

Arunachal Governor urges university to focus research on local biodiversity

FOCUS ON LOCAL RESEARCH

Itanagar, Oct 13: Arunachal Pradesh Governor Lieutenant General KT Par-naik (Retd) urged Arunachal University to align its academic programs and scientific research initiatives with the state’s rich biological diversity and indigenous knowledge systems.

Addressing faculty, scholars, and students during an official visit to the university campus, the Governor highlighted the critical need for academic institutions to pioneer localized scientific studies that directly benefit regional communities. He emphasized that the state’s extensive forest cover, high concentration of endemic flora and fauna, and traditional ethnic practices present immense scope for ground-breaking research in environmental science,



sustainable agriculture, and ethnobotany. The Governor encouraged the university management to establish dedicated research centers aimed at documenting, preserving, and scientifically validating traditional medicinal knowl-

edge passed down through generations across indigenous tribes. Highlighting the role of higher education in regional growth, the Governor called for interdisciplinary collaboration between academic departments, local communities,

and government agencies to address pressing environmental challenges such as climate change, deforestation, and biodiversity conservation. He urged the institution to integrate modern technological tools—including geographic information systems (GIS) and bio-prospecting—with traditional ecological wisdom to develop sustainable livelihood models for rural populations. The Governor further stressed the importance of quality higher education in fostering entrepreneurship, encouraging students to leverage local resources for sustainable eco-tourism and organic farming ventures. University officials briefed the Governor on ongoing academic activities, infrastructure development projects, and research publications.

Nagaland division warns of jail term for illegal hunting

Kohima, Oct 13: The Doyang Wildlife Division in Nagaland has reiterated a strict ban on the hunting, trapping, and commercial trade of wild animals and birds across its jurisdiction, warning that violators will face up to seven years in prison alongside heavy financial penalties under the Wildlife Protection Act.

The official directive comes ahead of the winter season, which coincides with the annual arrival of millions of migratory Amur falcons to roost near the Doyang reservoir in Wokha district. Wildlife authorities noted that despite extensive community awareness drives, reports of illegal trapping, poaching, and selling of wild meat continue to surface in local markets and highway transit points across the region. The Forest Department emphasized that all wild species—including migratory

birds, endangered mammals, and reptiles—are protected under strict statutory schedules, making any unauthorized possession, sale, or transportation a non-bailable offense.

To ensure compliance and protect biodiversity, joint protection teams comprising forest officials, local administration personnel, and village council representatives have been deployed to conduct surprise raids across roadside markets, hotels, and suspected poaching hotspots. Authorities have instructed local village councils to enforce community-level prohibitions, warning that traditional hunting practices targeting protected species during peak migration periods will attract stringent administrative action. Forest officials highlighted that Nagaland has earned international recognition as the “Amur Falcon Capital of the World”

due to successful community-led conservation efforts over the past decade. The department appealed to civil society organizations, youth groups, and local residents to cooperate with enforcement agencies by reporting wildlife violations, reaffirming its commitment to preserving the region’s delicate ecological balance.

In addition to field inspections and statutory penalties, the Doyang Wildlife Division is intensifying educational outreach programs across schools and community halls to promote long-term conservation ethics among youth. Local authorities are also coordinating with village councils to explore alternative, eco-friendly livelihoods like eco-tourism and guided birdwatching align economic benefits with wildlife conservation for former hunting communities.

Army launches Agniveer rally Agartala

Agartala, Oct 13: The Indian Army commenced a five-day Agniveer recruitment rally at the Dasarath Deb State Sports Complex in Badharghat, Agartala, to select eligible youth from across Tripura for various technical and non-technical trades.

Organized jointly by the Army Recruiting Office in Silchar, personnel of the Red Shield Division, and the Agartala civil administration, the physical selection phase runs from October 13 to October 17. Officials revealed that a total of 1,203 shortlisted candidates who successfully cleared the initial Common Entrance Examination (CEE) are competing in this secondary phase. The drive witnessed unprecedented youth participation across all eight districts of the state, registering a record 4,885 total applicants this year—marking a 92 percent increase in registrations compared to the previous recruitment cycle. Over the course of the five-day event, candidates will undergo rigorous physical fitness evaluations—including 1.6-kilometer runs, chin-ups, balance beams, and 9-foot jumps—followed by physical measurement standards, detailed medical examinations, and primary document verification. Military officials highlighted that candidates are vying for positions across multiple arms and services, including Agniveer General Duty, Agniveer Technical, Agniveer Office Assistant/Store Keeper Technical, and Agniveer Tradesmen.

Nagaland CM assures smooth experience for 27th Hornbill Festival

Kohima, Oct 13: Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio announced that preparations for the upcoming 27th edition of the Hornbill Festival are progressing on track, assuring domestic and international tourists of a seamless, comfortable, and memorable experience at the Naga Heritage Village in Kisama.

Chairing a high-level review meeting of the High Power Committee at Bamboohall in Kisama, Chief Minister Rio assessed the state’s readiness alongside departmental heads, administrative officers, and security personnel. The review focused on essential infrastructure upgrades, including road maintenance along the Dimapur-Kohima-Kisama corridor, uninterrupted

power and water supply, healthcare facilities, traffic management, and hospitality logistics. Addressing the proposed public-private partnership (PPP) model to manage and maintain the Naga Heritage Village, Rio confirmed that the process is moving forward, with tender documents currently being finalized to onboard private partners for long-term facility maintenance.

The Hornbill Festival—popularly known as the “Festival of Festivals”—is Nagaland’s flagship ten-day socio-cultural event celebrated annually from December 1 to 10. The festival brings together all recognized Naga indigenous tribes to showcase traditional arts, folk music, tribal dances, indigenous sports, and regional

cuisine. Departmental officials briefed the committee on planned attractions, including tribal morung displays, traditional games, handloom and handicraft exhibitions, culinary bazaars, and specialized youth activities such as e-sports tournaments.

Highlighting the economic significance of the annual gathering, Chief Minister Rio called for synchronized inter-departmental efforts to ensure high standards of safety, sanitation, and transport for thousands of visitors. State authorities confirmed that official invitations have been dispatched to national and international dignitaries, reaffirming Nagaland’s commitment to positioning the festival as a world-class cultural destination.

Arunachal CM launches incubation centres to boost youth entrepreneurship

Itanagar, Oct 13: Chief Minister Pema Khandu virtually inaugurated satellite incubation cells across seven prominent educational institutions in Arunachal Pradesh to promote youth entrepreneurship and strengthen the state’s startup ecosystem.

