlier, but now there is none, as now both ships are being attacked and sunk, shippers killed, while earlier they were mostly disabled and not allowed to move," he said. According to shipping industry executives, the latest escalation is a major concern for India because a likely Houthi takeover of Bab-al-Mandab could worsen disruptions and force tankers carrying Saudi Arabian oil to take the Suez Canal route, adding two weeks to the journey and possibly

driving up global oil prices. Benchmark Brent crude is currently close to \$105 a barrel, and oil prices are already at four-month highs. Approximately thirty percent of India's current gas and oil imports come from West Asia. This is an important development for India because every \$1 increase in the price of crude oil results in an annual import bill of ₹18,000 crore, which has an impact on GDP and inflation. India's retail inflation hit a 19-month high of 4.45% in July. About two months ago, tanker rates had dropped to between \$70,000 and \$80,000 per day, according to Devli of INSA. India's oil import bill for the April-July fiscal year has already reached \$63.37 billion, up 56% from the same period last year, which coincides with the rise in tanker freight rates. In contrast, the previous fiscal year's entire oil import bill was \$123 billion. On September 9, the Indian crude basket was last valued at \$115.98 a barrel. One of the three individuals mentioned above, an executive with a refiner, asked to remain anonymous. "The latest uncertainty in West Asia threatens to halt the revival of supplies and the eventual rise in prices adds to the supply constraints, as there are instances of Russian crude also being sold at a premium." "There is very limited movement of ships around the Strait of Hormuz and the little that moves, paying hefty war risk premium that has also gone up further high over the already elevated levels," said a UAE-headquartered logistics major DP World executive, who did not want to be named. DP World operates a global logistics and ports network across 80 countries and has a 10% share of global container traffic. Emails sent to India's port and petroleum ministries, as well as state-owned refiners Indian Oil Corp., Bharat Petroleum Corp. Ltd. (BPCL), and Hindustan Petroleum Corp. Ltd. (HPCL), received no response. In order to enable ongoing maritime insurance coverage, the Center introduced the \$1.5 billion Bharat Maritime Insurance Pool (BMIP) in May with a \$1.4 billion sovereign guaranty. Speaking on condition of anonymity, an executive from an Indian shipping company stated that Indian ships are not currently using insurance support because they are not operating through the affected routes.

Following a top court order in a rape case, Tarun Tejpal surrenders before the Goa court

New Delhi, Sep 14: As ordered by the Supreme Court, Tarun Tejpal, a renowned former top editor of the equally renowned news magazine Tehelka, turned himself in before the Mapusa court in Goa on Monday in a 2013 rape case. The 63-year-old former editor was given three weeks by the top court to turn himself in before his appeal against the conviction is heard. Tomorrow is the last day of the three-week deadline. On August 6, the Bombay High Court's Goa bench overturned Tejpal's 2021 acquittal in the case, finding him guilty of raping a for-



mer coworker in 2013 and sentencing him to ten years in prison. Tej-

pal insists that he is a victim. Last month, the Supreme Court rejected Tejpal's plea seeking exemption from surrendering before his plea filed against the Bombay High Court judgment convicting him is listed in the top court. Tejpal had sought exemption from surrendering on the ground that his appeal should first be listed and heard by the Supreme Court. Senior Advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for Tejpal, argued that the top court has the power to dispense with the requirement of surrender in an appropriate case and list the criminal appeal even where the accused has

not surrendered. Before contesting a conviction order, one must submit in accordance with Supreme Court regulations. Rules provide that a surrender certificate must be presented. The state of Goa was represented by Solicitor General of India (SGI) Tushar Mehta, who opposed the plea and argued that the exemption claim should be evaluated based on the case's merits. He argued that Tejpal had been sentenced to ten years of severe imprisonment for an aggravated offense of rape, citing the Bombay High Court's findings.

Aaditya Thackeray and Dino Morea are named in the CBI's FIR about Disha Salian's killing

New Delhi, Sep 14: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) announced on Monday that it has filed the First Information Report (FIR) in the case to start the investigation, twelve days after the Bombay High Court ordered the agency to look into the death of celebrity manager Disha Salian. "The FIR in the Disha Salian case has been registered as per the Bombay high court's orders," a CBI official told today, confirming the event. The official refused to provide any additional information regarding the accused and the sections cited in the FIR. After recording Disha's father Satish Salian's statement on Friday at its Mumbai office at the Bandra-Kurla Complex (BKC), the CBI filed the FIR as the initial stage of its probe. After recording his statement at the CBI office in BKC, Salian said on Friday, "I have recorded my statement with the CBI, and you can learn about it tomorrow. I have spoken about those who were involved." Salian stated on

Monday, "Yes, I learnt that the FIR has been registered." Salian's statement will be included in the CBI's FIR, according to his attorney, advocate Nilesh Ojha, who asserted on Friday that Salian provided more information in his statement than what was presented before the high court. Ojha claimed that a number of well-known people and a former police officer had been involved in the case. "The key points in the statement were that Disha Salian was gang-raped and then murdered, and there was a cover-up to hide the crimes, in which some then police officers were also involved," Ojha had stated. According to the court's ruling, Satish Salian's statement served as the basis for the CBI's FIR, which was filed on Sunday. Accessed the FIR's data, which don't list any accused individuals. "Nobody shall be treated as an accused unless, in the opinion of the IO, there are sufficient grounds to raise reasonable suspicion against them," the

court stated in its September 2 judgment. Sections of the Indian Penal Code pertaining to suspected offenses, such as criminal conspiracy, gang rape, murder, causing evidence to disappear or providing false information to screen offenders, public servants disobeying legal orders with the intent to spare people from punishment, and public servants fabricating false records with the intent to spare people from punishment, are the sections under which the FIR has been filed. On June 9, 2020, Disha, 24, passed away after falling from a Malad apartment on the twelfth story. After investigating the incident, the Malwani police filed an accidental death report and determined that there was no indication of foul play and that the death was a suicide. In December 2023, the state government established a Special Investigation Team, which similarly concluded that Disha's death was not the result of foul play.

The Supreme Court will provide audio-video bulletins and Hindi summaries

New Delhi, Sep 14: The Supreme Court on Monday launched a new Hindi public information service that will include daily 15- to 30-minute audio and video bulletins outlining significant rulings, as well as straightforward Hindi summaries of a few crucial judgments and directives. The effort, which was unveiled on Hindi Diwas, aims to increase the accessibility of the Supreme Court's significant rulings and its ramifications for common people and litigants, especially those who might have trouble reading or comprehending lengthy legal documents. According to a press release, the Hindi service will begin soon as the required preparations are completed. In order to give users access to the original court document, each summary will also include a link to the relevant official decision or order. The purpose of the audio and video announcements is to make it easier to comprehend significant decisions, their implications, and potential courses of action. People with impairments would also profit from the program, according to the Supreme Court. The court intends to gradually expand the service to other Indian languages after it is first made available in Hindi. The goal of the action is to provide residents from all linguistic regions with clear information about significant Supreme Court rulings in languages they are familiar with.

On September 17, the government will launch a ₹13,000-crore infrastructure deployment and welfare drive: Rekha Gupta

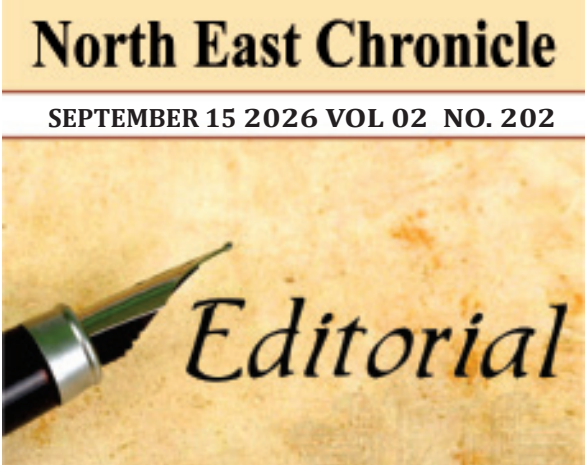
New Delhi, Sep 14: Chief Minister Rekha Gupta stated on Monday that the Delhi government will begin a month-long welfare and infrastructure campaign, the "Sewa Sankalp Abhiyan," on September 17 to commemorate Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 25 years in public service. The administration will also initiate or set the groundwork for projects totaling more than ₹13,000 crore in the nation's capital as part of the campaign. Blood donation clinics, senior citizen health examinations, sanitation and Yamuna cleaning campaigns, and special welfare scheme registration camps covering all 70 assembly constituencies will all be part of the campaign. Gupta said PM Modi's "25 years of uninterrupted public service" were an inspiration and a matter of pride, and the campaign would focus on service-oriented activities across Delhi. Under the campaign, camps will be held for three days



in each of the 70 constituencies to help residents register for various Delhi and central government schemes. On September 17, beneficiaries of government schemes

will be asked to light lamps at their homes. On September 17, the health department will host a massive blood donation camp with the goal of gathering 2,500 units. Senior people's health examinations will be arranged by the social welfare department, she stated. She also mentioned that organ donation will be encouraged by the State Organ and Tissue Transplantation Organization (SOTTO). According to the chief minister, the government will step up efforts to clean up the Yamuna and conduct cleaning initiatives. It is anticipated that the campaign will initiate Yamuna-related projects totaling ₹8,000 crore. Over 4,000 Anganwadi and ASHA employees will get awards, and public officials will participate in a "Sewa Jyoti Kalash Yatra" that will be conducted throughout Delhi's 14 districts and 70 constituencies. The campaign will also have a youth and education

component. This will involve around 5,000 government and private schools through painting, speech, and other competitions showcasing students' vision of a developed India. Additionally, the government will host an innovation contest to inspire young people to come up with ideas and solutions. During the drive, the government has scheduled projects worth about ₹13,800 crore for foundation-laying and inauguration. According to Gupta, they include ₹8,000 crore worth of Delhi Jal Board projects, ₹2,800 crore worth of Public Works Department (PWD) projects, ₹1,500 crore worth of electricity sector initiatives, ₹365 crore worth of Irrigation and Flood Control department projects, and ₹77 crore worth of tourism projects. Harsh Malhotra, the head of the Delhi BJP, stated that the campaign would emphasize the benefits of Modi's policies and his 25 years of public service.



Assamese culture meets the orange economy

Creative economy is becoming an important part of modern economic life. Often called the Orange Economy, it connects culture, creativity, knowledge, talent and enterprise to income and employment. Assam has strong potential because culture is closely connected with everyday life. Handloom, handicrafts, music, dance, theatre, literature, cinema, traditional cuisine and festivals are not merely symbols of identity. They also have economic value when properly organised and connected with wider markets. A traditional skill can become a livelihood when it receives suitable design, technology, branding and market support. A weaver can become an entrepreneur, a folk artist can build a professional career, and a culturally distinctive village can develop tourism. Yet commercialising culture should not mean reducing heritage to a marketable product without protecting its identity. The objective should be to ensure that creators and communities receive fair economic returns. Assam needs an approach that connects tradition with modern markets while preserving originality.

Handloom and handicrafts provide one of the strongest foundations for Assam's creative economy. The traditional loom represents generations of knowledge about fibres, colours, motifs and techniques. Muga, Eri and Pat silk have distinctive identities, while Sualkuchi is closely associated with weaving. But cultural importance alone cannot protect the livelihood of weavers. Rising costs, machine-made competition and changing consumer preferences have created difficulties for artisans. Preservation therefore requires more than repeating old designs. Traditional craftsmanship must be combined with contemporary design and professional marketing. Similar possibilities exist in Sarthebari's bell-metal work and bamboo and cane crafts across Assam. Traditional skills can produce modern lifestyle products when artisans receive design support and reliable markets. Branding, quality control, attractive packaging and geographical indication protection can strengthen local products. Digital platforms can reduce dependence on middlemen by allowing artisans to reach consumers directly. Technology, properly used, can help artisans promote products, receive orders and reach customers beyond Assam. The challenge is to give traditional skills modern economic value without weakening their cultural character. The performing arts offer another important

ant field for creative economic activity. Bihu shows this relationship clearly. Its programmes involve singers, musicians, dancers, sound technicians, lighting workers, stage builders, costume makers and many other service providers. Assam's mobile theatre has demonstrated the same connection on a larger scale. Its production system brings together actors, directors, writers, musicians, technicians, stage workers and transport providers. It is therefore both a cultural institution and an employment-generating industry. Similar possibilities exist for Sattriya, folk music and other traditional forms. Digital platforms have expanded the audience for Assamese artists, allowing them to reach people outside the state. But wider access also makes copyright, contracts and fair payment important. Artists must be able to earn from their creative work. Cultural recognition without economic security cannot sustain a profession. If young people see music, theatre and dance as viable careers, traditional forms are more likely to continue through new generations. The creative economy must therefore protect both artistic quality and the economic rights of creators.

Cinema, literature and digital content can further strengthen Assam's creative economy. Assamese cinema has a long history and creates work for writers, directors, cinematographers, editors, technicians, designers and performers. Changes in technology and distribution have created opportunities for regional cinema to reach audiences beyond Assam. Literature also supports authors, publishers, printers, designers, booksellers and distributors. Assamese folk narratives can be adapted into children's books, animation, films, audio programmes and digital productions. Such adaptation can introduce traditional stories to new audiences while creating income opportunities. Digital content related to Assamese language, food, history, travel and culture has similar potential. However, digital growth makes intellectual property protection more important because original work can be copied easily without adequate benefit to its creator. Greater awareness of copyright, digital distribution and professional contracts is therefore necessary. Assam also needs stronger Assamese-language digital resources, translation and technological tools. A language with a rich literary tradition must have a meaningful place in the digital economy. Creative production can thus support both economic activity and cultural development.

India's construction push requires new land financing tools

The collapse of a five-storey boys' hostel in Delhi's Satya Niketan killed seven people and injured several others. Two months ago, a fire in a Malviya Nagar building killed 23 people. Two years ago, the Old Rajinder Nagar basement flooding tragedy killed three UPSC aspirants. Every time something like this happens, especially in metropolitan cities, the prescription is familiar: enforce building codes better, conduct structural audits, crack down on illegal construction, and increase penalties.

Another school of thought says the answer is more construction: liberalise Floor Space Index (FSI), make land-use rules less restrictive, allow private developers to build faster. Occasionally, there's the least useful answer of all: let the government take over building construction. But, there is a question sitting underneath all three arguments that gets surprisingly little attention: who is going to finance the buildings? India does not merely need more or safer buildings. It needs a financial system capable of funding the enormous stock of buildings that urbanisation will require. Land is the largest

component of this capital requirement. But our regulatory system imposes structural barriers on financing the acquisition of land by private developers. Under the RBI's banking regulations, banks may finance virtually every other stage of a development project, from construction to the purchase of completed homes., But, they remain largely barred from financing the acquisition of the land on which those projects are built. This restricts the scale at which Indian developers can realistically construct real estate in our cities.