The newly launched incubation facilities have been established at Rajiv Gandhi University, Arunachal Pradesh University in Pasighat, Arunachal University of Studies in Namsai, National Institute of Technology in Jote, Dera Natung Government College in Itanagar, Dorjee Khandu Government College in Tawang, and the North East Institute of Science and Technology in Nirjuli. Speaking at the launch event, Chief Minister Khandu emphasized that these campus-based cells will provide stu-



dent innovators with structured mentorship, technical guidance, and operational assistance to transform business concepts into viable commercial enterprises.

In addition to the physical incubation infrastructure, the state

government unveiled a series of youth entrepreneurship initiatives designed to scale local ventures. The Chief Minister announced a 100% expansion in the state’s annual startup incubator intake, increasing annual enterprise support capacity

from 50 to 100 startups. Seed funding grants under state startup frameworks were also doubled, raising financial assistance thresholds from ₹5 lakh to ₹10 lakh in one category and from ₹4 lakh to ₹8 lakh in another.

To further streamline youth access to developmental programs, the government introduced the “Arunachal Creative Economy” (ACE) scheme and launched the “YES Arunachal” single-window digital portal to connect young entrepreneurs directly with state and central welfare schemes. The Chief Minister also announced the creation of the Institute for Transforming Arunachal (ITA)—a specialized policy think tank—and scheduled an upcoming startup-investor meet to link regional entrepreneurs directly with venture capital networks.

Navy to commission warship ‘Samarthak’

Karwar, Oct 13: The Indian Navy is set to commission its first indigenous Multi-Purpose Vessel (MPV), ‘Samarthak’, at the Naval Base in Karwar, Karnataka, on October 16.

Constructed by Larsen & Toubro (L&T) under the Union Government’s ‘Make in India’ initiative, Samarthak is the lead ship in a series of four multi-purpose vessels designed to fulfill diverse operational roles while reducing load on frontline combatants. Boasting an indigenous content exceeding 75 percent, the ship underscores India’s accelerating push toward self-reliance in military shipbuilding and maritime defense manufacturing. The vessel features an integrated combat suite equipped with indigenous sensors, weapons, and electronic countermeasure systems optimized for demanding sea states. Designed primarily for coastal and offshore maritime surveillance, extended patrolling, and Low-Intensity Maritime Operations (LIMO), Samarthak is engineered to perform a wide spectrum of secondary missions. The ship serves as a specialized sea-going platform for testing and firing developmental naval weapons, sensors, and towed targets.

Pijush Hazarika launches olive cultivation pilot in West Karbi Anglong

FOCUS ON OLIVES

Guwahati, Oct 13: Assam Water Resources, Information and Public Relations, and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pijush Hazarika launched a pilot olive cultivation project and reviewed ongoing infrastructure and developmental schemes across West Karbi Anglong district.

Accompanied by Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC) Chief Executive Member (CEM) Tuliram Ronghang, Minister Hazarika formally inaugurated the experimental olive plantation site initiated by the Agriculture Department under the autonomous council’s administrative jurisdiction. Speaking at the inaugural program, the minister highlighted that the climate and soil topography of West Karbi Anglong present high potential

for non-traditional high-value cash crops. He noted that successful trial cultivation of olives could diversify the regional agrarian economy, provide sustainable commercial opportunities for tribal farmers, and position the hill district as a pioneer in specialized horticulture across the Northeast region. Following the agricultural launch, Minister Hazarika chaired an extensive inter-departmental review meeting with senior district administration officials, department heads, and KAAC executive members at the administrative headquarters. The discussion focused on accelerating key public works, including rural road connectivity, flood control embankments, irrigation channels, primary healthcare facilities, and educational in-

frastructure projects currently underway in the district. The minister instructed executing agencies to adhere strictly to project deadlines and maintain stringent quality benchmarks, emphasizing that state developmental benefits must reach remote tribal habitations efficiently. Addressing local community representatives, Hazarika reaffirmed the state government’s commitment to balanced regional development in the autonomous hill districts. He emphasized that synchronized efforts between the state government and the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council aim to modernize agricultural practices, build climate-resilient rural infrastructure, and boost local employment through sustainable economic initiatives.

Bansuri Swaraj accuses Congress leader of misbehaving with women

New Delhi, Oct 13: New Delhi Member of Parliament and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Bansuri Swaraj accused national-level Congress office-bearer Sanjeev Singh of misbehaving with and physically manhandling women workers during a political demonstration.

Addressing a press conference in the national capital on Tuesday, Swaraj alleged that the incident occurred during a protest staged by the BJP Mahila Morcha outside the Congress headquarters. According to the BJP leader, Singh engaged in an unprovoked altercation with female protesters, reportedly raising his hands, making indecent gestures, and using objectionable language against the demonstrators. Swaraj strongly condemned the alleged behavior,



characterizing it as a clear indication of double standards within the Congress party regarding women’s safety and dignity. She asserted that while opposition leaders routinely speak on women’s empowerment, their local functionaries actively indulge in hostile conduct toward female political workers and journalists. Highlighting broader

concerns, Swaraj urged senior opposition figures to break their silence and institute strict disciplinary measures against party officials involved in misconduct against women. She noted that political disagreement should remain strictly ideological and must never deteriorate into physical intimidation or personal disrespect against

women activists exercising their democratic right to protest. Members of the BJP Mahila Morcha who accompanied Swaraj at the briefing similarly voiced outrage over the incident, demanding an unconditional public apology from the opposition party and immediate administrative intervention. The ruling party’s women’s wing reaffirmed its resolve to pursue legal and administrative remedies, stating that formal complaints would be pursued through appropriate law enforcement channels to ensure full accountability. Meanwhile, local law enforcement agencies monitored security arrangements around party offices in New Delhi following the demonstration to prevent further escalation between party cadres.

Assam and Arunachal set two-month deadline to resolve border dispute

Itanagar, Oct 13: Regional committees from Assam and Arunachal Pradesh convened at the Biswanath Circuit House on Tuesday and agreed to resolve all remaining inter-state boundary disputes within a strict two-month deadline. The high-level regional committee meeting brought together senior officials, ministers, and district administrators from Assam’s Biswanath and Lakhimpur districts alongside Arunachal Pradesh’s Papum Pare dis-

trict to accelerate resolution efforts. During the discussions, delegates reviewed the progress made since earlier rounds of dialogue and evaluated administrative mechanisms to settle long-standing differences over contested border stretches. To address complex ground realities, officials placed alternative land arrangements on the table for disputed pockets where traditional occupation, village boundaries, or administrative overlaps make



direct demarcation difficult. Representatives from both

state governments affirmed that the Survey of India will

assist in conducting technical ground surveys, establishing precise physical demarcation lines, and guiding the installation of boundary pillars once mutual consensus is reached on the remaining village clusters. The joint committee emphasized that both administrations are committed to maintaining peace, preventing fresh encroachments, and ensuring public tranquility along border habitations while final negotiations proceed. State

ministers leading the delegations reiterated that the goal is to finalize an amicable, permanent settlement before the end of the year. The bilateral initiative aligns with the historic Namsai Declaration signed by both states, which established 12 regional committees to resolve disputes across 123 border villages. With a substantial majority of border points already resolved or narrowed down through prior joint field inspections, both delegations

expressed confidence that the remaining contested areas would be settled peacefully through sustained dialogue, strengthening regional stability across the Northeast.

The meeting was attended by senior leaders including Assam minister Keshab Mahanta and Arunachal Pradesh Urban Affairs Minister Balo Raja, who both emphasized that joint field visits would be conducted before the next round of discussions scheduled for late December.

Assam 30 Cattle Rescued From Hidden Truck Compartment in Kaliabor, Driver Held

Dispur , Oct 13: Assam police rescued 30 cattle from a concealed compartment inside a truck during a nighttime operation against suspected cattle smuggling in Kaliabor. The vehicle was intercepted after allegedly attempting to evade a police checkpoint, and its driver was arrested. One of the cattle was reportedly found dead during the search.

According to the information available, the operation began when a truck allegedly failed to stop despite instructions from personnel at the Kaliabor Police Outpost in Kuwaritol. Instead of complying with the directions, the vehicle reportedly sped away towards Shivsthan, prompting police to pursue it.

Police followed the truck along National Highways 715 and 127 before intercepting it at Shivsthan. The



vehicle, bearing registration number AS 02 CC 7019, was subsequently seized as part of the operation. The incident led to a search of the truck, during which officers discovered cattle hidden inside a concealed compartment.

A total of 30 cattle were recovered from the vehicle. One animal was reportedly found dead, raising concerns about the conditions in which the cattle had been transported. The remaining rescued animals were later taken to a cowshed in Nagaon, according to the

information available. The driver was identified as Nur Mahmud, a resident of Borma Bil under the jurisdiction of the Samaguri Police Outpost. He was arrested in connection with the case and taken to the Koliyabor Police Outpost along with the seized truck for further proceedings.

The discovery of a concealed compartment inside the vehicle became a key aspect of the operation. Such a compartment can make it difficult to identify the nature and quantity of goods being transported without a

detailed inspection.

In this case, the police search revealed the cattle hidden within the truck. The sequence of events, as reported, began with the truck allegedly ignoring the police checkpoint before continuing towards Shivsthan.

The subsequent pursuit across the two national highways ended with the vehicle being intercepted. Police then examined the truck and recovered the animals, leading to the driver's arrest.

Information available in connection with the case indicates that the cattle were allegedly being transported from Upper Assam to Bangladesh. However, the circumstances surrounding the intended movement of the animals and the alleged involvement of other individuals would require further investigation to establish the facts.

Major Administrative Shake-Up as Governor Reshuffle Covers Six States

Dispur , Oct 13: President Droupadi Murmu has appointed new Governors for six states as part of a major administrative reshuffle that brings four new faces into gubernatorial positions. The appointments combine experienced political and administrative figures with new appointees, marking changes in the leadership of several state Raj Bhavans.

The reshuffle reflects the constitutional process through which Governors are appointed by the President and assigned responsibility for representing the Union in states.

Governors serve as constitutional heads of their respective states, performing duties prescribed by the Constitution and acting in accordance with its provisions. The appointment of Governors is an important part of India's federal administrative framework. While elected state governments

emerge across six states has brought renewed attention to the constitutional role of Governors and the process through which appointments to these positions are made. The changes include four new faces in gubernatorial positions, alongside adjustments to existing assignments, marking a significant administrative development across the states concerned. Governors occupy an important position within India's constitutional framework, serving as the constitutional heads of their respective states. Although elected state governments exercise executive authority under the leadership of their Chief Ministers, Governors perform several constitutional functions that are essential to the functioning of state administrations and legislatures. The latest appointments have drawn attention because of the number of states covered and the in-

troduction of new appointees to the office. Such reshuffles are part of the broader process through which the Centre and the President oversee gubernatorial appointments, transfers and changes in responsibilities in accordance with the Constitution.

The implications of the reshuffle for individual states will depend on the appointments made and the responsibilities assigned to each Governor.

While the changes may affect the administrative arrangements at Raj Bhavans, the constitutional duties of the office remain governed by the provisions of the Constitution of India. The office of the Governor is established under the Constitution of India and serves President and are entrusted with responsibilities relating to the functioning of state legislatures and the administration of constitutional procedures.

Student Groups Press for Regular VC at NEHU

Shillong, Oct 13: North-Eastern Hill University (NEHU) has come under renewed scrutiny following a significant decline in its national ranking, with student bodies demanding the appointment of a regular Vice-Chancellor to address concerns over governance and academic performance.

The NEHU Students' Union (NEHUSU) and the Khasi Students' Union (KSU) NEHU unit submitted a memorandum to Governor C.H.

Vijayashankar at Raj Bhavan on Monday, urging him to appoint a leader capable of restoring the university's academic standing. The student organisations called for a Vice-Chancellor needed decisive leadership to address its institutional ills years.

Himashree Boro Case Five Named in Complaint



Dispur , Oct 13: The family of 20-year-old Himashree Boro, who was found dead near railway tracks in Andhra Pradesh after going missing while travelling by train, has lodged a police complaint naming five people as suspected accused in the case. The complaint was submitted to the Government Railway Police (GRP) on Monday, October 12, as a team of senior Andhra Pradesh police officers arrived to investigate the circumstances surrounding her death.

The complaint marks a significant development in the case, with the family seeking an investigation into the events that led to the young woman's death. The five individuals named in the complaint have been identified by the family as suspected accused, but their alleged involvement has not been established. The allegations will need to be examined by investigators as part of the ongoing probe. Himashree was 20 years old when she was found dead near railway

tracks in Andhra Pradesh.

According to the information available, she had gone missing while The investigation will need to establish what happened during Himashree's train journey, when she was last seen and how she came to be found near the railway tracks. Investigators may examine available records and statements from people who could help reconstruct her movements before her death. The findings will be important in determining whether any criminal offence occurred and whether anyone should be held accountable. The family's decision to name five people in the complaint represents an allegation rather than a finding of guilt. The individuals named should be treated as suspects only if the investigation establishes grounds for doing so, and their roles must be assessed on the basis of evidence. A police complaint by itself does not establish criminal responsibility. The circumstances of Himashree's disappearance are central to the investigation. Understanding the route she travelled, the timeline of her journey and the period between her disappearance and the discovery of her body could help police determine what occurred. Investigators may also seek information from individuals who were in contact with her or who may have seen her during the journey, if such leads are available.