Consider what happens when a developer decides to construct a large residential or commercial project. There is a fairly obvious sequence: acquire the land, obtain approvals, construct the project, lease or sell the completed asset, and eventually generate a stream of cash flows from it. The financial system should be capable of supporting this entire chain. Indian banks can finance construction. They can finance individuals purchasing homes. They can finance factories, roads, and other infrastructure projects built on land. But, they cannot finance private developers acquiring the land

on which residential and commercial projects are to be built. This is not a minor regulatory technicality. Land can account for 50-80 per cent of the cost of real-estate development in major Indian cities. Preventing banks from financing that component creates a structural hole in the financing chain. Resultantly, developers turn to private credit, non-bank lenders, and other forms of financing, often at considerably higher cost, pushing up the cost of constructed real estate. Historically, the financing vacuum around land has also provided fertile ground for unaccounted money and opaque transactions. There is a certain irony here. We worry about speculative land markets and the risks of real-estate lending. So we prohibit the banking system from financing a large part of the land-development cycle and then leave the financing to parts of the financial system that may be more expensive and less transparent.

India has already demonstrated that real estate can be converted into a financial asset. The success of listed Real Estate Investment Trusts, or REITs, is an important experiment in this

direction. REITs allow investors to own units backed by income-generating real estate rather than having to buy and manage buildings themselves. The model has worked particularly well for Grade-A office assets. India's listed REIT ecosystem has grown to cover hundreds of millions of square feet of commercial and retail property, with substantial distributions to investors. That said, so far, REIT investments have been concentrated disproportionately in commercial office assets. The much larger universe of urban real estate rental housing, student hostels, health-care, senior living, and other specialised assets has barely been financialised. Indeed, acknowledging the institutional funding gap in real estate, SEBI's latest discussion paper on REITs published last month proposes allowing REITs to invest minority stakes in under-construction projects undertaken by developers. This is a step in the right direction. The prohibition on bank financing of land acquisition has understandable historical roots. It emerged in an era when Indian banking was state-dominated, land markets were opaque and fragmented,

property records were weak, and policymakers were concerned that institutional credit would fuel speculation in land. But India's financial system has changed. Banking is more market-oriented. Real-estate regulation has changed. RERA has created an institutional framework for monitoring projects and ring-fencing customer money. Financial regulation itself has moved substantially toward risk-based supervision. The question, therefore, is no longer whether land finance is risky. The question is whether prohibition is still the best way to manage that risk. Major advanced economies do not generally deal with the risks of land and real-estate lending through an absolute prohibition. Banks in countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, Germany, and Japan can finance land acquisition and development, subject to substantial prudential constraints. A better framework would allow banks to finance land acquisition for bona fide development projects, but only where the project has appropriate approvals, a defined implementation schedule, and meaningful promoter equity. Regulators

could impose conservative loan-to-value ratios, higher capital requirements, milestone-based disbursement, commencement deadlines, and enhanced provisioning. They could restrict speculative land banking and impose sectoral or borrower-level exposure limits. Modern prudential regulation has developed these tools to deal with risky lending. A financial market where banks finance appropriately regulated development, REITs provide a route to long-duration institutional capital, and prudential regulation controls rather than prohibits risk is as important as building more and safer buildings. The lesson from India's recent building tragedies should certainly be that enforcement matters. But there is a second lesson. India's cities cannot be made safer, larger or more liveable merely by writing better building rules. Someone has to finance the buildings that comply with them. Regulation determines what can be built. Finance determines what actually gets built. And as India urbanises, Indian financial architecture will have to rise to this challenge. For starters, let's abandon old tropes and taboos on land financing.

Unearthing Kalibangan: time to elevate one of Harappa's greatest sites

More than a century ago, when the Harappan cities still lay buried beneath the earth, when the history of the subcontinent was thought to begin only in the 6th century BCE, and when there was no known evidence of an Indian Bronze Age, an Italian Indologist, traveller and explorer traversed the undulating sand dunes and flat alluvial plains of the erstwhile Bikaner state on camelback. Between 1916 and 1919, Luigi Pio Tessitori, who was entrusted by John Marshall, surveyed this rich landscape marked by ancient mounds along the dry channel of the Ghaggar. During his survey, he recorded bardic lore, documented monuments, inscriptions and ancient theris, also known as archaeological mounds. It was the time when archaeology in undivided India was transforming under the keen eyes of Lord Curzon, who appointed young Marshall to head the Archaeological Survey of India over a decade ago. In the winter season of 1915-16, Harold Hargreaves, superintending archaeologist, was supposed to take a trial trench at Harappa. He had surveyed the site along with YR Gupte, assistant surveyor, who had found two to three seals from the mound of Harappa. While Hargreaves was unimpressed by the site, Gupte was intrigued by the curious characters and animals carved on the piece of steatite. He decided to write about these in an article to be reviewed by Marshall. By 1916, neither was the site excavated by Hargreaves, nor did Gupte publish these seals, and Harappa was pushed into the background until 1922.

However, in 1917, Tessitori stumbled upon a large site near Suratgarh, located close to the dry channel of the Ghaggar. His fascination with the site led him to take up excavation at this site, similar to what Hargreaves was supposed to do at Harappa. This limited excavation by Tessitori brought to light a few brick structures, pottery, some antiquities and three seals, similar to what Gupte found at Harappa a few years prior. When Tessitori submitted the excavation report to Marshall, he omitted the mention of these seals. If these seals were revealed to Marshall and other archaeologists familiar with material from Harappa, this site and this geographical region would have

changed the initial understanding of the ancient past. But for six decades, this site remained buried until it was excavated in independent India. This is the story of a lesser-known, less appreciated but highly rich site on the fringes of the Thar, at the confluence of Ghaggar and Chautang—Kalibangan, the Harappan frontier in the Thar, a settlement of merchants, farmers and traders. Kalibangan, the name literally translates to black bangles, is an archaeological site located at the confluence of rivers Ghaggar and Chautang, in present-day Hanumangarh district of Rajasthan. After its initial investigation by Tessitori, the site remained buried both literally and symbolically despite its mention in the survey records of Aurel Stein in the 1940s. Since Stein was unable to identify the site's cultural affinity, the onus of its recognition fell on Amalananda Ghosh and his team, who surveyed the Bikaner state in the 1950s. Ghosh identified the site as a Harappan settlement and recorded its antiquities. The research questions during this survey did not align with the excavation of Kalibangan, which had to wait till 1961, when it was finally subjected to excavation by the Archaeological Survey of India. Stalwarts of Indian archaeology, including BB Lal, BK Thapar, JP Joshi and others, excavated the site between 1961-1969. Spread over an area of 25 hectares, the site comprises three mounds—KLB 1, KLB 2 and KLB 3. The excavation yielded an Early Harappan deposit at the site for the first time in independent India. According to BK Thapar, Kalibangan was the fourth pre-urban or Early Harappan site to be excavated following the excavation at Amri, Kot Diji and Harappa, which were part of newly formed Pakistan. The Early Harappan level, which is dated to the fifth century BCE, yielded a parallelogram fortified settlement measuring 250m x 180m. The fortification wall was made of mud-bricks (30x20x10cm) in the ratio of 3:2:1 and had two structural phases. Within the walled area, houses with two to three rooms and a courtyard, made with mud bricks and a sophisticated drainage system made of baked brick or terracotta pipes, were found. A lane measuring 1.5 metres in width between two

houses was excavated during the early and pre-urban levels. Moreover, a hearth resembling a modern-day tandoor with mud-plastered walls was found, along with cylindrical pits lined with lime plaster, possibly for storing water.

Agriculture practises indicated by the infamous furrow marks at the sites and archaeobotanical evidence indicated at cultivation of winter (rabi) crops. And for the antiquities, chert blades, terracotta toy-cart wheel, carnelian and agate beads, and a copper celt were found. During the Mature Harappan (urban phase), the settlement was divided into a citadel found at KBL 1, which was found overlaying the Early Harappan horizon, and a lower city found at KBL 2. Excavators noted that the city layout and the settlement pattern changed during this period. The citadel was a fortified parallelogram measuring 240 x 120m. The fortification was 3 to 7 meters in width and was made of mud-bricks in the ratio of 4:2:1. The lower city was about 40cm away from the citadel and was also fortified. The fortification was 3 to 9 meters wide and within the fortification the city had a gridiron plan of streets running north to south and in the east to west direction. The streets were two to five meters wide. Evidence of houses with multiple rooms, sometimes decorated with stylised terracotta tiles, courtyards, and lanes was found. The drainage system was even more sophisticated, with specialised terracotta pipes, some even bearing Harappan letters were found. The water management system also included wells made with trapezoid-shaped bricks. Evidence of wheat and barley was found, along with the domestication of cattle, which was a continuation from the early phase. The material culture was as vibrant as any other major Harappan city, which had to be accommodated in multiple volumes of the excavation report. An array of terracotta human figurines was found from the site, which is significant as it is a rarity in the eastern domain of the civilisation. Some were decorated and some were also anthropomorphic. An interesting terracotta anthropomorphic figure, resembling a Celt, was found. Apart from human figurines,

animal figurines, particularly that of a zebu bull, are a favourite of the people of Kalibangan. Interestingly, bulls are integral to the locality even today, as one can find many grazing on the site or resting under a tree. A copper bull statue is especially significant for its iconography and making.

Moreover, a terracotta cake, which is one of the Harappan markers, largely underrated, was found. It had an engraved human figure with horned headgear on one side, and a human figure carrying probably an animal on the other side is interesting and rare. This, as per the excavators, suggest to some belief system among the people, evidence of which was found at KBL 3 on the northeastern edge of the site. It was here that multiple hearths labelled by excavators as fire-altars were found. The absence of any domestic activity in this area and the presence of an isolated mud-brick structure appealed to the excavators as evidence of rituals. While a thesis can be written on the plethora of significant and unique evidence found at the site, it is important to highlight its importance, as the buck often stops at Rakhigarhi these days. Unlike Rakhigarhi, this site was excavated for nine field seasons, which yielded evidence that is unique to the region where it is located. Ancient cities, particularly Harappan cities, were strategically located. Similarly, Kalibangan, literally translated as black bangles, is located near the confluence of Ghaggar and Chautang. According to Gregory Possehl, this city may have played a significant role as a way station and monitor of overland communications of the Harappan people. The site remained under-represented in the public domain despite being the only Harappan site in this region to have a decent site museum. Government initiatives to re-excavate the site and build an open-air museum have yielded no results, but as we keep pushing these demands, we have to understand if an open-air site museum would be advisable. Just as dramatic as its discovery and how it was pushed into the background, the site should not be ignored. Kalibangan is not just another site, but represents a fortress of resilience and power in the arid region on the fringes of Thar.

Hindi and regional languages expand their reach across India

This is the reason he chose Varanasi along with Vadodara as a perfect option from where to contest the 2014 Lok Sabha elections. After winning both seats, he chose Varanasi. The corridors of power believe all roads to New Delhi pass through Uttar Pradesh — before Modi, Uttar Pradesh has given

seven PMs to the country. The importance of Hindi and the Hindi belt is acutely articulated by politicians from the non-Hindi-speaking parts of the country. After PM Jawaharlal Nehru's demise in 1964, a powerful faction within the Congress Party requested party president Kumaraswami Kamaraj to become

the PM. He declined, insisting he didn't know Hindi, which was necessary to become PM.

On Hindi Day (September 14), I can say with pride that Hindi is acquiring a global footprint. According to data from the international database, Ethnologue, the total number of people who can speak, un-

derstand and use Hindi language stands at over 610 million. It includes people listing it as their mother tongue as well as those who mention it as their second or third language of preference. Ninety percent of them live in India. The remaining 10% live outside the country and act as its brand ambassador. The

majority of Hindi-speaking population outside India is concentrated in Nepal, the UAE, the US, Mauritius, Fiji, Guyana, Trinidad, the UK, and Canada. I am mentioning this for a reason. The GDP of all these countries will total around 50% of the global GDP. Almost 30 to 40 million NRIs regularly contribute financially

to their relatives, religious institutions, saints, etc. Remittances are key to our foreign exchange reserves.

However, this isn't the only source of foreign capital. Our artistes and films earn millions in foreign markets. If you want to have influence in a country, you must send your people even before open-

ing an embassy. This is the reason we see politicians in the UK, the US, and Canada celebrating Hindu and Sikh festivals. These countries have seen large Indian immigrant influx since the 19th century. Before Independence, when Mahatma Gandhi along with his close associates tried to establish Hindi as the

national language, some Congress leaders from the non-Hindi speaking states voiced concerns. After a lot of deliberations, it was decided that for the initial 15 years every state will use English for official work and then a decision on the language would be taken considering the prevailing conditions in the future.

Motilal Oswal sees 27% upside potential

New Delhi: Could Indraprastha Gas (IGL) be nearing a turning point? The stock has faced pressure in recent months as higher gas costs, a weaker rupee and concerns over Delhi’s electric vehicle policy weighed on investor sentiment. The brokerage house, Motilal Oswal, in its latest report sees the possibility of a recovery. According to the brokerage report, IGL’s margins may have reached their lowest point, while growth outside Delhi continues to provide support. The brokerage has retained its ‘Buy’ rating and set a target price of Rs 195 per share. This implies an upside of around 27% from the current levels.

Let’s take a look at the key reason behind this bullish call and the rationale behind it IGL’s shares have corrected around 10% over the past four months. The main pressure has come from higher input costs. According to the Motilal Oswal report, Brent crude averaged about \$93 a barrel during the first half of FY27, compared with \$69 a barrel in FY26. At the same time, the Indian rupee weakened to around Rs 95 against the US dollar from Rs 88.4 earlier. The brokerage expects recent price increases for compressed natural gas (CNG) and piped natural gas (PNG) to support margins from the second quarter of FY27.A recent Rs 3.9 per kg increase in CNG prices could also provide an estimated Rs 1.4-1.5 per standard cubic metre boost to EBITDA, according to the report.

IGL’s exposure to Delhi remains an important issue. The city’s Electric Vehicle Policy 2.0 and subsequent directions from the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) are expected to gradually

reduce the use of CNG vehicles. From January 2027, new registrations of several categories of petrol, diesel and CNG light goods vehicles in Delhi will be restricted. As per the brokerage report, “We estimate 0.6% p.a. CNG volume impact from 3-Wheeler electrification.” Three-wheelers account for around 6% of IGL’s overall CNG volumes, and the brokerage estimates that the transition to electric vehicles could affect volumes gradually rather than cause a sudden decline.

However, the report flags the longer-term policy shift towards electric mobility as a structural risk. Motilal Oswal in its report noted that CNG volumes outside the Delhi National Capital Region (NCR) have grown more than 20% year-on-year in recent quarters. These markets now account for around 15-20% of IGL’s total volumes and contribute nearly half of incremental sales. Motilal Oswal report added, “CNG volume growth remains broad-based—ex-Delhi NCR, consistently rising 20%+ YoY.”Within Delhi too, passenger vehicle demand remains relatively resilient. Excluding buses, CNG volumes grew around 11% year-on-year in the first quarter of FY27.The stock is trading at around nine times estimated FY28 earnings, excluding the value of its joint ventures, according to Motilal Oswal.The brokerage expects volumes to grow at a 7% compound annual growth rate between FY26 and FY28, while EBITDA and profit after tax could grow at around 14% annually.The report noted, “We value IGL at 13x Dec’27E SA P/E and add Rs 44/share as the value of JVs to arrive at our target price of Rs 195/share.”