Manipur Police Nab 13 in Telegram Content Case

Imphal, Oct 13: Manipur Police have arrested 13 people, including one minor classified as a child in conflict with law (CCL), for their alleged involvement in circulating and monetising non-consensual explicit photographs and videos of women from the state through multiple Telegram channels. According to police, the material allegedly included content classified as Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM). The investigation was launched under the code-name Operation Dignity following information about the alleged circulation and trading of such material online.

The case came to light after police received credible information that administrators and users of several Telegram channels were allegedly sharing, trading and earning money from explicit content without the consent of the individuals depicted. Acting on the information, an FIR was registered at Moirang Police Station, and an investigation was initiated to identify those suspected of operating or participating in the channels. During the investigation, police arrested 13 people in connection with the case. One of those apprehended is a minor classified as a child in conflict with law.

The allegations against the individuals relate to the circulation and monetisation of non-consensual explicit photographs and videos through Telegram, including material that police said fell under the category of CSAM.

Durga Puja EKH Police Seek More Security Personnel



Shillong, Oct 13: East Khasi Hills Police will seek the deployment of additional state forces to strengthen security arrangements during the upcoming Durga Puja celebrations. Police have planned elaborate security measures at puja pandals across the district, including round-the-clock mobile patrolling, to ensure that festivities proceed peacefully.

East Khasi Hills Superintendent of Police Vivek Syiem confirmed that the police would request additional personnel for the festival. He said security arrangements had been planned for puja pandals, with mobile patrol teams deployed throughout the day and night to maintain vigilance and respond to any incidents.

Syiem also said that measures and advisories had been issued to prevent overcrowding and reduce the risk of stampedes at puja venues. Authorities are focusing on crowd management and safety arrangements to ensure that devotees can participate in the celebrations without unnecessary risks.

"Measures and advisories have also been issued to ensure that there is no stampede," Syiem said, adding that adequate security

deployment would be in place to ensure the celebrations passed off peacefully. Preparations for the festival have involved a series of meetings between the district administration and various stakeholders. These discussions have been held at different levels to coordinate arrangements and establish the responsibilities of the agencies involved in managing the celebrations. The meetings have focused on the practical requirements for organising puja events, including security, crowd movement, traffic management and public safety.

Coordination between the administration, police and organisers is expected to play an important role in managing the increased movement of people during the festivities. Authorities have also issued advisories on the installation of closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras and compliance with fire-safety requirements at puja pandals. These measures are intended to improve surveillance and reduce risks associated with large public gatherings.

The police have asked the Central Puja Committee to arrange volunteers at the venues. These volunteers are expected to receive support from traffic police to help manage crowds and assist with the movement of vehicles and pedestrians around the pandals. The presence of volunteers can help organisers guide visitors, communicate safety instructions and identify areas where crowding may become a concern.

Their coordination with traffic personnel is also intended to ease movement around busy puja locations, particularly during periods of heavy attendance.

Fire safety has been another area highlighted in the advisories issued to organisers. Puja pandals and temporary structures need appropriate safety arrangements, particularly when large numbers of people are expected to gather. CCTV surveillance and coordination with the police are also among the measures being emphasised as part of the preparations, arguing that they are causing traffic disruptions and inconvenience to commuters and pedestrians.

Margherita Distances Himself From Festival Plan



Guwahati, Oct 13: Union Minister of State Pabitra Margherita and BJP MLA Rupak Sarmah have distanced themselves from a proposed Zubeen Mahotsav in Guwahati, clarifying that neither they nor Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma are associated with the event. The clarification comes amid a controversy over the alleged use of names of individuals on the festival's organising committee without their consent.

The proposed event, named after late Assamese singer Zubeen Garg, has drawn attention following questions about the composition of its organising committee and the inclusion of individuals who have reportedly denied any association with the programme. The statements by Margherita and Sarmah seek to establish that they have no connection with the proposed festival.

Margherita, a Union Minister of State, and Sarmah, a BJP legislator, have made their positions clear as the controversy surrounding the event continues. Their clarification also addresses speculation about the involvement of the Assam Chief Minister, whose name has figured in discussions surrounding the proposed programme. The central issue in the controversy concerns the alleged inclusion of names on the organising committee without the knowledge or consent of the individuals concerned. The use of names in such a context can create the impression that those individuals have formally endorsed or are participating in an event, even when they have not agreed to do so. The controversy has consequently raised questions about how the organising committee was constituted and whether the individuals listed were consulted before their names were used. The available information does not establish who was responsible for including the names or whether the organisers have issued a detailed explanation regarding the allegations.

Bamunimaidan Durga Puja Turns Into Disneyland for 39th Year

Guwahati, Oct 13: The Bamunimaidan Durga Puja Committee in Guwahati is preparing a distinctive attraction for its 39th year of celebrations, with plans to transform its puja mandap into a replica inspired by Disneyland. The themed installation is expected to bring a touch of the iconic entertainment destination to the city, offering visitors a different visual experience during the Durga Puja festivities.

The committee's plan centres on recreating the look of Disneyland through a large-scale structure that is expected to become a major attraction at the venue. According to the announcement, the installation will feature a replica measuring around 100 feet, making the theme a prominent part of this year's celebrations.

Durga Puja is among the most widely celebrated festivals in India, particularly in eastern and northeastern regions, where elaborate pandals and artistic installations form an important part of the festivities. Organising committees often choose distinctive themes to attract visitors and create memorable



experiences. These themes can draw inspiration from architecture, cultural landmarks, historical sites and popular destinations from around the world. The Bamunimaidan committee's Disneyland-inspired concept follows this tradition of using creative designs to give visitors something beyond the conventional puja setting. By drawing inspiration from a globally recognised entertainment destination, the organisers aim to create an installation that combines festive celebration with vi-

sual spectacle. Disneyland is widely known for its themed attractions, distinctive architecture and immersive entertainment environment. Recreating elements associated with the destination in a Durga Puja mandap offers organisers an opportunity to adapt a familiar international reference to a local festive setting. The planned replica ilies, groups of friends and visitors move from one venue to another to and unusual themes can become popular striking visual features.

CCTV Cameras Mandatory for Hotels, Homestays

Shillong, Oct 13: Meghalaya Police has made the installation of CCTV cameras mandatory for hotels and homestays across the state, directing establishments to ensure surveillance in common areas and at entry points as part of efforts to strengthen security.

The directive comes as Meghalaya's tourism industry begins to recover following a period of reduced visitor arrivals after violence reported on August 19. Parambir Singh Sehdev, president of the Federation of Shillong Hotels, confirmed on Monday that the Superintendent of Police (SP) had issued instructions requiring hotels and homestays to install CCTV cameras at designated locations. Particular emphasis has been placed on ensuring surveillance coverage at property entrances, where monitoring can help establishments keep track of

movement in and out of their premises.