Nuvama projects an upside potential ranging from 11% to 58.9% in six power stocks

New Delhi: India’s power demand rose 12.95% year-on-year in August 2026, while peak demand touched about 258 gigawatts, giving power producers and renewable energy companies a strong operating backdrop. Nuvama Research, in its Power Pulse report, has named ACME Solar, NTPC and Power Grid Corporation of India as its top picks, while also recommending ‘Buy’ on CESC, Tata Power and Inox Wind.

Nuvama said thermal plant load factor increased to 66.8% in August 2026 from 61.7% a year earlier. Renewable energy additions also remained strong, with 16.4 gigawatts added in the year-to-date FY27. The brokerage’s analysis found that around 1,42,000 megawatts of tendered renewable capacity was yet to be converted into power purchase agreements.Among the six stocks carrying a ‘Buy’ rating in Nuvama’s utilities valuation table, Inox Wind has the highest target-price upside at 58.9%, followed by CESC at 33.6% and NTPC at 33%. Nuvama Research has given ACME Solar a ‘Buy’ rating and a target price of Rs 448, implying an upside of 11.5%. The company is also one of the three stocks that the brokerage has specifically named as its top picks in the power sector.The brokerage’s positive view comes as renewable energy tendering remains strong across the country. Nuvama’s analysis found that about 86 gigawatts of renewable capacity already has power purchase agreements, while a much

larger pool of tendered capacity is still awaiting conversion. “Given 86GW of existing PPAs, we believe annual RE additions of ~45–50GW over the next two years are achievable,” Nuvama said.

Nuvama said the annual pace of renewable energy additions could reach around 45 to 50 gigawatts over the next two years when rooftop solar is included. The brokerage based this assessment on the existing power purchase agreement pipeline and the time required for renewable projects to reach commissioning. Nuvama Research has assigned a ‘Buy’ rating to NTPC Ltd. with a target price of Rs 445, implying an upside of 33%. NTPC is among the three stocks that the brokerage has named as its top picks in the power sector.

The company recorded a higher thermal plant load factor during August 2026. Nuvama’s company-level data showed NTPC’s plant load factor at 73.7% in August, compared with 69% in the same month a year earlier.“NTPC reported a higher PLF of 73.7% in Aug-26 (69.0% in Aug’25),” Nuvama said. The brokerage also said India’s thermal generation mix stood at around 66% in August, while overall power demand remained elevated. August demand reached about 169 billion units, supported partly by higher temperatures as the monsoon was softer than expected. Nuvama Research has assigned a ‘Buy’ rating to Power Grid Corporation of India and set a target price



of Rs 283, implying an upside of 13%. PGCIL is also among the three stocks that Nuvama has specifically identified as its top picks in the report.

The brokerage’s assessment comes as India continues to add renewable generation capacity, creating requirements across the wider power system. Nuvama said installed power capacity reached about 552 gigawatts at the end of August 2026, helped by strong renewable energy additions during the current financial year. “Given 86GW of existing PPAs, we believe annual RE additions of ~45–50GW over the next two years are achievable,”

Nuvama said. Nuvama’s tendering analysis showed that around 1,42,000 megawatts of tendered renewable capacity was yet to be converted into power purchase agreements. The brokerage expects this pipe-

line to support substantial renewable capacity additions over the coming two years. Tata Power’s thermal plant load factor stood at 75.8% in August 2026, compared with 69.9% in August 2025, according to Nuvama’s company comparison.

“NTPC/Tata Power/JSW Energy all report rise in PLF during the month,” Nuvama noted.Nuvama’s sector assessment showed thermal generation continuing to account for the largest portion of India’s power generation. At the same time, renewable energy accounted for about 20% of the generation mix in August, according to the report.Nuvama on Inox Wind: ‘Buy’ Nuvama Research has given Inox Wind Ltd. a ‘Buy’ rating and a target price of Rs 123, implying an upside of 58.9%. This is the highest target-price upside among the six stocks carrying a ‘Buy’ rating in Nuvama’s utilities valuation table.

NSE IPO: Can existing shareholders apply 15 questions answered

New Delhi: The much-awaited National Stock Exchange (NSE) initial public offering (IPO) is set to open for investors. Ahead of the opening of the issue, there are several questions around who can apply, how the issue is structured and whether existing NSE shareholders get any special advantage.

Yes, existing NSE shareholders can participate in the IPO, just like other eligible investors. They can bid under the applicable categories. These include – Retail Individual Bidders (RIBs), Non-Institutional Bidders (NIBs) and Qualified Institutional Buyers (QIBs).However, there is an important distinction. The IPO does not have a separate reservation category for existing NSE shareholders.

Any investment will also remain subject to regulatory ownership limits and other requirements. The IPO will open for subscription on Thursday, September 17, and close on Monday, September 21. Anchor investors will be able to participate a day earlier, on Wednesday, Sep-

tember 16.

So, investors have a limited window to place or revise eligible bids. The NSE IPO comprises an Offer for Sale (OFS) of up to 126,436,650 equity shares. Each share has a face value of Rs 1.

There is no fresh issue of shares. This means the IPO is entirely an OFS by existing shareholders. The issue size at the upper end of the price band, the issue size exceeds Rs 22,000-crore. No. This is one of the key points investors should understand.Since the issue is an OFS, the proceeds will go to the existing selling shareholders. NSE itself will not receive the funds raised through the offering.5. Where will NSE shares be listed?

The shares will be listed only on BSE. The Bombay Stock Exchange will act as the designated stock exchange for the issue. If you are wondering why it can’t list on NSE, there is a regulatory factor. Under the applicable Securities Contracts (Regulation) (Stock Exchanges



and Clearing Corporations) Regulations, a recognised stock exchange cannot list its own securities on its own trading platform.The Qualified Institutional Buyer (QIB) category can receive up to 50% of the net offer. The Non-Institutional Bidder category will get at least 15%, while Retail Individual Bidders will have at least 35% reserved. Several existing shareholders are participating in the OFS. They include State Bank of India, Canada Pension Plan Investment Board, Aranda Investments (Mauritius) Pte Ltd, MS Strategic (Mauritius) Limited and The New India Assurance Company, among others.

Smart money is quietly up FII longs but auto

New Delhi: FII Index Future long-short ratio is at 11.2, largely unchanged throughout the week, and also in comparison with the 11.1 seen the previous day. But one look at FII action along longs and shorts separately suggests that there has been brisk activity along both sides that betrays the apparent calm depicted by the ratio.

FIIs added longs by 22.5%, lifting long positions to 41,252 contracts, the highest since June, while shorts were boosted by 21% to 3,26,134 contracts, the highest since April. Incidentally, Nifty FIIs’ short positions had dipped after April, which also coincided with a rise in Nifty. This construct encourages us to expect a similar outcome shortly.

Except for metal and energy indices, major Nifty sectoral indices have all sunk below their respective 10-day SMA. However, the pullback on Friday lends hope of a mean reversion and upmove. The Nifty Auto Index continues to show a weak technical structure, although near-term oversold signals

leave some room for a brief pullback. A pin-bar Doji on the daily chart, along with signs of exhaustion in the MACD histogram, suggests that selling momentum may pause temporarily. Even so, the broader trend remains bearish after the index slipped below an important Fibonacci support level. The Point & Figure chart also remains subdued, with the index still trading below the recent column-high resistance zone and yet to produce a convincing reversal signal. The index has also pulled back from the resistance line of a rising wedge pattern, a formation that can often be followed by a deeper correction. Short recovery attempts may still emerge, particularly from oversold levels, but they are likely to meet renewed selling pressure in the 27,775–27,900 zone. For the outlook to improve meaningfully, the index would need to reclaim 27,900 and sustain above it on a closing basis. Until that happens, the underlying weakness is likely to remain in place.

Jefferies names 5 financial stocks with 11% to 25% upside Paytm, Groww to PB Fintech

New Delhi: Jefferies has identified five Indian financial companies that it expects can deliver at least 25% compound annual growth in operating profit over the next three years, while maintaining healthy revenue growth and benefiting from scale. The list comprises fintech companies Groww, Paytm and PB Fintech, along with AU Small Finance Bank and Poonawalla Fincorp, all of which carry a ‘Buy’ rating from the brokerage.In its report titled The 25% compound annual growth rate (CAGR) Club of Indian Financials, Jefferies said the five companies can compound growth despite their relatively higher valuations.

The report estimates operating profit growth of more than 25% for each of the five companies over the period. Jefferies said its assessment does not depend on a normalisation of credit costs or a low base.

Jefferies has initiated coverage on Groww with a ‘Buy’ rating and a target price of Rs 240, implying an upside of 23%. The brokerage expects Groww to deliver a 30% compound annual growth rate in net profit over financial year 2026 to financial year 2029. Jefferies said Groww is the largest broker in India by active clients, with a 28% market share. The brokerage expects growth to come from its existing broking business as well as newer offerings such as margin trading facility and wealth management. “We believe Groww has several levers to drive 28% EPS CAGR over FY26-29,” Jefferies noted.

The brokerage expects Groww’s revenue to rise at a 24% compound annual growth rate over financial year 2026 to financial year 2029, while earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation could grow at a 31% compound annual rate. It expects the company’s earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation margin to improve by 10 percentage points over the period.

Jefferies also expects Groww’s expansion into margin trading facility and wealth management to contribute more than 20% of revenue by financial year 2029, compared

with 1% in financial year 2025. The brokerage expects the planned launch of US stocks later in financial year 2027 to provide another earnings opportunity. Jefferies has a ‘Buy’ rating on Paytm and has raised its target price to Rs 2,100 from Rs 1,600. The revised target implies an upside of 20%.The brokerage sees Paytm benefiting from better monetisation of its large merchant base as the prospect of a merchant discount rate on Unified Payments Interface transactions improves. Jefferies expects Paytm’s revenue to grow at a 25% compound annual rate over financial year 2026 to financial year 2029.“Paytm stands out on monetisation of client base in near-zero MDR regime, which is now changing favourably,” Jefferies reported.

Jefferies expects operating synergies to support a sharp increase in earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation and profit. The brokerage has also factored in opportunities from credit on Unified Payments Interface, cloud artificial intelligence inference models, wealth services and overseas expansion. PB Fintech operates Policybazaar and Paisabazaar, its online insurance and lending platforms. Jefferies expects premiums to grow at a 35% compound annual rate between financial year 2026 and financial year 2029.“Digital brokers are gaining from rising insurance penetration and customer shift to online channels,” Jefferies added in its report.

The brokerage expects operating leverage and a growing renewal book to drive a fourfold expansion in adjusted earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation between financial year 2026 and financial year 2029. Revenue is projected to grow at a 31% compound annual rate over the same period.

Jefferies expects adjusted earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation margin to increase from 11% in financial year 2026 to 20% in financial year 2029. Net profit is projected to rise from Rs 6,701 million to Rs 23,331 million over the same period.

HPCL, Indigo to Asian Paints: 5 sectors at risk as crude surges 30% from July lows

New Delhi: Oil prices surged further above \$100 a barrel on Monday. Brent crude prices are now trading close to \$108 after fresh strikes in Saudi Arabia and ships in the Gulf raised concerns over worsening disruption to global energy supplies. The pressure is now being felt across sectors linked to crude. Oil marketing companies face the most immediate earnings risk, while airlines, tyre makers, paint manufacturers and some chemical companies could see their margins squeezed by higher fuel and raw-material costs.

The recent surge in crude makes the impact even more worrying. Brent crude futures rose 3.46%, while WTI futures gained 3.15%. Brent had already touched a three-month high of \$109.97 a barrel on September 11, up over 30% from levels seen in early July. Oil marketing companies are at the centre of the crude-price shock because they have to procure crude at higher prices while retail petrol and diesel prices may not rise at the same pace. What makes it worse is that the Indian crude basket is now trading consistently above \$100 for some days now.

Nilesh Ghuge, Research Analyst at HDFC Securities, said, “If you look at the near term, crude oil price is negative for oil marketing companies because the retail price is fixed, but crude price, which is a key raw material for oil marketing companies, has already touched \$100. Definitely, it is negative for oil marketing companies.”Sunny Agrawal, Deputy Vice



President – Fundamental Research at SBI Securities, said the biggest earnings risk from crude above \$100 is with India’s downstream fuel retailers. “If Brent sustains above \$100/bbl, the biggest earnings risk remains with India’s downstream fuel retailers: (a) HPCL, (b) Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd. and (c) Indian Oil Corporation. In such a scenario, marketing margins can turn negative,” Agrawal said.Although Brent has already crossed that level, the key question for OMC earnings is how long crude stays there and whether retail fuel prices are adjusted to reflect the increase.Agrawal said HPCL has historically shown greater earn-

ings volatility during crude spikes because of its smaller balance sheet and lower diversification compared with IOC and BPCL.“Historically, HPCL has shown the highest earnings volatility during periods of crude spikes because of its relatively smaller balance sheet and lower diversification compared with IOC and BPCL,” he said. “At sustained \$100-plus crude, with restricted retail-price increases, the major risks are: Negative petrol and diesel marketing margins. Higher LPG under-recoveries. Higher crude-landing, freight and insurance costs. Working-capital and debt accumulation. Inventory losses once crude corrects sharply,” Patel said.

Campaigners warn of a tidal wave of Pfas being introduced to appease the AI business



Washington: Pfas companies are launching a “tidal wave” of forever chemicals production to meet demand from the AI industry, a campaign organisation has warned.Despite alarm over the chemicals, which have been linked to cancer, a survey of the 10 biggest manufacturers found most had plans to increase production.Many frame their investments around the “AI revolution”, because of the role Pfas play in semiconductor production and next-generation datacentre cooling systems.But opponents warn that the chemicals, which never degrade in nature, are a ticking timebomb for human and planetary health. They say increased production risks undermining nascent moves to restrict Pfas in Europe, the UK and parts of the US.“These companies’

expansion plans show that unless governments and regulators insist on a rapid phaseout, we will face a new tidal wave of forever chemicals,” said Anne-Sofie Bäckar, the executive director of ChemSec, the Swedish chemicals watchdog that carried out the research.ChemSec’s survey found nearly all of the 10 biggest manufacturers of Pfas had plans to increase production, at sites in Europe, Asia and North America.The boom in AI tech was leading demand, with Pfas used for “eco-friendly” datacentre cooling and in various stages of semiconductor manufacturing.Japan-headquartered Daikin said it was launching a “datacentre hub” to meet demand, and promised to “maintain and expand our top share in the industry by expanding sales of existing fluorine

products and introducing new products”. The French multinational Arkema was expanding its refrigerant offering, with a new \$60m (£44m) production unit in Kentucky that it said “will enable us to follow the rapid expansion of datacenters’ cooling needs”.And the US Pfas producer Chemours was expanding to meet demand from “advanced datacenters and AI hardware”. It said its “innovative liquid cooling solutions” lower the energy, water, space, maintenance and investment costs of datacentres. Critics have said Chemours – recently ordered to pay \$450m to settle a lawsuit over Pfas discharges – downplays the chemicals’ toxicity and climate impact.

Other companies increasing production were Japanese multinational AGC, Chinese conglomerate Dongyue, India-based chemicals giant Gujarat Fluorochemicals, secretive Russian Pfas producer HaloPolymer, Mexico’s Orbia Fluor & Energy Materials, US-based fluorinated gases producer Solstice and Belgian multinational Syensqo.

Producers also cited Pfas coatings and binders for lithium-ion batteries, used in EVs, laptops and phones, as a parallel growth area. Gujarat Fluorochemicals’ chief executive, Bir Kapoor, recently identified batteries as one of several “sunrise sectors”, alongside datacentres, semiconductors and green hydrogen. “There is a tremendous growth opportunity there,” he said.The only clear exceptions were the Swiss company Archroma, which was switching to marketing Pfas-free alternatives, and the German giant BASF, which has said it will exit Pfas production by 2028.

With the majority of votes counted, the center left parties in the Swedish election lead by just one seat



Stockholm: With most of the votes counted, Sweden’s national election remained too close to call on Sunday night, with left-wing parties holding a lead of just a single seat according to a partial tally by the election authority.

Earlier in the night, exit polls suggested that the country was on course for a brand new left-leaning government. But as the votes were counted, it was apparent it could take days for the outcome to become clear.With 80% of votes counted, there was just one seat between the left and right blocs. The left-leaning

opposition parties, led by Social Democrat Magdalena Andersson, had 175 and the rightwing parties, led by the Moderates prime minister, Ulf Kristersson, had At 10:30pm local time, broadcaster SVT predicted there were only 20,000 votes between the blocs.The election authority said a preliminary vote count may not be ready until Thursday.Kristersson, the incumbent prime minister, said the voters had had their say, but “we still don’t have a final result.Which government will lead Sweden in the coming years is still an open question,

and we will do everything we can to ensure that this government will be the very best for our country,” Kristersson told supporters.The Social Democrats remain Sweden’s biggest party, but look to have had their worst result in decades.

Speaking just before midnight local time, Andersson addressed supporters to say that every vote must be counted.“We will have to wait for the final election results. But my message is clear: we Social Democrats will always be ready to take responsibility for the result. It seems like it will be very even,” she said.“But right now we are leading. If it stands, then Sweden will have a new government. But we have to wait for the final result, so let me end where I began, in democracy, the finest thing we have.”It was also a bad night for the far-right Sweden Democrats, who are hoping to enter government for the first time. They slipped from the country’s second biggest party to third.The deputy prime minister, Ebba Busch, of the Christian Democrats, told her supporters that Sweden would be going “to bed with uncertainty” and may have to wait until Wednesday for a result. But she remained adamant that the ruling right-leaning

coalition should remain in government.“

This is a very clear message for the only unified government alternative in this election campaign,” she said in an upbeat speech. “This will be a real nail-biter, this could be uncertain all the way until Wednesday.”

It comes after an unusually heated and polarised campaign punctuated by personal attacks between leaders, accusations of misinformation and Maga-inspired ads. Polls suggested an extremely tight race, with one showing just 0.3 percentage points between the left and right blocs. Polling stations across the country opened at 8am local time (7am UK time). Enthusiasm among voters appeared to be high. A record 3.6 million voters took part in early voting and there were reports of long queues at some polling stations.Whatever the result, coalition talks are expected to take weeks if not months. The opposition left-leaning bloc is formed of Sweden’s biggest party, the Social Democrats, the Centre party, the Green party and the Left party. The rightwing coalition broke a longstanding taboo in 2022 by going into partnership with SD, which has neo-Nazi roots.

Nine EU countries further delay EES border checks

London: The entry-exit system (EES), which was due to come into force in full on 6 September, has been delayed multiple times to avoid visitor congestion around large events, including the Olympics in 2024. Now nine countries, including the holiday hotspots France, Greece, Portugal and Italy, have told Brussels they need more time. Germany, Malta, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Belgium have also sought extra time. Spain, which had teething problems, is implementing the EES fully.The EES, which was first adopted by the EU in 2017, was officially launched last October and was due to become fully operational in April but early problems, particularly in Greece and Portugal, led to a further reprieve for member states.EU sources say the system is considered a success with about 200m registrations and 70,000 people stopped from entering the Schengen area, up from 43,700 in June.These include people without visas, those who have overstayed their 180-day allowance or Britons who have overstayed



their 90-day allowance. Criminals using forged passports or ID documents have also been apprehended with fingerprint and facial image records exposing the use of different passports by individuals. The delays in those nine member states are not

countrywide. Fingerprinting has started at the Eurostar terminal in Brussels and Antwerp port but not in all airports.Large airports, such as Frankfurt and Schiphol – two of Europe’s busiest international hubs, are also taking biometrics but small

airports may not be fully up to speed.

Sources say just 12 airports out of 1,500 border crossing points are still having issues. France has also not introduced checks in the Port of Dover where French police are in the unique position

to do border controls in a non-EU country. Technically those that do not capture fingerprints and facial images are now in breach of the EU regulation, which ended any right to suspend the EES, but sources in Brussels have confirmed they will not be prosecuted.Earlier this summer, the EU noted that one of the airports was a small regional facility where 3,000 passengers could arrive in an hour in the peak holiday period, but could not be assessed because there were only four booths for biometric capture.The International Air Transport Association had demanded a full suspension in July complaining that passengers were missing connections in Spain, Italy, Greece and Belgium, while Ryanair warned of “queue chaos” in airports including Málaga and Palma.

The pre-authorisation app, Travel to Europe, which allows passengers to register their facial image and passport details before travelling, will shortly be working for seven countries, sources say.

So far, it is showing as only operational in Sweden and Portugal.

Treasury employees at all levels are invited to submit budget suggestions by John Healey



UK: John Healey has asked junior Treasury staff – including IT workers and apprentices – to send him ideas for his October budget, saying he will listen to all suggestions regardless of grade or profession.

The chancellor’s unorthodox approach comes as he faces a tricky autumn with expected inflation rises, sluggish growth and potential cuts from other departments to fund extra defence spending.

Healey, who was Andy Burnham’s surprise choice for chancellor, is understood to have written to staff at the Treasury campuses in London, Norwich, Leeds and Darlington asking them to send him ideas. He said he did not only want to hear from economists but from staff not traditionally involved in policymaking.

Those with the most interesting ideas will be invited to pitch to Healey in person.

A Treasury source said the move was designed to challenge “traditional Whitehall hierarchies” and that the chancellor was particularly looking for ideas focused on spreading growth around the country

and boosting local industries, as well as measures to cut costs for families and businesses.

Healey has told staff he wants “everyone from apprentices, IT staff and junior officials to senior economists and private secretaries” to contribute to the exercise, and that he hopes October’s budget will include some of the ideas from the brainstorm.

A Treasury spokesperson said: “Just as we want growth in every postcode, we want ideas from every postcode. The chancellor wants to harness the talent in the Treasury and across the country to improve our communities and high streets, and give people and businesses a bit more breathing space.”

Healey told Sky News on Friday that this next phase was a “continuity of a Labour government with a change of leader”, saying he would not sacrifice fiscal discipline. He said a Burnham government “simply can’t deal with the problems we face as a country by maxing out the country’s credit card”.

Healey quit as defence secretary under Keir Starmer over a disagree-

ment about defence spending, including cash for the defence investment plan and the timeline to increase defence spending to 3.5% of GDP. As chancellor, however, he has played down the prospect of setting out that timeline by the October budget.

“Fiscal discipline has been the bedrock of the government that I was part of for the first couple of years, as a Labour government since July 2024,” he told Sky.

“We build on that, but it is not easy. It is not easy in a world in which you see global conflict, increasing dangers.”

The Financial Times has reported that Healey will most likely use the budget to fill the gap of about £5bn in the defence investment plan, partially funded by departmental cuts of about £1.2bn a year.

Burnham has said he will stick to Labour’s manifesto, which promises no increases in income tax, national insurance or VAT, though he said in a recent interview that the public needed to be realistic about what needed to be funded and how difficult more spending would be.

In an attempt to identify the owners worth of pots, child trust fund companies are under scrutiny



UK: Child trust fund providers are being put under the spotlight to check they are treating savers fairly and doing all they can to reunite young people with lost ac-

counts.

The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) said about 760,000 accounts worth an average of £2,000 were yet to be claimed – more

than £1.5bn in total – as it launched a review of the market.

The City regulator also urged parents and young adults to use a free checking

service to see if they have a forgotten pot of money.

About 6.3 million children born between 1 September 2002 and 2 January 2011 had accounts opened for them under a government scheme designed to encourage saving.

Families received at least £250 and were encouraged to pay in more. While some parents did, others left it to the government to choose a provider.

The scheme closed in 2011, and existing accounts will continue to mature until 2029 as their owners turn 18.

The FCA said it would review whether banks, insurers and fund managers were being active enough in attempts to track down customers.

It will ask all 55 providers to explain the efforts they are making to trace customers who have lost touch with their accounts. It also plans to look at the barriers faced by parents and guardians of

vulnerable people who may struggle to access their money.

The review will also look at how firms are checking that charges and fees are fair after the introduction of the consumer duty in 2023, a rule stating that financial firms must deliver good outcomes for their customers.

Chris Knight, the FCA’s director of insurance, said: “Child trust funds can help set young people up for the future. But too many risk losing touch with money that is rightly theirs. Our review will look at how firms are helping customers access their funds, providing fair value, and supporting vulnerable consumers and their families.”

The FCA warned about the cost of claims management companies offering to help people track down missing funds, but charging a fee to may take action against providers if necessary.

Five lightweight running shoes that someone who has just begun jogging should think about

I have only recently begun my running journey, yet I have already determined one crucial aspect I desire to avoid in a pair of running shoes: I do not want them to feel cumbersome.I also don't like shoes that make my feet feel boxed in. I want enough space for my toes to move comfortably, enough flexibility to let my feet move naturally and cushioning that makes running feel easier without making the shoe itself feel bulky.That has become my personal filter while looking for running shoes.

The ASICS GEL-CUMULUS 28 is the pair I have actually road-tested and loved. I found it easy to walk in, comfortable to move around in and surprisingly eye-catching. So while putting together this list, I looked at the other options through the same lens: how lightweight they are, how much freedom of movement they offer, what kind of cushioning they have and whether they make sense for someone who is only just getting into running.

If you're new to running and don't want your shoes to feel like an extra weight on your feet, these are five pairs I'd consider.

5 lightweight running shoes for beginners:

1. ASICS GEL-CUMULUS 28: The ASICS GEL-CUMULUS 28 is my favourite from this list, and unlike the other four, this is one I have actually worn on the road.

What struck me first was how easy it was to walk in. Since I've only recently started running, my workouts aren't necessarily just running from the moment I leave home. There is walking involved too, and I don't want to switch shoes or feel uncomfortable between the two.

I also liked that it didn't feel heavy on my feet. That's a big deal for me because bulky sports shoes can make me feel like I'm carrying extra weight with every step.

And then there is the appearance. The pair I wore is genuinely eye-catching, which I appreciate because I don't necessarily want my running shoes to look like something I would only wear for a workout. What does it physically offer?

ASICS describes the GEL-CUMULUS 28 as a lightweight running shoe designed for a smooth underfoot experience. It uses FF BLAST MAX cushioning and a FLUID-RIDE outsole designed to help with smooth transitions between strides. The women's version is listed with a standard width and lace-up construction.

What does that mean in real life?

For me, it feels like a shoe that manages to give you cushioning without making the footwear itself the star of the show.

I can walk comfortably in it, move around without feeling restricted and actually enjoy wearing it outside the running session too. The obvious limitation is the price. At nearly ₹13,000, I wouldn't tell someone who has just decided to try running once a week that they need this shoe. But if you know you want to make running part of your routine, this is the one I'd personally choose.Best for: Beginners who want a dedicated running shoe and are willing to invest.What I love: Lightweight feel, comfortable walking experience, freedom of movement and the

eye-catching design.

My verdict: My clear winner and the only shoe here I've personally road-tested.

2. Skechers GO WALK FLEX: For beginners who prioritise flexibility: The Skechers GO WALK FLEX isn't a dedicated running shoe. It's a walking design, and I think that's important to say upfront.

But if you're a beginner whose routine currently looks more like walking, brisk walking and occasional short jogs, this could be more relevant than a highly technical running shoe. Skechers describes the GO WALK FLEX as a walking design with lightweight ULTRA GO cushioning, an Air-Cooled Goga Mat insole and a super-flexible traction outsole. It also uses Soft Stride cushioning foam for additional comfort. If you hate shoes that feel rigid, this is the option that immediately catches my attention.The flexible outsole and lightweight cushioning fit the kind of movement I personally prefer. It also makes sense beyond running because you could use it for walks, errands, travel or everyday athleisure.But I wouldn't buy this specifically for serious running. It is fundamentally a walking shoe, so if running becomes your main activity and your distances start increasing, I'd move towards a dedicated running shoe.Best for: Walking, beginner jogs and everyday movement. What stands out: Flexibility and lightweight cushioning. Trade-off: It's more walking-focused than running-focused. My verdict: A strong option if your running journey is currently mostly walking with some jogging mixed in.

3. Reebok Wonder Run: A lightweight all-rounder: The Reebok Wonder Run is the kind of shoe I'd consider if you don't want your first pair of sports shoes to have one very specific job. Reebok's women's Wonder Run listings describe the shoe as a running model for hard or road surfaces, with a lightweight construction, breathable mesh or synthetic-and-textile upper and an EVA sole. Some variants also list 3D EVA and Zigtech technology.

What does that mean in real life? This is a practical choice if you're still figuring out what your exercise routine looks like. Maybe you want to run twice a week, walk on other days and occasionally use the same pair for a gym session. In that situation, buying an extremely specialised running shoe may be unnecessary.The lightweight construction also fits the central requirement I'm using for this list: I don't want a shoe that feels cumbersome while I'm moving. The trade-off is that this is more of a versatile running shoe than a premium performance model. If you already know you're going to run regularly and want to invest in a more dedicated shoe, I'd look at the ASICS or PUMA instead.Best for: Beginners who want one pair for several activities.What stands out: Lightweight construction and versatility.Trade-off: Less specialised than a premium running shoe.My verdict: A sensible option if you're still experimenting with your workout routine.

4. PUMA Scend Pro Speedfit: For a more running-focused option: The PUMA Scend Pro Speedfit is the option I'd consider when



running itself starts becoming the main event.PUMA describes the Scend Pro Speed-Fit as a running shoe designed to keep the wearer light on their feet, with PROFOAM cushioning, a textile upper, PROTREAD rubber outsole and a performance running fit. The listed version has a regular width, rounded toe and lace closure. What does that mean in real life?

This is much closer to what I'd call a proper running shoe than a general walking sneaker.The lightweight PROFOAM construction particularly appeals to me because it matches the feeling I'm looking for: enough cushioning to make movement comfortable without making the shoe feel unnecessarily heavy. PUMA itself describes the model as keeping the wearer light on their feet.The performance fit is something I'd pay attention to, though. If you are particularly sensitive to shoes that feel restrictive around your toes, check the fit carefully before buying.Don't assume your usual size will automatically be perfect. Look at the brand's size chart and make use of the return or exchange policy if available.Best for: Beginners who primarily want to run outdoors.What stands out: Lightweight cushioning and running-specific construction.Trade-off: The performance-oriented fit may feel less relaxed than an everyday walking shoe. My verdict: A good middle ground if you want a dedicated running shoe without immediately moving into the premium price bracket.