The directive is intended to strengthen security arrangements at accommodation facilities and support efforts to maintain a safe environment for visitors. Hotels and homestays play an important role in Meghalaya's tourism sector, particularly in Shillong, which attracts travellers interested in the state's natural landscapes, cultural attractions and seasonal events. The move comes at a time when tourism stakeholders are looking to restore visitor confidence following the recent decline in tourist arrivals. According to Sehdev, the flow of tourists dropped sharply after the violence on August 19, with visitor numbers remaining low throughout September. The decline affected the tourism sector during a period when hotels and other

hospitality businesses depend on a steady flow of visitors. With fewer tourists arriving, accommodation providers faced a challenging period as they waited for travel activity to improve.

However, Sehdev said the situation has since stabilised and tourists have started returning to Meghalaya. The gradual improvement has brought renewed optimism to the hospitality industry, with establishments preparing for an increase in bookings in the coming weeks. He also reported strong advance bookings at hotels for the coming month. The expected rise in visitor numbers has been supplemented by plan staffing, room availability and other operational requirements ahead of a busy period. They also provide an indication of renewed interest among travellers considering a visit to Meghalaya.

Court Grants Bail to Amritprabha Mahanta

Dispur , Oct 13: Singer Amritprabha Mahanta, one of the seven accused in the death case of Assamese singer Zubeen Garg, was released from Haflong sub-jail on Tuesday, October 13, four days after the Gauhati High Court granted her bail.

The High Court granted bail to Mahanta on Friday, October 9. Special Public Prosecutor Ziaul Kamar informed reporters that the relief was granted by Justice Pranjal Das against a bond of Rs 50,000 and two sureties of the same amount. Mahanta's release marks a further development court. It does not amount to a finding of innocence or determine the outcome of the case. The case has drawn considerable public interest because of Garg's prominence has reinforced by the public.

SC Stays Criminal Defamation Trial Against Rahul Gandhi

New Delhi, Oct 13: The Supreme Court on Tuesday paused the trial in a criminal defamation case against Congress leader Rahul Gandhi over his alleged remarks against Prime Minister Narendra Modi in connection with the Rafale fighter jet deal.

A bench comprising Justices Vikram Nath and Aparesh Kumar Singh issued notice on Gandhi's plea and sought a response within four weeks. The order temporarily halts proceedings in the lower court while the matter is considered by the apex court. The case concerns Gandhi's alleged use of the phrases "Commander-in-Thief" and "Choro Ke Sardar" while criticising the Prime Minister over the Rafale aircraft procurement agreement. The remarks became the subject of criminal defamation proceedings, which Gandhi has challenged before the Supreme Court. The latest order provides temporary relief to the Congress leader by putting the trial on hold. However, the Supreme Court has not, through this interim direction alone, delivered a final ruling on the merits of the defamation alle-



gations or Gandhi's challenge to the proceedings. The bench issued notice after considering Gandhi's plea, which seeks the court's intervention in the case. By asking for a response within four weeks, the Supreme Court has initiated the next stage of consideration, during which the opposing side will have an opportunity to present its position. The temporary pause means that the lower court proceedings cannot move forward while the interim order remains in force. The ultimate outcome will depend on the Supreme Court's further consideration of the petition and the submissions made by the

parties. The defamation case stems from Gandhi's comments about Prime Minister Modi during the political controversy surrounding the Rafale fighter jet deal. The aircraft procurement agreement became a major point of political debate, with the Congress raising questions about the deal and the government defending its position. During the controversy, Gandhi allegedly used the expressions "Commander-in-Thief" and "Choro Ke Sardar" in reference to the Prime Minister. The remarks subsequently led to legal action on the grounds of crim-

inal defamationCriminal defamation proceedings concern allegations that a statement has harmed a person's reputation and meets the requirements for an offence under applicable law. Whether the statements in a particular case satisfy those requirements is a matter for judicial determination. Gandhi's challenge has now brought the proceedings before the Supreme Court, which has temporarily halted the trial while seeking a response to his plea.

The order does not settle the underlying dispute over the remarks. Instead, it pauses the lower court proceedings pending further consideration of the legal issues raised before the apex court. The bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Aparesh Kumar Singh issued notice on Tuesday, directing that a response to Gandhi's plea be submitted within four weeks. The notice is an important procedural step in the Supreme Court's examination of the matter. It allows the opposing side to respond to the arguments raised by Gandhi before the court considers the next course of action.

Protest Site Can Change, Not People's Anger' Congress

New Delhi, Oct 13: Opposition leaders on Monday criticised the decision to de-notify Jantar Mantar as a designated protest site, describing the move as arbitrary and arguing that citizens in a democracy should have the right to decide where they express their dissent. They maintained that changing the location of demonstrations would not diminish public anger or bring an end to political protests.

The remarks came as Opposition MPs and leaders, accompanied by hundreds of supporters and activists, began their "March for Democracy" towards the Supreme Court. The delegation intended to submit a petition concerning their allegations of "vote chori" and their objections against Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar.

The decision regarding Jantar Mantar has triggered objections from Opposition leaders, who questioned the authority behind the move and its implications for the right to protest. They argued that the government could change the designated location for demonstrations but could not determine when public dis-



content should begin or end. Congress MP Manish Tewari said the Opposition had decided to approach the Supreme Court with a representation on the matter. Speaking to reporters, he said the leaders would collectively proceed towards Barakhamba Road as part of their effort to submit their concerns before the court."We want to submit a representation to the Honorable Supreme Court. Therefore, the entire Opposition is collectively going to Barakhamba Road. Let's see where it goes from here," Tewari said.

He also questioned the change in the designated protest arrangements, pointing to the established practice of holding demonstrations

at locations such as Boat Club. According to Tewari, the relocation of protest sites would not resolve the grievances that motivate people to take to the streets.

"The norm is that the protests and demonstrations take place in Boat Club. People come there. You may change the designated venues for demonstrations, but you cannot reduce people's anger," he said. Tewari's comments reflected the Opposition's broader criticism of the decision, with leaders maintaining that restrictions on designated protest locations should not be used to discourage demonstrations or prevent citizens from raising political concerns.

SC Hearing on Delhi Protest Crackdown Deferred

New Delhi, Oct 13: The Supreme Court on Tuesday postponed the hearing on a group of petitions challenging alleged detentions, assaults on protesters and restrictions on public transport ahead of a demonstration demanding the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar. The hearing has been rescheduled for October 15 after one of the judges on the bench fell ill.

The petitions raise concerns over the alleged treatment of protesters and restrictions imposed in connection with the planned demonstration. The matter was taken up by the apex court, which adjourned the proceedings because of the judge's illness. The postponement means the petitions will be considered on Thursday, October 15. Until then, the legal challenges concerning the alleged detentions, reported assaults and transport restrictions remain The allegations have brought questions about the remain subject to judicial consideration, and the adjournment does not amount to a ruling on their merits.

Newborn Snatched from Mother, Rescued in Thane

Mumbai, Oct 13: The Ambernath police rescued a 25-day-old infant within four hours of his alleged kidnapping on Monday and arrested five people, including the suspected kidnapper. Investigators suspect that the accused planned to sell the baby to a childless couple in Gujarat.

The swift police operation ensured that the infant was recovered safely shortly after the reported abduction. The five arrests mark a significant development in the investigation, as police work to establish the circumstances surrounding the kidnapping and determine the alleged roles of those involved.

According to the information available, the accused allegedly planned to hand over the infant to a couple in Gujarat who did not have children. The suspected plan has become a key focus of the investigation, with officers examining the possible arrangements made for transferring the baby. The police have not provided further details in the available account about the identities of the arrested individuals, the exact location where the infant was recovered or the alleged financial arrange-

ments involved in the suspected plan. The case came to light after the 25-day-old baby was allegedly kidnapped on Monday. The Ambernath police launched an investigation and acted within hours to trace the infant and identify those suspected of involvement. The operation resulted in the arrest of five people within four hours of the crime, including the person suspected of carrying out the kidnapping. Police also recovered the baby safely, bringing the immediate search for the infant to an end.

The rapid recovery was particularly significant given the child's age. At just 25 days old, the infant would have required continuous care and attention, making his safe recovery an urgent priority for the investigating team.

The police action also allowed investigators to take the suspected individuals into custody and begin examining the circumstances of the alleged abduction. Their investigation is expected to focus on how the kidnapping was carried out, whether the accused acted together and what arrangements, if any, had been made to transfer the infant to Gujarat.

Andhra IAS Officer Faces FIR Over Alleged Pub Slap

Bengaluru , Oct 13: Bengaluru Police have registered a First Information Report (FIR) against an Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer belonging to the Andhra Pradesh cadre and three of his friends for allegedly assaulting a police Inspector and verbally abusing police personnel during a raid at a pub in the city. The incident reportedly took place at around 1.30 am at Kavoor pub, which falls under the jurisdiction of Cubbon Park police station.

According to the available information, the confrontation began when the police Inspector asked the IAS officer to produce his identity card during the raid. The officer and his companions allegedly reacted by abusing and assaulting the Inspector. The incident gained wider attention after a video showing the IAS officer and his friends allegedly hurling abuses at police personnel circulated on social media on Tuesday. The officer and his three friends in connection with the alleged assault and abuse of the police personnel.been made to transfer the infant to Gujarat.

BJP Seeks Akoijam's Expulsion from Congress



New Delhi, Oct 13: The BJP Mahila Morcha on Monday staged a protest outside the Congress headquarters in New Delhi, demanding the expulsion of Inner Manipur MP Angomcha Bimol Akoijam from the opposition party following his dismissal from Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) over sexual harassment allegations.

Union Women and Child Development Minister Annpurna Devi joined the demonstration, titled 'Nari Shakti Hunkar Andolan', and accused the Congress leadership of remaining silent over the allegations against its MP. She also questioned Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra's commitment to women's rights, alleging that the party's inaction contradicted its public messaging on women's empowerment. The protest focused on the Congress leadership's response to the allegations against Akoijam, who was dismissed from his position as a professor at JNU with immediate effect on October 9 following an inquiry into

sexual harassment allegations. Akoijam has denied the charges.Addressing the demonstrators, Devi challenged Priyanka Gandhi over her slogan, "Ladki Hoon, Lad Sakti Hoon", which translates to "I am a girl, and I can fight". The minister questioned whether the Congress leader's message had become an empty promise in light of the allegations against the party's MP.

"Today, on behalf of our women and the daughters of this country, we want to ask Priyanka Gandhi ji: What happened to your slogan, 'Ladki Hoon, Lad Sakti Hoon'? Has it become an empty slogan?

Where has it gone?" Devi asked.The minister alleged that the Congress was protecting Akoijam despite the action taken by JNU following its inquiry.

The BJP women's wing described the party's response as an attempt to shield its MP and demanded that the Congress leadership take action against him. Devi alleged that 11 women had been subjected to sexual harassment by the MP and questioned why the Congress had not taken action against him following his dismissal from the university. "A Member of Parliament from your party has sexually harassed 11 girls.

Even JNU has taken action against this accused MP and dismissed him. Despite all this, why are you still silent? When will you break your silence, Rahul Gandhi? When will you expel that MP?What action have you taken against him?" she asked. The minister's remarks formed the central message of the BJP Mahila Morcha demonstration, which sought to put pressure on the Congress leadership to respond to the allegations. She argued that the party's failure to act against Akoijam raised questions about its stated commitment to protecting women.

Mulund Labour Camp Fire Two Employees Face FIR



Mumbai, Oct 13: Two employees of Shapoorji Pallonji and Company Pvt Ltd have been booked for alleged negligence, four days after a major fire broke out at a labour camp near a building being constructed by the real estate company in Mumbai's Mulund area. No injuries were reported in the incident.

The case was registered following the fire at the labour camp, which is located near the construction site of the company's building. The two employees have been booked in connection with alleged negligence linked to the incident, although further details about their specific responsibilities and the circumstances leading to the fire were not immediately available.

The blaze raised concerns about safety arrangements at temporary accommodation facilities used by construction workers. Labour camps are often established close to building sites to provide accommodation for workers involved in construction activities.

Ensuring adequate fire prevention measures and safe access to emergency services is important in such locations, particularly where several workers may be staying together. The incident took place in Mulund, a suburb of Mumbai that has seen construction and redevelopment activity. The labour camp was situated near a building being developed by Shapoorji Pallonji and Company Pvt Ltd, one of the country's established construction and real estate groups. Despite the scale of the fire, no casualties or injuries were reported. The absence of injuries was a significant aspect of the incident, although the registration of a case indicates that the circumstances surrounding the blaze are being examined by the authorities.

Bhutan Receives Rs 290 Crore from India for Development Projects

Thimphu, Oct 13: India has handed over cheques worth INR/Nu 2.90 billion, equivalent to Rs 290 crore, to Bhutan's Ministry of Finance to support projects under the Himalayan kingdom's 13th Five-Year Plan. The Indian Embassy in Thimphu announced the development on Tuesday, reaffirming New Delhi's financial commitment to Bhutan's development priorities

The financial assistance was handed over during the 19th Monthly Coordination Meeting between India and Bhutan, held in Thimphu to review the progress of projects being implemented with support from the Indian government.