5. Boldfit Women's Walking Shoes: The budget-friendly way to start: If you're not ready to spend several thousand rupees on your first pair of sports shoes, Boldfit is the budget option I'd look at. The exact Boldfit models vary, but the women's walking and running range includes breathable mesh uppers, cushioned insoles and lightweight soles designed for daily movement and walking. What does that mean in real life?

This is where I'd start if you're testing the waters. If your current routine is mostly walking with a few short jogs thrown in, I don't think you need to immediately spend ₹10,000-plus on running shoes. A lightweight, breathable and comfortable pair can

get you moving while you work out whether running is something you genuinely enjoy. While budget walking shoes can serve as an accessible and comfortable entry point for daily strolls, casual fitness walking, or short errands, you should remain clear about their inherent structural limitations if your physical activity begins to evolve. Specifically, if you decide to transition from casual walking to running regularly, or if you find yourself steadily increasing your weekly mileage and pushing your distance thresholds higher, I would strongly advise you to upgrade to a dedicated, high-performance running shoe rather than attempting to treat an affordable walking shoe as a viable, long-term solution. Walking shoes are intentionally engineered with different biomechanical priorities in mind; they typically feature a more flexible forefoot, heavier overall upper materials, and a flatter, firmer cushioning profile designed to support the rolling heel-to-toe motion of a pedestrian stride at slower speeds. In contrast, running is a high-impact, repetitive sport that subjects your joints, tendons, and muscles to forces up to three times your body weight with every single stride, requiring specialized footwear equipped with advanced shock absorption, targeted energy return, breathable mesh uppers, and robust medial or lateral support systems to prevent overuse injuries like shin splints, plantar fasciitis, and runner's knee. Trying to force a budget walking shoe to handle the rigorous demands of sustained, high-mileage running will not only cause the midsole foam to compress, flatten, and lose its protective cushioning properties at an accelerated rate, but it will also leave your feet and lower limbs vulnerable to premature fatigue and discomfort, ultimately proving that investing in the right tool for the specific job is essential for both your athletic progress and your long-term physical well-being. Best for: Beginners on a budget who are starting with walking and short jogs.What stands out: Affordability and lightweight everyday construction. Trade-off: Less running-specific than the ASICS or PUMA.My verdict: A sensible entry point if you're not ready to invest heavily yet.

Cosmetologists recommend eight skincare products

If your skin is experiencing dryness, patchiness, and itchiness after washing your face, it indicates that you have dry and dehydrated skin. In such cases, it is crucial to identify the appropriate moisturizer to address these issues. dry and patchy skin.

While applying a moisturiser is an important part of any skincare routine, the ingredients in your products matter just as much. Some ingredients help attract moisture to the skin, while others strengthen the skin barrier and prevent water loss. If your skin often feels flaky or dehydrated, knowing which ingredients to look for can help you choose skincare products that provide lasting hydration and keep your skin soft, smooth and comfortable.

Dr Trishna Gupte, Clinical Cosmetologist and Founder and Owner of Cosmo-Square Clinic and ISCA Institute, recommends choosing a moisturiser based on the severity of dryness and the condition of the skin. From everyday lotions for sensitive skin to richer creams for severely dry areas, here are eight options to consider.

1. Dr Reddy's Venusia Max Intensive Moisturizing Lotion for Normal to Dry skin: Venusia Max Intensive Moisturising Cream is a rich moisturiser designed for dry to very dry skin. It contains glycerin along with emollient butters that help provide intense hydration and soften dry skin. Its richer texture makes it suitable for people dealing with persistent dryness and a compromised moisture barrier. It can be considered



when regular lightweight lotions do not provide enough moisturisation. This cream is particularly useful for areas that feel rough, tight or excessively dry and need longer-lasting moisture.

2. Cetaphil DAM Daily Advance Ultra Hydrating Lotion for Dry: Cetaphil DAM Daily Advance Lotion is an everyday moisturising option for dry and sensitive skin. Its formula is designed to hydrate while supporting the skin's moisture barrier. Consider this lotion for facial skin that often feels dry, tight, or uncomfortable, especially if you prefer a product you can incorporate into a regular skincare routine. Its focus on moisturisation makes it a practical choice for people looking for an uncomplicated daily moisturiser for dry and sensitive skin.

3. Physiogel Hypoallergenic Daily Moisture Therapy Cream For Normal: Physiogel Daily Moisture Ther-

apy Cream is formulated for dry, sensitive and barrier-compromised skin. It can help when skin feels tight, rough, or uncomfortable from excessive dryness. The cream moisturises while supporting the skin barrier, making it suitable for regular use by people whose skin becomes easily dry or sensitised. If your skincare routine tends to leave your skin feeling stripped or uncomfortable, a barrier-focused moisturiser such as this can help restore a more comfortable, hydrated feel.

4. Moisturex - Bottle of 100gm Cream: Moisturex Cream combines urea and lactic acid, making it different from conventional moisturisers that primarily focus on hydration. It is particularly useful for rough, scaly and very dry areas of the body, where the skin may need help with both moisturisation and surface roughness. It may be considered for areas such as extremely dry elbows,

knees or other rough patches. Since products containing exfoliating ingredients may not suit everyone, especially when the skin is irritated, it is best used under medical guidance.

5. Bioderma Atoderm Intensive Baby Soap Bar from Birth Gently Cleanses and Purifies The Skin: Bioderma Atoderm Intensive Baume is a richer moisturising option for very dry and sensitive skin. It is particularly suited to skin that is prone to significant dryness or atopy. The balm-like texture makes it useful when the skin needs more intensive moisturisation rather than a lightweight daily lotion. It can be incorporated into a routine when dryness is persistent, and the skin barrier needs additional support. For people whose skin frequently feels tight, rough or uncomfortable, a richer barrier-supporting product may be more appropriate.

6. Aveeno Daily Moisturizing Lotion 354ml: Aveeno Daily Moisturising Lotion is an oat-based moisturiser that can be useful when dryness is accompanied by irritation. Oat-based skincare is often chosen for its moisturising and soothing properties, making this lotion an option for people who want hydration without an excessively heavy texture. It can work as an everyday body moisturiser for dry skin and can be particularly useful when the skin feels rough or uncomfortable. Its focus on moisturisation and soothing makes it a practical addition to a simple daily skincare routine.

7. La Roche-Posay Cicaplast Baume B5+ Repair Moisturiser Balm, 15ml: La Roche-Posay Cicaplast Baume B5+ is a barrier-repair balm intended for dry, irritated and sensitised areas. Its richer balm texture makes it especially useful when certain areas of skin need extra protection and moisturisation. Rather than a basic lightweight lotion, it suits areas that feel compromised, dry, or uncomfortable. It can be used as part of a barrier-focused routine when the skin needs extra care. Those with persistent or severe irritation should seek professional advice before adding new products.

8. Sebamed Moisturizing Cream 50ml: Sebamed Moisturising Cream is a lighter OTC moisturising option for dry and sensitive facial skin. It can be considered by people who want daily hydration without choosing a very rich cream. The formula is intended to moisturise while being suitable for sensitive skin, making it a practical option for everyday skincare. It may work particularly well for those who find heavy creams uncomfortable during the day. If your facial skin tends to become dry but you prefer a lighter texture, this can be an option to consider.The best moisturiser depends on how dry your skin is and whether you also experience sensitivity, irritation, roughness or a compromised skin barrier. Lightweight lotions may work for everyday dryness, while richer creams and balms can be more appropriate for very dry or sensitised skin.

These 4 Besan Face Packs to Give Your Skin a Natural Glow

You may be able to take better care of your skin with gram flour. However, you need to mix a few ingredients in a gram flour box to achieve that. This will keep the skin hydrated and leave it acne-free, smooth, and radiant.

Gram flour-turmeric face pack

To create a deeply nourishing and multitasking DIY facial treatment designed to target stubborn blemishes and promote a flawlessly clear complexion, start by gathering a few kitchen staples: take one teaspoon of fine gram flour to serve as a clarifying, textured base that helps sweep away dead surface cells and excess sebum; add a small, measured amount of rich olive oil to infuse the blend with intensive moisture, essential fatty acids, and powerful antioxidants that heal and soften rough skin; pour in a splash of fresh milk, which delivers natural lactic acid to gently brighten and smooth the skin's texture; and finally, mix in a careful pinch of pure turmeric powder, renowned for generations for its potent antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory properties that actively combat blemish-causing bacteria and calm redness. Whisk these wholesome ingredients together in a small bowl until they transform into a smooth, cohesive, and luxurious paste that clings comfortably to the skin without running. Using clean fingertips or a soft brush, smoothly apply an even layer of this golden mixture across your face, taking care to avoid the immediate eye area, and allow it to rest undisturbed for a full twenty minutes so the botanical components can deeply penetrate, purify, and revitalize your complexion. Once the time is up, gently massage and rinse the mask away with lukewarm water to reveal skin that feels thoroughly refreshed and renewed. For optimal results in your quest to fade blemishes and get rid of all those unwanted imperfections on your skin, incorporate this rejuvenating ritual into your regular self-care regimen three times a week. Gram flour, honey and rose water

To create a deeply soothing, hydrating, and clarifying homemade facial treatment that brings together some of nature's most treasured skincare ingredients, begin by taking a clean mixing bowl and combining one carefully measured spoon of fragrant, soothing rose water, known for its ability to calm inflammation, balance skin pH, and impart a subtle, refreshing floral essence; one teaspoon of raw, pure honey, which acts as a powerful natural humectant that draws vital moisture deep into the skin while offering antibacterial and antioxidant benefits to promote a clear complexion; and one spoonful of fine gram flour, or besan, which serves as a traditional, gentle texturizing base that helps absorb impurities and unclog pores without causing harsh abrasion. Thoroughly whisk these three wholesome components together until they merge into a completely smooth, velvety, and homogenous paste that has just the right consistency to glide effortlessly across your skin without dripping. Once your nourishing concoction is properly prepared, use clean fingertips or a soft cosmetic brush to apply an even, generous layer across both your face and your neck, ensuring you cover all the contours while carefully avoiding the delicate and sensitive skin immediately surrounding your eyes and lips. Allow the mask to sit undisturbed for a peaceful ten to fifteen minutes, giving the active ingredients ample time to nourish, hydrate, and gently clarify your complexion. As the time comes to a close and before the mask has a chance to dry out completely and tighten uncomfortably, lightly dampen your fingers with a splash of water and gently massage the mixture in slow, circular motions across your skin, which reactivates the product and provides a mild, physical exfoliation to slough away dead skin cells. Finally, rinse your face and neck thoroughly with lukewarm water until every trace of the paste is gone, pat dry with a soft towel, and enjoy the instantly refreshed, soft, and glowing results, keeping in mind that you can safely incorporate this nurturing ritual into your skincare routine two to three times each week for optimal, long-lasting radiance. Gram flour and almond oil

To craft an intensely nourishing and deeply hydrating homemade skincare treatment specifically tailored for individuals struggling with chronically dry, flaky, or dehydrated skin, you can begin by combining a base of traditional gram flour, which provides a gentle, non-stripping textural foundation, with your choice of either rich milk powder or nutrient-dense almond oil, both of which serve as exceptional emollients designed to lock in vital moisture. If you opt for milk powder, it introduces lactic acid and essential milk proteins that softly condition and brighten the complexion, whereas choosing almond oil infuses the blend with a powerhouse of vitamin E and deeply penetrating fatty acids that soothe rough patches and restore the skin's natural lipid barrier. Thoroughly blend your chosen combination in a clean bowl until it achieves a smooth, velvety consistency, and then gently apply this comforting mixture evenly across your face, ensuring a soothing application while avoiding the delicate eye area. Allow the nourishing mask to work its restorative magic for approximately ten minutes; however, it is critically important to remain mindful of the timing and rinse the mask off with lukewarm water before it has a chance to completely dry down and crack, as letting flour-based masks dry out entirely on parched skin can inadvertently cause further moisture depletion. By washing it away while it still retains a touch of dampness, you ensure that your skin absorbs all the rich, emollient benefits without any irritation, ultimately leaving those with really dry skin feeling remarkably soft, deeply comforted, and beautifully revitalized. Gram flour, tomato and turmeric

To prepare this revitalizing and natural homemade face mask, begin by gathering your simple kitchen ingredients: measure out one teaspoon of fine gram flour, also known as besan, which acts as a gentle natural cleanser and exfoliator to help absorb excess facial oil and clear away dead skin cells; add one teaspoon of fresh tomato juice, packed with natural acids and vitamins that work to brighten a dull complexion and tighten enlarged pores; and finally, sprinkle in a pinch of pure turmeric powder, celebrated for centuries for its powerful anti-inflammatory, antibacterial, and antioxidant properties that help soothe irritated skin and impart a healthy, radiant glow. Thoroughly mix these three components together in a clean small bowl until they form a smooth, uniform, and easily spreadable paste with a consistency that won't drip down your neck. Once your concoction is properly blended, gently smooth an even layer across your freshly cleansed face and neck, taking careful precautions to avoid the sensitive skin directly around your eyes and lips. Now, carve out some dedicated time for relaxation—plan to spend the next 20 to 25 minutes allowing the mask to sit undisturbed, giving the active botanical ingredients ample opportunity to penetrate the outer layers of the skin, draw out impurities, and work their magic. As the time passes, you will likely feel the mask gradually tighten and dry on your skin as it performs its clarifying work. When the timer goes off, gently splash your face with lukewarm water, taking your time to carefully soften and massage the dried paste away in gentle circular motions, which provides an extra layer of mild physical exfoliation as it rinses off.

ENTERTAINMENT

Soni Razdan lauds Ranbir Kapoor’s hands-on parenting and support for Alia Bhatt



Mumbai : Soni Razdan has seen parenting change quite a bit over the years. The actor, who will next be seen in Om Ka Hari, releasing in theatres on September 18, feels that parents today are doing things very differently from her generation. According to Soni, fathers are far more involved, parents are more patient, and raising a child is no longer seen as the mother’s responsibility alone. Looking back at her own generation, Soni feels parenting was not necessarily seen as something that

needed to be equally shared between both parents. “In my generation, taking out that maximum amount of time for your children was not really looked upon as some sort of virtue. It just wasn’t given that importance. It was almost like parenting was either dumped on the woman, or I don’t think parenting was shared as much as it is today.” For Soni, that shift towards shared parenting is perhaps one of the nicest changes she has seen. “And I think that is the best part of today’s generation. They really know how to share parenting, which makes all the difference.” She is particularly struck by how involved fathers are today. Watching the men in her own family has made that change even more noticeable to her. “Fathers are—I’m sometimes gobsmacked when I see the way fa-

thers are. Anshuman, what a wonderful dad he is. My son-in-law, what a wonderful father he is. You know, and he’s such a support to Alia. So I can see that, and even my husband is the same.”Soni also feels her husband has, in some ways, come to understand this change himself. “You know, he is realising perhaps how little he actually gave to his children. And at that time, he had the excuse, ‘I was working very hard.’ But everybody is working very hard now. So, haan, it was just not that.” For her, the difference isn’t necessarily that parents today have less work or fewer responsibilities. It is that parenting itself has started getting the importance it perhaps didn’t receive earlier. “It was not given that importance. I don’t know why. Some things get better with generation, some don’t.”

Meghna Gulzar’s daayra: Kareena and Prithviraj turn up the tension in striking new visuals



Mumbai : Kareena Kapoor Khan and Prithviraj Sukumaran are all set to show a fierce and intense side as cops, if the latest posters from their upcoming film, Daayra, are anything to go by. Directed by National-award winning Meghna Gulzar, the investigative crime thriller has been hitting the headlines for its plotline and lead cast performances. The makers have dropped news posters of Kareena and Prithviraj who play righteous police officers. “DCP Raman Kumar upholds the law. And never breaks his own rules,” read the Instagram caption

of Prithviraj’s poster from Junglee Pictures. “DCP Ajooni knows the law. And she stands by it. Get a closer look at DCP Ajooni Kohli and the making of #Daayra,” read another caption of Kareena’s picture. Kareena earlier played investigative or law enforcement roles in films like, The Buckingham Murders (2023) and Angrezi Medi-

um (2020). But in Daayra, her character Ajooni is built around subtle intensity, sharp psychological depth, and quiet authority. As part of her preparation, she worked extensively on mastering a stoic, controlled persona. “I had to suppress my usual expressive acting style to suit the character. It was a great and challenging experience working on the film,” said Kareena. Daayra is about the gray areas of the law and systemic apathy. The film explores a brutal case involving the disappearance and murder of a young girl. On the other hand, Prithviraj Sukumaran is winning accolades for his

screen presence. Not relying on commercial tropes, he picked up a role that has a calm authority yet leaning into a raw and un-stylized performance. The star admitted that debated with Meghna Gulzar on set because of his onscreen character’s extrajudicial methods. At the same, Prithviraj credited Meghna’s objective preparation for winning every creative debate and character arc. “Her approach to the characters were very clinical, and always had logical and well-reasoned perspectives,” he said. Daayra is releasing in theaters worldwide on September 18, 2026.

Diljit Dosanjh confirms Ahmedabad show for aura world tour



New Delhi : Punjabi singer and actor Diljit Dosanjh has announced his return to India with a massive concert at Ahmedabad’s Narendra Modi Stadium on November 21, 2026, just hours after making history as the first Punjabi artist to headline London’s iconic Wembley Stadium.

Both Diljit and his team have shared snippets from the historic show on Instagram. The Wembley milestone marked a significant moment in Diljit’s international career. According to his team, he performed his hit songs in front of approximately 90,000 people. The show featured his

trademark bhangra routines in traditional attire, seamlessly blended with hip-hop, as he performed to a packed stadium. The official Instagram of Wembley Stadium also shared snippets from the show and wrote, “The first Punjabi artist to headline Wembley Stadium - and this is why.” Accord-

ing to viral social media videos shared by several fans at the concert, Diljit also announced the next leg of his AURA World Tour in India, with a performance scheduled at Ahmedabad’s Narendra Modi Stadium. Addressing the crowd in Punjabi, Diljit said, “The world’s biggest stadium is in India... how can a Punjabi not go there?” He added, “Kem Cho, majaa maa? We’re doing Live at Narendra Modi Stadium on 21st November.” The Ahmedabad announcement also signals a major expansion in scale for his India return. During his Dil-Luminati India Tour in late 2024, Diljit performed to packed venues across the country, including Ahmedabad. For now, the Ahmedabad concert on November 21 is the confirmed date and venue for the upcoming India leg. Full tour details, including ticket sale dates and pricing, have not yet been announced.

Telugu industry rethinks strategy: stars call out ‘pan-India’ marketing label



Hyderabad : Noted actor Nani has taken a dig at one of the most overused terms in Indian cinema today — “Pan-India.” Speaking about The Paradise, the actor made it clear that while the film will release in multiple languages, its primary target audience remains Telugu. “Stop using the term ‘Pan-India.’ It’s an overused and abused term. Paradise will be released in all languages, but our target is mainly the Telugu market,” Nani said. Nani’s comments come at a time when almost every major regional film is being positioned as a Pan-India project, irrespective of its scale, content or actual market potential. What started as a description of a film’s ability to travel across regions has gradually evolved into a marketing label attached to projects of all sizes. “Nani has got it right. It is not just overused anymore — it is misused,” says a top producer. “The Pan-India tag is being used even for smaller films and non-star projects. Telugu actors and filmmakers need to realise that the North Indian market is not waiting to buy every Telugu film. Those days are gone. Instead, they should focus on their core strength — the Telugu audience.” According to the producer, the industry should first concentrate on making strong local stories that can succeed on their own before aggressively attempting

to expand into other markets. “I would like to see actors such as Vijay Deverakonda with Ranabali, Nikhil Siddhartha with Swayambhu, Naga Chaitanya with Vrushakarma and Vishwak Sen with Legacy focus strongly on winning the Telugu audience first. If the content works here, other markets will naturally follow,” he adds. Interestingly, Rana Daggubati, who was among the actors who helped popularise the concept through the Baahubali franchise, has also questioned the relevance of the term. He had earlier described “Pan-India” as a stupid term, while acknowledging that it was initially useful because there was no proper terminology to describe regional films making a significant impact in North India. However, with the growth of the internet and OTT platforms, language and geographical barriers have largely disappeared, making the term increasingly redundant.

Producer Ravi Shankar Yellamanchili, who has tasted success with both large-scale Pan-India projects and Telugu-centric films, also believes the industry needs to rethink its approach. “I agree that regional cinema and Hindi cinema are two different segments, and we need to understand that difference,” he says. According to him, attaching the Pan-India tag can dramatically inflate a film’s scale and, consequently, its budget. “A Telugu film may initially be planned at around ₹50 crore. But once the Pan-India label is attached, the budget can increase four to five times because the makers start thinking about multiple markets, bigger stars, wider releases and larger production values. That makes recovery much more difficult,” he explains. He cites Irumudi as an example of what Telugu filmmakers could learn from. Made on a comparatively controlled budget, the film reportedly managed to deliver strong returns after collecting around ₹200 crore. “That is the kind of model Telugu producers and directors should seriously look at,” Ravi Shankar says. “There are so many stories that can be made within Telugu budgets and still become commercially successful. We need more films like Irumudi rather than automatically turning every project into a Pan-India production.”

CBI takes over Disha Salian probe, registers FIR years after death

Mumbai : The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Monday registered an FIR in connection with the death of Disha Salian, former manager of late actor Sushant Singh Rajput, following a direction from the Bombay High Court for a thorough probe into the case. Salian was found dead on June 8, 2020, days before Rajput was found dead at his residence in Bandra, Mumbai. Her death had earlier been recorded as an Accidental Death Report (ADR). The development comes after the Bombay High Court directed the CBI to register an FIR and investigate the circumstances surrounding Salian’s death. During an earlier hearing, a Division Bench of Justice Bharti Dangre and Justice Manjusha Deshpande had raised concerns over the registration of only an ADR despite allegations by Salian’s family that she was murdered.

The court had also noted that copies of the post-mortem report and the ADR had not been provided to Salian’s family even five years after her death.Following the court’s direction, Salian’s father, Satish Salian, had said that he had provided investigating authorities with details of the circumstances surrounding his daughter’s death and expressed confidence that the proceedings would begin soon. The CBI probe has also drawn attention from Sushant Singh Rajput’s sister Shweta Singh Kirti, who recently expressed hope in the investigation.Sharing a video on social media, Shweta said, “Truth has its own power... it can be suppressed for some time, troubled, but it cannot be defeated."She welcomed the CBI inquiry into Salian’s case, saying it had given hope to many of Rajput’s followers.

Haiwaan box office: Akshay-Saif film wraps up opening weekend below Rs 8 crore



Mumbai : Saif Ali Khan and Akshay Kumar’s Haiwaan is currently facing stiff competition from Mirzapur: The Movie. The film, that released on September 11, reunites Akshay and Saif after 17 years. Haiwaan is the Hindi remake of the Malayalam film Oppam. On its opening day at the box office, the film had collected Rs 3 crore. Haiwaan remained steady in its first weekend at the ticket windows. Haiwaan opened with Rs 3 crore on Friday, but the film didn’t see the expected jump over the weekend. It collected Rs 2.5 crore on Saturday, while Sunday’s collection stands at Rs 1.85 crore, as per the latest Sacnilk update. With this, the Akshay Kumar and Saif Ali Khan starrer has earned Rs 7.35 crore nett in India

in its first three days. The much-anticipated Akshay Kumar-Saif Ali Khan face-off should have been one of the film’s biggest selling points. Instead, it becomes one of its weakest links. With two stars of their stature sharing the screen after 17 years, the audience naturally expects fireworks. What they get, however, is a confrontation that is so tonally misplaced that the

most serious moments end up drawing giggles from the audience. And that perfectly sums up Haiwaan: it is less about creating thrills and more about creating convenience. Instead of building genuine tension or suspense, the narrative repeatedly relies on convenient coincidences and easy resolutions. Characters get what they need precisely when the story requires it.

Haiwaan, meaning “Beast” or “Animal”, is a crime comedy thriller directed and co-written by Priyadarshan. The film is produced by KVN Productions and Thespian Films and is a Hindi remake of Priyadarshan’s 2016 Malayalam thriller Oppam. The film features Saif Ali Khan, Akshay Kumar, Boman Irani, Shriya Pilgaonkar and Saiyami Kher in key roles. Mohanlal makes a cameo appearance in the film. Haiwaan also marks the final screen appearance of veteran actor Asrani, who died in October 2025. In Haiwaan, Saif Ali Khan plays a visually challenged man, while Akshay Kumar takes on the role of the antagonist, a cold-blooded psycho killer. The film was released in theatres on September 11, 2026.

Hina Khan meets governor Jishnu Dev, promotes eco-friendly Ganeshotsav



Mumbai : Today, September 14, marks Ganesh Chaturthi. Hina Khan had a rather special Sunday ahead of the festival. The actress met Maharashtra Governor Jishnu Dev Varma and later shared pictures from their meeting on Instagram. Hina used the occasion to talk about celebrating Ganesh Chaturthi without hurting the environment. She encouraged people to bring home eco-friendly Ganpati idols and avoid those made with POP. Sharing pictures from her meeting with the Governor, Hina thanked him for making her part of the initiative. She wrote, “Honoured. Thank you for making me a part of this initiative, Hon’ble Governor of Maharashtra Shri Jishnu Dev Varma ji. This Ganesh Chaturthi, let’s bring Bappa home without harming nature. Inspired by our Honourable Governor’s leadership and vision, I urge all Indians to participate in this movement again.” Hina also explained why she feels people should opt for eco-friendly idols. In her post, she wrote,

“Eco-friendly idols aren’t just a trend; they’re the right way. No POP means less pollution, less damage to our water bodies, and a little more care for the resources we’ve been blessed with. Because sustainability is not a modern idea. It’s the civilisational path, the Indian Way.” She went on to remind everyone that celebrating a festival and caring for nature can go hand in hand. Hina urged people to respect nature, protect the resources they have and celebrate Ganesh Chaturthi without causing harm.And clearly, her fans liked what she had to say. The comments section was soon filled with messages praising the actress. One fan wrote, “She’s a real secular citizen (sic).” Another commented, “Apko Mile h bappa becoz u respect all religion (sic).” Hina has been away from fiction shows for the past few years. Her last television appearance was in the reality show Pati Pati Aur Panga, where she appeared with her husband, Rocky Jaiswal. She is also a cancer survivor.

Box office juggernaut: Hanuman ansh collects Rs 22.50 crore net on day 38

Mumbai : Hanuman Ansh is ruling the box office, and how. The film, based on the life of Neem Karoli Baba, is in its sixth week, but the audience craze is not dying anytime soon. The movie has managed to cross the Rs 200 crore mark in India within six weeks of its box office run. Hanuman Ansh, released on August 7, had a mediocre box office start until the film picked up in its second week. Now in its sixth week, the movie has crossed the Rs 200 crore mark. On its Day 38, the movie earned Rs 22.50 crore net in India. The film



recorded 54% overall occupancy across 8,902 shows. On Saturday, the movie earned Rs 18.50 crore, meanwhile, Sunday saw a 21.6% higher occupancy. Meanwhile, the movie

is making wonders in the global market. The film earned Rs 5 crore overseas on Day 38, taking its total overseas gross collection to Rs 14.50 crore. Right now, the domestic gross of

the film is Rs 253.55 crore, while the worldwide gross of the film has reached Rs 268.05 crore. Meanwhile, the net collection of the film in India is Rs 214.63 crore. Hanuman Ansh had

a slow start at the box office, opening with just Rs 10 lakh on Day 1. Its first two weeks were equally underwhelming, with the film collecting only Rs 1.48 crore net. However, the film’s fortunes changed after positive word of mouth began spreading. A major jump came on Day 16, setting the stage for a strong run in the weeks that followed. The film went on to post record collections in its third, fourth and fifth weeks, earning Rs 61 crore in Week 4 and a massive Rs 90 crore in Week 5. Its momentum continued into the sixth weekend, with the

film collecting Rs 10.50 crore net on Friday, its 36th day in theatres. With this, its India net collection climbed to Rs 174 crore. The film is based on his book Divine Detour: That Changed My Life, which chronicles the life of Neem Karoli Baba. Shobhinaw Satyaa and Chandan Anand play the lead roles. The story follows Lakshmi Narayan, a young boy living in pre-Independence India who leaves home after his mother’s death in search of God. His journey across North India eventually leads to his transformation into Neem Karoli Baba.

A Mumbai con artist was arrested in Gujarat using a wig, three aliases, and a Rs 30 crore scam



Mumbai, Sep 14: A 56-year-old con artist who reportedly defrauded investors of over Rs 30 crore through a stock market scam has been detained from Gujarat, according to an official on Monday. He lived under three different names and wore a wig to conceal his identity. According to an officer from the Economic Offenses Wing (EOW), Roshan Bhushan Sheth, the accused, exploited the scam to finance a luxurious lifestyle that included costly watches, high-end automobiles, and luxury apartments. He also enticed 42 victims across Gujarat and Maharashtra with promises of 5% monthly profits on investments. The EOW arrested Sheth

from a residential building in Gujarat's Valsad in July, he said. According to the probe agency, Sheth circulated fabricated profit statements to convince investors that their funds were traded in the stock market. While the principal investment collected stands at around Rs 5 crore, the total loss reported by victims, including an NRI woman, is approximately Rs 30.26 crore. The fraud came to light when Kandivali resident Sanjay Hiralal Shah (60) approached Mumbai Police Commissioner Devan Bharti in April, alleging his family was conned of Rs 10.81 crore. Investigations found that Sheth originally befriended Shah's software engineer son in 2020 under

the pretext of developing a trading app named 'Investok'. He allegedly persuaded the family to invest heavily, and used a similar pitch to lure other investors, showing them manipulated Excel sheets during meetings at his Sion and Matunga apartments.