India has handed over financial assistance amounting to INR/Nu 2.90 billion, equivalent to Rs 290 crore, to Bhutan's Ministry of Finance to support development projects under the Himalayan kingdom's 13th Five-Year Plan. The transfer was made during the 19th Monthly Coordination Meeting between the two countries in Thimphu, where officials reviewed the progress



of ongoing projects and discussed the next steps for their implementation. The Indian Embassy in Thimphu confirmed the transfer, stating that cheques worth INR/Nu 2.90 billion were handed over to Bhutan's Ministry of Finance during the meeting on Tuesday. The assistance forms part of India's commitment to supporting Bhutan's development priorities through financial cooperation and bilateral engagement. The coordination meeting provided an

opportunity for representatives from both countries to assess projects being implemented with support from the Indian government. Discussions focused on reviewing the progress of ongoing work, identifying areas requiring attention and determining the future course of action for initiatives covered under Bhutan's current five-year development plan.

The latest transfer highlights the continued economic partnership between India and Bhutan, with development assistance serving as an important component of their bilateral relationship. The funds are intended to support several projects aligned with Bhutan's development priorities under the 13th Five-Year Plan. India has maintained a longstanding partnership with Bhutan, with development cooperation forming a central part of bilateral relations. Financial assistance from India supports projects across different sectors, helping Bhutan pursue its development objectives and strengthen infrastructure and public services.

Beant Singh Convict Hawara's Transfer Plea SC Seeks IB's Input

New Delhi, Oct 13: The Supreme Court on Tuesday directed the Delhi government to seek inputs from the Intelligence Bureau (IB) on the plea filed by Jagtar Singh Hawara, a convict in the assassination of former Punjab Chief Minister Beant Singh, seeking his transfer from Delhi's Tihar Jail to a prison in Punjab.

The direction came as the court considered Hawara's request to be shifted to a jail in Punjab, where he has sought to serve the remainder of his sentence. The Intelligence Bureau's assessment is expected to assist the authorities in examining the request, particularly in view of the security considerations associated with the high-profile case.

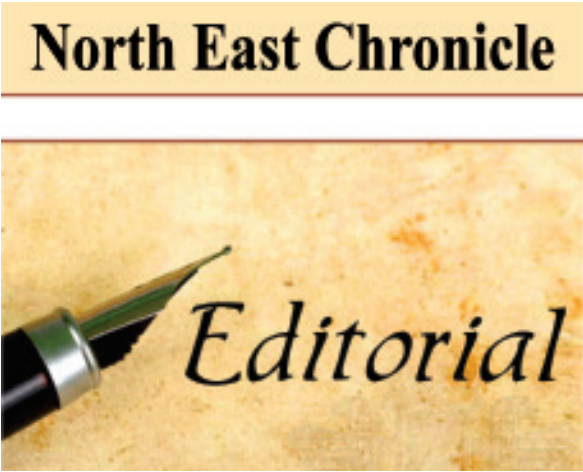
Hawara, who was convicted in connection with the 1995 assassination of Beant Singh, is currently lodged in Tihar Jail in the national capital. His plea seeks permission to move to a prison in Punjab, bringing the question of his place of incarceration before the apex court.

The Supreme Court's direction requires the Delhi government to obtain the intelligence agency's views before the matter proceeds further. The court's move indicates that security-related concerns will be among the factors considered while examining the transfer request. The Intelligence Bureau plays a role in assessing security-related matters, and its inputs may help

the authorities evaluate any potential implications of transferring Hawara to a prison in Punjab. However, the direction to seek the agency's opinion does not, by itself, mean that the court has approved or rejected his plea. Hawara's plea centres on his request to be transferred from Tihar Jail to a prison in Punjab.

The request has brought renewed attention to the arrangements governing the incarceration of convicts involved in politically sensitive and high-profile criminal cases. A transfer between prisons is subject to the applicable legal and administrative procedures. Authorities may need to consider several factors, including security assessments, prison

arrangements and the circumstances of the individual concerned, before reaching a decision. In Hawara's case, the Supreme Court has directed the Delhi government to obtain the Intelligence Bureau's inputs as part of the process. The agency's assessment may help inform the government's position on whether the proposed transfer raises any security concerns. The court's intervention places the matter within a formal process of examination, with the relevant authorities expected to provide information that could assist in determining the next course of action. The final outcome will depend on the court's consideration of the plea and the material placed before it.



Manipur’s urgent need for local peacemakers

Fresh ethnic violence claiming nine lives in Manipur is portending another round of flareup in the state. Killings, counter-killings, arson, economic blockades by communities engaged in mindless violence and clashes have further dimmed hopes for return of peace to the troubled state. If armed groups are not restrained, the resulting irreversible trust among communities may keep the state burning for indefinite period. Persistent violence despite heavy deployment of security forces and crackdown launched by them reflect widening gap in maintenance of land and order. For the security forces, however, the challenges of launching a full-scale crackdown against the armed groups stem from high risk of unwarranted collateral damage, with innocent unarmed civilians vulnerable to getting caught in the crossfire. In sharp contrast to armed groups carrying illegal weapons and also using them in carrying out targeted and indiscriminate killings, the security forces must act responsibly and with restraint to ensure that unarmed and peace-loving civilians are not harmed. Armed groups exploit this strategic gap by hiding among civilian populations, making it severely difficult for security forces to go all out against them. Allegations of involvement of armed groups based in Myanmar is a cause for grave concern and calls for India strengthening its border guarding along India-Myanmar border.

The Central government’s push to expedite the construction of barbed wire fence along the state’s border with Myanmar is a step in right direction, but the project faces monumental challenges due to rugged and hilly terrain. Of the total 398 km of the India-Myanmar which Manipur share, 55 km has been fenced so far while construction work for another 80 km stretch has gained momentum. Sealing of the international border will help both India and Myanmar to manage shared border better, facilitating smooth passenger and goods movement and curbing illegal cross border smuggling of arms, narcotics and illegal crossings or armed groups. The fencing work gathered pace after the Central government decided in 2024 to push the working of fencing the entire 1,643-km India-Myanmar border “to facilitate better surveillance”, and scrap the Free Movement Regime between the two countries “to strengthen the internal security and to maintain the demographic structure of India’s North Eastern States bordering Myanmar.” While fencing the entire border is a long-term project, restoration of peace in the state is an immediate need to deny operational space to anti-India