To sustain the fraud, he paid around Rs 3.8 crore in small "profit" instalments before halting all payments in December 2025 and vanishing in April, the official said. Following technical surveillance, an EOW team tracked Sheth to a residential building in Valsad. Officers laid a three-day stakeout and arrested him after gaining entry into his apartment disguised as housekeeping staff. Police discovered that Sheth had used three identities over time - Jayesh Hasmukhbhai Shah in his youth, Rahul Atulbhai Parekh while he was in Delhi, and Roshan Bhushan Sheth in Mumbai. In addition to attaching three residential properties, authorities have confiscated a BMW, a Mercedes, a Mahindra Thar, 14 expensive watches, gold jewelry valued at Rs 1.67 crore, and Rs 17 lakh in cash, according to the official. He said that 37 witnesses, including salon employees who kept up Sheth's wig and assisted police in confirming his identification, were named in a chargesheet submitted on September 1. The remaining victims have been asked by the EOW to provide information about their investments.

Sanju Samson is under pressure following a recent setback, while Vaibhav Sooryavanshi is on the bench

New Delhi: India won the first Twenty20 International (T20I) of the three-match series against Afghanistan by seven wickets in Delhi. India chose to bowl first and held Afghanistan to 156/8 thanks to pacer Arshdeep Singh's outstanding 3/19 in four overs. Afghanistan's only bright spot was Azmatullah Omarzai, who scored 64 off 44 balls. In response, supporters at the Arun Jaitley Stadium saw Abhishek Sharma unleash utter devastation in a batting masterpiece. As India chased down the mark in only 13.4 overs, the left-hander hit 82 off just 32 deliveries, including seven fours and seven sixes. Despite the emphatic win, Team India's selection decisions have come under scrutiny, with the exclusion of batting prodigy Vaibhav Sooryavanshi raising plenty of questions. The 15-year-old sensation, who has already taken the cricketing world by storm with his fearless strokeplay, was benched for the opening match as the management opted to field the experienced Sanju Samson

alongside Abhishek Sharma at the top of the order. However, the decision did not pay off immediately, as Samson managed only 10 runs before being dismissed by Omarzai in the third over. Sooryavanshi earned his maiden India call-up for the two-match T20I series against Ireland in June this year but did not get a game. As India suffered a disappointing whitewash in that series, the youngster's exclusion became a talking point, especially after his blockbuster IPL campaign. Later, during India's five-match T20I series against England, Sooryavanshi finally made his international debut in the second game and featured in a total of three matches. However, he failed to make a significant impact and was subsequently dropped for the final match, with Samson returning to the playing XI. Sooryavanshi's breakthrough moment came against Zimbabwe, where he became the youngest player to score a T20I half-century and announced his arrival on the international stage. Samson's journey in the Indian team has



never been smooth. First competing with Rohit Sharma and Shubman Gill, and later with Yashasvi Jaiswal, the Kerala batter has consistently faced stiff competition to cement his place in the side. While competition has certainly played a role in his intermittent appearances, Samson's inconsistency has also been a major factor. With back-to-back centuries against South Africa in 2024, Samson strengthened his case and looked set to become a regular member of India's T20I playing XI. Later, after the management decided to move on from Gill in the shortest format, Samson formed a promising opening

partnership with Abhishek Sharma. However, the emergence of Sooryavanshi has created fresh competition for places. With Ishan Kishan also in the mix as a wicket-keeper-batter, time could be running out for Samson unless he is able to consistently justify his place in the side. Because of Sooryavanshi's quick ascent to fame, every omission has become a hot topic of discussion. Shreyas Iyer and head coach Gautam Gambhir may have to make tough choices in the future as they weigh experience against the long-term potential of one of India's most promising young players.

Ferran Torres propels PSG to their first Ligue 1 victory

Brest: With a 1-0 victory against Brest on Sunday, champions Paris Saint-Germain finally got their Ligue 1 campaign underway, and Ferran Torres scored. Luis Enrique's treble Champions League-winning team made a very slow start to the league season, managing just two points from their first three games before their journey to Brittany. They defeated Slovan Bratislava 6-1 on Wednesday to start their quest for a third straight Champions League crown, but four days later, Torres' arrival has caused them to fall short at home. The close-season arrival from Barcelona, who scored the winning goal for Spain in the World Cup final this summer, netted a hat-trick midweek and followed it up with a sumptuous early strike at Brest's Stade Francis-Le Ble. Torres now has six goals in five outings in all competitions for PSG. "What matters to me is always helping the team, regardless of how much playing time the coach decides to give me, and doing my part. Whether that's through goals, assists, or my work on the pitch," the 26-year-old said. The result sent the Parisians up to eighth in the league table, with an identical record to their hosts, who had been unbeaten heading into the encounter. Ahead of kick-off, Brest paid tribute to their former coach Eric Roy, who died in June aged 58 after suffering from pancreatic cancer. PSG got the crucial breakthrough

in the fifth minute when Balon d'Or winner Ousmane Dembele flicked a backheel into the path of the onrushing Torres. The Spaniard strode onto the ball just outside the 'D' and caressed it into the bottom corner beyond the dive of goalkeeper Egil Selvik. Khvicha Kvaratskhelia then went close to doubling PSG's lead in an entertaining first half. It was not all good news for PSG in the opening period, however, as Morocco captain and right-back Achraf Hakimi limped off just before half-time to be replaced by midfielder Fabian Ruiz.

Brest came within a whisker of equalising five minutes after the interval when Nuno Mendes carelessly played the ball across for Kamory Doumbia, but the forward saw his effort rebound off the post when he had only goalkeeper Matvey Safonov to beat. The hosts then turned into their own net two minutes later but the goal was disallowed for a push by Warren Zaire-Emery, which forced the error. Safonov was the hero for PSG late on as he got down quickly to fingertip a Pathe Mboup effort past his far post as Luis Enrique's side held on for the victory. Mbappe redemption Earlier, Ethan Mbappe redeemed himself after his Champions League red card in midweek by scoring a late goal in a 2-0 win over Troyes which sent Lille top of Ligue 1. Mbappe, the younger brother of France and Real Madrid star Kylian, was sent off in Wednesday's

3-2 home loss to Real Betis in Europe for elbowing an opponent. The 19-year-old put that incident behind him, though, as he came off the bench against Troyes to seal victory in stoppage time, after the hosts had taken a first-half lead through Portuguese full-back Tiago Santos. Mbappe celebrated his first goal since December in subdued fashion by apologising to supporters for his red card, but the strike lifted Lille above Monaco and Rennes on goal difference at the top of the table. "He came to his senses after his red card and showed maturity beyond his years; he took responsibility for his actions," Lille boss Davide Ancelotti said. "This week has been very important for him personally, helping him to grow as a player and as a person. As for his qualities, he certainly has them — he showed that again today." Lille have taken 10 points from a possible 12 under new coach Davide Ancelotti, the son of Brazil boss Carlo Ancelotti. Lens, the unexpected championship contenders from the previous season, have found Ligue 1 to be more difficult this year. In contrast to a challenging early domestic campaign, the team defeated PSG in the French Champions' Trophy last month and won the Champions League 3-2 on Thursday against Slavia Prague. After a 2-2 draw away to recently promoted Le Mans on Sunday, they are presently in 10th place with just four points from as many games.

The success of the BRICS summit boosts the BJP's confidence and helps it fend off attacks from the opposition



New Delhi, Sep 14: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given the government and the BJP newfound confidence by successfully holding the BRICS conference. It is being praised as a great accomplishment for the Modi government that this important international meeting was successfully organized after the G20 in just three years. The BJP anticipates that this will aid in the party's recovery from recent political losses. The administration and the BJP have not had a good few months. The NEET paper leak protest and the ensuing "Cockroach Janta Party" uproar have stifled the political momentum created by a historic victory in West Bengal and a hat-trick of victories in Assam. The resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan was viewed as a major blow to the government. Aggressive attacks by the Congress party regarding police action against protesters at Jantar Mantar effectively washed out the parliament's monsoon session. During that session, the government could not pass any major constitutional amendment bills and

the tabling of the joint parliamentary committee (JPC) reports on three such bills had to be deferred. Against this backdrop, the successful hosting of the BRICS Summit has once again demonstrated India's formidable presence on the international stage. The issuance of a joint statement by member nations - despite their internal differences - is being regarded as a major achievement for Indian diplomacy and PM Modi's leadership. Furthermore, the strong condemnation of the Pahalgam terror attack in this joint statement marks a significant diplomatic success. In a similar vein, winning China's and Russia's support for India's application for a permanent seat in the UN Security Council is a significant accomplishment. Other noteworthy outcomes of the summit include discussions aimed at ending the Russia-Ukraine war, PM Modi's third consecutive year of bilateral meetings with the Chinese president, talks between the UAE and Iran (who had been at odds for months) on the sidelines of the event, and the friendly reception given to the Iranian president. De-

spite some reservations, the Opposition Congress party has also praised this announcement. Through this event, India has once again demonstrated that not only has its international stature risen, but as the fastest-growing economy, it is also fully capable of hosting such mega events. This will strengthen India's bid to host the Olympics in 2036. As the leader of the host nation, PM Modi remained at the centre of the entire event. His warm rapport with other world leaders and his boundless energy were evident throughout the three days. He maintained a hectic schedule, holding bilateral talks with 15 heads of state or government during this period, alongside numerous informal discussions. The eyes of the world were fixed on his meetings with Russian President Vladimir Putin, Chinese President Xi Jinping and Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian. This was not the first time PM Modi shifted the focus of domestic discourse through international meetings and events. The successful hosting of the G20 Summit in September 2023 had already showcased the Modi government's foreign policy prowess to the world. Prior to this, there were several instances where roadshows featuring visiting foreign dignitaries were organised in states heading to the polls. This represents a highly successful experiment in leveraging diplomacy to serve domestic political interests. It is now up to the BJP and the government to decide how they will capitalise on the success of this BRICS summit. According to BJP leaders, the successful hosting of the BRICS event will be prominently highlighted during the month-long 'Seva Sankalp Abhiyan' (Service Pledge Campaign), which begins on September 17 - PM

Modi's birthday. This period also marks the completion of 25 years of his service to the public on October 7. The successful BRICS Summit will be counted among the achievements of his foreign policy. The BJP has begun targeting the Congress party over its opposition to the BRICS Summit. Before the summit began, a statement by former finance minister P Chidambaram - questioning what India would gain from such an event - had become a major point of contention. The BJP intends to highlight the success of BRICS and the benefits India derived from it across the country. Similarly, the BJP is likening the Opposition's - specifically Rahul Gandhi and other Congress leaders - criticism regarding the all-vegetarian menu at the BRICS gala dinner to the behavior of a disgruntled relative - or an "easily offended uncle". According to BJP leaders, the fact that the Congress could find no issue to criticise other than the dinner menu is a testament to India's success at the BRICS summit. Attention has also shifted to the government's next move regarding the Delimitation Bill. The parliament has not yet been prorogued, thereby keeping the option open for the government to convene a special session to pass the Constitutional Amendment Bill on delimitation. In this regard, a possible reorganization of the Council of Ministers is also being considered. The process of forming the BJP's parliamentary board, central election committee, national executive, and national council is anticipated to be finished shortly after BJP leader Nitin Nabin's team is formed. Meanwhile, the BJP has begun preparing for the assembly elections that are set for early next year in five states.

Racing, Politics, and Public Relations: The Significance of the Vijay-Ajith Meeting for TVK

Chennai, Sep 14: Warm embraces, kisses, and companionship between actor-turned-politician Vijay, the chief minister of Tamil Nadu, and actor-racer Ajith Kumar in the UK have sparked a wider discussion regarding the two celebrities' alleged rivalry, which has persisted for almost thirty years. The encounter took place as Vijay kicked off Ajith Kumar's race at Silverstone. Ajith applauded the Tamil Nadu government's declaration of plans to build a world-class motor racing metropolis in the state at the same time. For many years, Vijay and Ajith were seen as the next generation of Rajinikanth and Kamal Haasan, two popular actors whose fan bases were frequently pitted against one another. Many saw Ajith as an actor with the technical range and variety of Kamal Haasan, while Vijay's popularity was often likened to that of Rajinikanth. The competition extended beyond the screen. Conflicts between segments of their fan bases have occurred on social media and in the streets throughout the years. The scenes in the UK have therefore been welcomed by many as a sign that the perceived rivalry between the two stars may finally be giving way to a more

open display of friendship and mutual respect - reminiscent of the deep friendship and mutual respect that have long defined the relationship between Rajinikanth and Kamal Haasan. Fisheries Minister A Srinath called for unity among their fans. "Thala Ajith and Thalapathy Vijay are big pillars of Tamil cinema. Both are heartthrobs of this generation. The recent event is a reflection of their friendship and affection. The message is Thala and Thalapathy fans should be united," he said. Fans, however, have reacted differently. Ajith fan Sivaraj in Chennai welcomed the meeting, saying, "I see the maturity of Rajinikanth and Kamal Haasan between these two stars now." Vijay fan Patricia called it "a brilliant move by both stars when they are seen as strong rivals." But some hardcore fans have taken to social media to express their discomfort. Ajith fan Subramaniam in Coimbatore dismissed the meeting as "a PR exercise by both sides and that it may not bring about much of a change". For Vijay, the moment could also have a political dimension. TVK is preparing for by-elections in two constituencies where the former AIADMK MLAs who defeated TVK candidates

have since resigned, joined the ruling party and are now contesting as TVK candidates. Political observers are pitching the by-elections as a referendum of the TVK government. That comes at a time when the opposition is taking on the state government over what it calls rising crimes against women and declining law and order. Against that backdrop, Vijay's public camaraderie with Ajith could also help him reach beyond his traditional support base, including Ajith fans who may not have voted for TVK in the assembly election. Sports Minister Aadhav Arjuna, who accompanied Vijay on the UK visit, said the trip had provided new perspectives and learning towards creating an international-level sports economy with Tamil Nadu at its centre. He called the visit a turning point in the state's athletic history and stated that Tamil Nadu will strive to become India's sports capital with top-notch facilities and an updated sports industry. Following the visit, he added, a number of new initiatives were being undertaken to raise Tamil Nadu's sports ecosystem to international levels. It remains to be seen if the UK embrace alters the balance between the two fan bases.

The BCCI clarifies the Asia Cup Trophy Row and explains Pakistan's Mohsin Naqvi snub

Chennai, Sep 12: Devajit Saikia, the secretary of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), stated on Monday that the women's cricket team's refusal to accept the Asia Cup trophy from Mohsin Naqvi, the Pakistani chief of the Asian Cricket Council (ACC), was a "conscious, institutional" decision made by the Board while taking sentiments and circumstances into consideration. In the final on Sunday in Dubai, the Indian women's team defeated Sri Lanka by 72 runs, but they refused to receive the trophy from Naqvi, after the men's team's departure from the 2025 Asia Cup in the wake of the 26-person Pahalgam terror incident.

Naqvi could only hand over the runners-up medals to the Sri Lankan women's team and continued to wait on the podium for Harmanpreet Kaur and Co., but they refused to change their stance. In the end, the Indian team celebrated the triumph without the trophy, much like Suryakumar Yadav's men last year. It was later explained that the BCCI had asked the Indian women's team to adopt this stance, in sync with the bitter political relations that exist between India and Pakistan. However, Saikia explained that the stance is purely an institutional decision, and not against the tournament, the players or the sport. "We had taken a conscious decision, consid-

ering all prevailing aspects, and our position had been communicated to the ACC in advance, that the Indian team would not participate in the trophy presentation under the circumstances," Saikia told PTL. "Given the circumstances and the sentiments prevailing in the country, the BCCI felt that it would not be appropriate for the team to receive the trophy in the proposed manner. "This was a firm institutional decision, reflective of the position we have maintained, and was not directed at the players, the tournament or the sport," he added. Following the terror attack in April last year, the two countries were also engaged in a brief military showdown in May.

India and Sri Lanka Clash in Women’s Asia Cup Final Rematch for Continental Supremacy

Dubai : Two years after Sri Lanka stunned India to win their maiden Women’s Asia Cup title, the two sides meet again in the final with the continental crown on the line in Dubai on Sunday. The rematch gives India a chance to reclaim the trophy they lost in Dambulla in 2024, when Chamari Athapaththu and Harshitha Samarawickrama struck half-centuries to power Sri Lanka to an emphatic eight-wicket victory. Harmanpreet Kaur’s side have been the standout team of the tournament, going unbeaten on their way to the final and chasing an eighth Asia Cup title. Sri Lanka have also remained undefeated and will draw confidence from knowing they have already beaten India on this stage. The 2024 final remains the obvious reference point, but



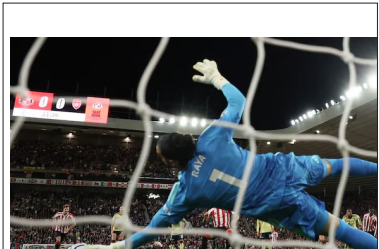
India arrive this time with Shafali Verma and Deepti Sharma in outstanding form, while Sri Lanka have once again shown the resilience that carried them to the title two years ago. Harmanpreet, however, does not want her team to over-complicate the occasion. With a title at stake, the India captain believes the key is to trust what has worked throughout the tournament. “Rather than trying

too many things and thinking of doing something extraordinary, it is all about sticking to your strength, backing yourself and trusting your gut feeling.” Harmanpreet said on the eve of the final. India have been led by Shafali Verma and Deepti Sharma during their unbeaten campaign. With 168 runs, including two fifties, Shafali is the tournament’s leading run-scorer. She has also been In-

dia’s most consistent batter on the slow, spin-friendly Dubai surfaces, finding a fluency that others have struggled to match. Smriti Mandhana has produced a century against Hong Kong but has also registered two single-digit scores, leaving Shafali’s consistency particularly valuable at the top. Deepti, meanwhile, shares the tournament’s leading wicket-taker spot with Sri Lanka captain Athapaththu, with both having taken 11 wickets. She has also contributed with the bat, hitting 13 off six balls against Bangladesh in the semifinal to help India push their total close to 150. With Shree Charani providing control and Prema Rawat finding her rhythm, India’s spin attack has been one of their biggest strengths.

Mikel Arteta Fumes at Sunderland Penalty Despite Arsenal Win Calling Decision Unacceptable

New Delhi : Mikel Arteta was left furious with the refereeing despite Arsenal maintaining their perfect Premier League start with a hard-fought 2-0 win over Sunderland on Saturday. Arsenal were made to work for all three points at the Stadium of Light, with David Raya producing a crucial save to keep out Enzo Le Fee’s penalty early in the second half. Bruno Guimaraes then broke the deadlock just two minutes later before Bukayo Saka sealed the win from the spot in stoppage time. The victory gave Arsenal four wins from four in the league and kept them at the top of the table. However, Arteta’s attention after the game was firmly on the penalty decision that went against his side. Referee John Brooks awarded Sunderland a spot-kick after Ezri Konsa was penalised for pulling Dan Ballard during a corner. Arteta strongly disagreed with the call and questioned how the incident could have been deemed a penalty. “It was a huge win but it could have been something very different,” Arteta told TNT Sports.



“It’s unacceptable at this level. This can change the course of a season and the championship. It’s not acceptable. I’ve seen it 10 times to make sure and it’s not possible at this level that it can be a penalty. It cannot happen. “It’s not a penalty in any context, in any league.” The result was far from a routine Arsenal performance. Sunderland’s energy, physicality and persistence caused problems for the visitors, who were forced to defend for long spells. Raya proved crucial when he pushed Le Fee’s penalty onto the post in the 55th minute. Arsenal responded almost immediately, with Guimaraes coming off the bench at half-time to make a decisive impact. The Brazil midfielder received

the ball from Declan Rice before curling a superb right-footed effort into the top corner to put Arsenal ahead. Sunderland continued to threaten, but Arsenal’s defence held firm to secure another clean sheet. The Gunners have now kept four clean sheets in their five matches across competitions since the start of the season, including their Champions League victory over Napoli in midweek. Arteta was particularly pleased with the character shown by his players. “It’s unbelievable the spirit and the courage we have to go again and again and again,” he said. “So pleased in one sense and so worried in another. “David Raya was unbelievable. He is a player that decides football matches when we need it.” The Arsenal boss also acknowledged Sunderland’s contribution to a difficult contest. “They deserve a lot of credit for the way they make it so hard for you,” he added. Arsenal secured a 2-0 win over Sunderland, maintaining their perfect Premier League start with four wins from four.

Rybakina Ends Sabalenka’s Three-Peat Dream to Claim US Open Title

New Delhi : Elena Rybakina has dethroned Aryna Sabalenka to become the new US Open champion, crushing the Belarusian’s bid for a historic three-peat at Flushing Meadows. In front of a packed house on Saturday, Rybakina produced a composed display to beat Sabalenka 6-4, 5-7, 6-2 in two hours and 21 minutes. Rybakina, the queen of aces, fittingly sealed her triumph with her signature weapon. She fired an ace on

championship point before erupting in celebration, completing a stunning victory and claiming her maiden US Open crown. The scenes on court could not have been more contrasting. While Rybakina soaked in the glory of her landmark triumph, Sabalenka was left to deal with the heartbreak, eventually venting her frustration by destroying her racket. Sabalenka had been chasing history, looking to become only the

third woman in the Open Era to win the US Open three years in a row. But Rybakina once again proved to be her nemesis. The Kazakh had already beaten Sabalenka at the WTA Finals last year and the Australian Open this year before taking the world No.1 ranking from her. Now, she has denied Sabalenka a historic three-peat and claimed her third Grand Slam title. Rybakina has now won two Grand Slam titles in 2026 and

three of the four majors in her career, with only Roland Garros missing from her collection. Rybakina dictated the terms for much of the opening set, using her powerful serve and clean ball-striking to keep Sabalenka under constant pressure in the US Open final. The Kazakh initially had to withstand Sabalenka’s explosive start, with the Belarusian holding serve after a pulsating opening game. But Rybakina quickly settled

into her rhythm. She held to love in her next service game, firing four straight points and making it difficult for Sabalenka to impose herself from the baseline. The turning point came at 2-2. Rybakina had already earned three break points earlier in the set, and this time she made the pressure count. Sabalenka struggled to find her range as Rybakina kept raising the intensity, with a costly double fault eventually handing

the Kazakh the breakthrough for a 3-2 lead. Rybakina then consolidated the advantage emphatically. She raced to 40-0 before producing another ace, with a Sabalenka error completing a commanding hold for 4-2. The Kazakh continued to dictate with her aggressive first-strike tennis, forcing Sabalenka into errors and denying the defending champion the chance to establish any sustained momentum.



Shreyas Iyer Expresses Excitement Ahead of Upcoming Asian Games Experience



New Delhi: India T20I captain Shreyas Iyer is eager to experience his first Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya and interact with the country’s top athletes, saying he wants to understand what drives them at the highest level. India will face Japan in a historic one-off T20I before beginning their Asian Games

campaign on September 28. Iyer said sharing the event with hockey players, Olympians and athletes from other disciplines would make it a memorable experience. “Definitely an exciting time for me and also for the team because it is going to be my first time and there are a couple of players who have

already been in the Asian Games. So, yeah, exciting time,” Iyer said. He is also looking forward to India’s meeting with Japan, which will precede the start of their Asian Games campaign. “Our first match we are going to play against Japan. So, that is going to be a historic one. And sharing relationship with the hockey players and other Olympic players who would be there, athletes who would be there along with us, definitely would be a great interaction,” he said. Iyer said he would be keen to interact with athletes from different sports, learn about their mindset and cheer for them during their events. “I would be eagerly waiting to go there and interact with them and know what their

mindset is. Probably go to one of the games and cheer for them as well,” he said. “So, yes, we are going as a whole nation and definitely we want to see to it that we come back triumphant.” With the Asian Games still ahead, Iyer insisted India are focused on the immediate challenge against Afghanistan. “We are thinking about the first game. We know that Afghanistan is a nice team and our preparation has also been promising for the last couple of days,” he said. “Leading up to Asian Games, we have got a great opportunity to play against a very quality side. So, looking for a great competition. And yes, fingers crossed, we will deliver to the best of our abilities,” Iyer added.

Supriya scores a hat-trick against Korea to power India into the Junior Women’s Asia Cup final

New Delhi : India continued their title defence in style as they stormed into the final of the AHF Junior Asia Cup with a commanding 5-1 victory over South Korea in the first semi-final on Saturday. Drag-flick specialist Supriya was the star of the show, scoring three times from penalty corners to put the defending champions one win away from retaining the title. The opening exchanges were closely contested as both teams approached the knockout clash cautiously. India, however, gradually began to take control and were rewarded in the 13th minute when Madhu Sidar finished off a well-worked attacking move to put the defending champions 1-0 ahead. The early breakthrough gave India greater confidence and they began to apply sustained pressure on the Korean defence. A



penalty corner in the 17th minute handed Supriya her first opportunity of the evening, and she made no mistake with a sharp drag-flick that doubled India’s advantage. India continued to dominate possession and territory, while South Korea struggled to contain their attacks. Their pressure produced another goal in the 21st minute, when a well-placed aerial ball opened up the Korean defence before

a precise cross was expertly finished by Sukhveer Kaur to give India a 3-0 lead. South Korea showed some signs of a response before the interval, but India’s defence held firm to take a three-goal cushion into half-time. The defending champions then picked up where they left off after the break, with Supriya striking again from a penalty corner in the 33rd minute to make it 4-0. The

Koreans finally found a way through in the 41st minute when Yuri Jeong converted a set-piece to reduce the deficit. The goal offered South Korea a brief glimpse of a comeback, but India stayed composed and refused to allow their opponents to build any sustained pressure. India remained disciplined at the back while continuing to threaten in attack, and their persistence earned another penalty corner in the 56th minute. Supriya once again stepped up and produced another clinical drag-flick to complete her hat-trick and seal a comprehensive 5-1 win. The victory sends India into the Junior Asia Cup final, where they will face either hosts China or Japan. The defending champions will now be one win away from lifting the continental title once again.

Virat Kohli tattoos: How India cricket stars turn their skin ink into identity

New Delhi : “My body is my journal and my tattoos are my story.” - Johnny Depp. One of the first things that comes to mind when you think of Virat Kohli is his strokeplay. Then comes the aggression, the animated celebrations and that almost infectious passion for the game. The runs and records followed soon enough. Kohli became the poster boy of Indian cricket, and for a generation growing up watching him, being like Kohli was the dream. Many tried to copy his shots in the nets. Some borrowed his aggression and celebrations. Beyond the cricket field, Kohli brought something else to the table: style. The signature beard. The rockstar hairstyles. The swagger. Many tried to copy those too. Myself included. But there was one thing about Kohli that perhaps stood out more than anything else: his tattoos. Covering both his



arms is a collection of tattoos that have become as recognisable as some of his trademark celebrations. You would imagine someone with a larger-than-life personality like Kohli to have gone down the classic rockstar route. Skulls. Bones. Fire. Something loud. Instead, Kohli’s collection is surprisingly grounded. There is the God’s-eye tattoo, or the all-seeing eye as Kohli has described it. It symbolises the belief that everything you do is being

watched and that someone is always keeping track of your actions. Then there is the Japanese samurai, a symbol from which Kohli believes he draws strength and values such as loyalty, self-discipline and ethical behaviour. His ODI and Test cap numbers find space on his left arm, along with the names of his father and mother. A worshipper of Lord Shiva, Kohli also has a tattoo of the deity meditating on Mount Kailash. There is a monastery im-

age, too, along with Scorpio, Om and tribal tattoos. And the collection has continued to grow. Kohli has been adding to his left-arm sleeve, one that was intentionally left incomplete. And there is a rather fitting reason for that. For Kohli, a tattoo is unlikely to ever be a finished chapter. It remains a work in progress, growing alongside his journey through life. Every major chapter, personal change and significant achievement could bring a new addition, turning the artwork into an evolving reflection of his experiences rather than a permanent reminder of just one moment. Then came the latest one, which appears to depict ripples spreading across a water surface after a single drop falls into it. Taken together, Kohli’s tattoos reveal a different side to the man we see charging around on a cricket field. There is calmness. Reflection. Spirituality.

Lewis Hamilton crashes into a barrier during the final Spanish Grand Prix

Madrid : Lewis Hamilton crashed his Ferrari into the barriers during final practice for the Spanish Grand Prix on Saturday, bringing the session to an early halt and adding another setback to a challenging weekend for the seven-time world champion. Hamilton locked up at the final corner of Madrid’s new Madring circuit and went into the wall, damaging the front of his Ferrari and puncturing the front-right tyre. Despite the damage, the Briton attempted to drive the car back to the pitlane, ignoring an initial instruction from his team to stop. “Stop the car. Stop in the safest place possible,” Hamilton was told over team radio. “If I can make it back I will. If not, I will do it safely,” Hamilton replied. He eventually pulled over after making his way through most of a lap, with the front wing wedged underneath the car. Hamilton then returned to the pits

on the back of a moped as the session was red-flagged. The crash came with just over half an hour remaining and interrupted what had been a promising session for Hamilton. He was fourth fastest at the time of the incident, with Ferrari teammate Charles Leclerc setting the pace. The timing could hardly have been worse for Hamilton, with qualifying later on Saturday expected to be particularly important at the new Madrid circuit. Overtaking is likely to be difficult on the tight and demanding layout, putting added emphasis on securing a strong grid position. The circuit has already proved unforgiving during its first Formula One weekend. Racing Bulls rookie Arvid Lindblad became the first F1 driver to crash at the Madring during Friday practice, while Fernando Alonso also brushed the barriers in his Aston Martin. Mercedes had shown strong



pace on Friday, with George Russell topping the opening practice before teammate Kimi Antonelli went fastest in the second session. Ferrari remained close, with Leclerc and Hamilton among the leading runners. Antonelli, who leads the championship, has emerged as one of Hamilton’s key rivals this season. Hamilton sits third in the standings, 76 points behind the Mercedes driver, and will be keen to limit the damage in Madrid. He had earlier described driving the new cir-

cuit as fun, but Saturday’s crash has given Ferrari a race against time to repair his car before qualifying. With track position expected to be critical, Hamilton will hope the damage is manageable and that he can recover quickly from the incident to put himself in contention for Sunday’s race. Lewis Hamilton crashed his Ferrari into barriers during final practice at the new Madring circuit for the Spanish Grand Prix, damaging his car and puncturing a tyre.