forces which have conspired to destroy age-old harmony among various communities to destabilise the region. Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh rightly highlighted the huge economic losses caused by frequent bandhs, blockades and counter blockades in the state. His government has estimated that ever since the violence broke out in the state in 2023, frequent bandhs and blockades called by various groups have resulted in a loss of around Rs 25 to Rs 30 crore per day in tax, while the prolonged conflict had resulted in a decline of more than Rs 1,200 crore in Goods and Services Tax (GST) revenue from 2023 to 2026. This alarming economic loss cannot be checked if community leaders do not take a resolute stand to isolate the armed groups who, by indulging in violence and counter-violence, have only added to woes of displaced people and other populations in the state gripped by prolonged violence and uncertainty. Restoration of permanent peace in the state will not be possible if the people displaced by violence are unable to return to their villages. The state government continuing to hold talks with representatives of various civil society organisations on the issue is crucial to trust building. The emphasis laid by Chief Minister Khemchand Singh that peace and development are closely interconnected is an established fact but it is crucial that his government delivers on this vision and promises through decisive governance and tangible outcomes. Apart from their sustained operations against armed groups involved in violence activities in the state, security forces securing the high-ways to facilitate safer movement of passengers and goods is essential to restoring confidence among the people to resume their daily economic activities. As communities are always interdependent on each other for their economic needs, restoration of routine trade and commerce, and agricultural activities plays crucial role in boosting confidence among ordinary people to support the government’s initiatives for return of peace and impress upon leaders of armed as well as un-armed headline groups to stop all hostilities for allowing normalcy to return. Once they see tangible outcomes from government projects and initiatives that can end their miseries, they will feel more confident to pressurise the armed groups and other headline groups for resolution of the conflict through dialogue with the government. Women and youth, who are the worst sufferers of prolonged conflict situation, must play important role of peacemakers for restoration of permanent peace in the troubled border state.

Lessons from Ukraine: the case for Indian military adaptation

It has been amply clear over the past couple of years that the Russia-Ukraine war, going on since 2022, has become a laboratory for a form of military adaptation unlike anything seen in recent times. This is a continuous, high-speed contest in which tactical innovations are fielded, countered, and re-countered within weeks rather than years. At the hub of this confrontation is a feedback loop that runs from the frontline to the production-line and back a loop defining military capability. As per a recent analysis of the Carnegie Endowment, “the classical model of defining requirements, issuing a tender, developing a system, testing it, producing it, and then fielding it is too slow to remain relevant in a rapidly evolving battlefield environment”. This shift is most visible in the deployment of drones on active battlefields and has the repetitive relentlessness as its basis. Ukraine reached an intercepter drone production of roughly 1,500 units per day by January 2026. Similarly, according to Ukraine’s former commander-in-chief General Oleksandr Syrskyi, Russia plans to manufacture roughly 20,000 units per day. These figures typify today’s wars, where a design not repeated on demand within weeks is already obsolete. Ukraine’s model of a battlefield-to-factory loop is also aided by the Delta platform, a bottom-driven battlefield database that acts as a real-time drone-kill data feedback system.

This enables design iteration on a cycle of weeks rather than years. Every engagement generates data that flows back to the manufacturers. Mass production and precision deployment are the most crucial prerequisites of an impactful military campaign. What distinguishes this war is that mass production is strengthened by a tight feedback loop between the user and the manufacturer. In Ukraine, combat units maintain their own repair facilities, small-scale production capabilities, and some even run informal research-and-development cells. Successful adaptations are spread laterally

through information sharing on social media and by civil volunteer communities, instead of strictly through centralised bureaucratic channels. The fusion of civil and military in an all-encompassing manner has been exemplary. As a corollary, Ukraine’s most competitive drone firms maintain seamless contact with combat units, receive real-time feedback from the front, and iterate designs accordingly. The traditional boundaries between users, developers, and manufacturers have diffused. This model also consists of mini factories that are geographically distributed and are in proximity of frontlines. For example, the German UAV company, Nordyn, designs networks of mobile, autonomous micro factories that bring assembly and maintenance directly to the frontline. If one unit is hit, there are ten others that keep running. On the other hand, Russia’s approach to adaptation follows a different rationale — slow to start, but formidable once mobilised. The initial invasion in February 2022 was characteristic of a rigid, top-down structure that discouraged initiative at lower levels. The structure was riddled with a hierarchy-monitored, zero-error syndrome. Russian innovation was mainly driven by the battlefield needs rather than being based on an established mechanism for doctrinal absorption. The centralised system that inhibited tactical creativity was leveraged to facilitate industrial mobilisation by creating an ‘ecosystem of learning’.

Dara Massicot, senior fellow at the Carnegie Endowment, writes in Foreign Affairs that since 2022, Russia has been studying combat experience. Several specialised commissions have analysed thousands of tactical incidents, leading to over “450 interim changes to combat manuals” for the Russian military. This has resulted in game changing innovations and tactics. Structurally, the key change was the decentralisation of command. Drawing lessons from Ukraine and to cater for fast developing battle scenarios, defence industry enter-

prises have established direct communication with the front, promptly implementing feedback-based improvements. The Russian army today, is a hybrid system: centralised in direction but capable of rapid, large-scale production once a requirement is identified. Russia’s mass production of Geran drones, standardised FPV warheads, and fibre optic drones reflect this pattern of transformation. The tension between centralised industrial power and decentralised battlefield innovation is the central strategic challenge of the Russia-Ukraine war, which has demonstrated that adaptation has become a vital dimension of combat power. The side that learns faster not the side that starts with better equipment gains a temporary edge. For traditional militaries accustomed to long development cycles and bifurcated users and manufacturers, the implications are discouraging. Russia bets on mass and the ability to overwhelm; Ukraine bets on speed and the ability to out-adapt. Which bet pays off may depend less on any single technology than on the resilience of the feedback loop that connects the soldier in the trench to the engineer at the factory floor. The broader lesson for India is that the feedback loop must shift from being merely network-centric to fusion-centric, with data from land, air, space, and cyber domains fused to compress decision cycles. This requires integrated targeting, on-the-spot thinking, and layered protection rather than stand-alone platforms. Through planned theatrisation, this need will, hopefully, be met as battlefield feedback shall have to be institutionalised. India can establish a real-time drone-kill data feedback loop through a ministry of defence-industry joint programme, on the lines of Ukraine’s Delta platform. Alongside theatrisation, a formation responsible for autonomous operations, under command of the theatre commander could be raised. Last but not the least, a customised procurement policy to accommodate the above dynamics shall be indispensable.

An absent counterweight: the supreme court’s deafening silence on the ECI

Two Election Commissioners objected on record 14 times in 10 months to steps taken by the Chief Election Commissioner has turned public anger toward the Nirvachan Sadan. Pratap Bhanu Mehta insisted that the SIR mess is a joint production of the ECI and the Supreme Court. The Commission is answerable to Parliament only through impeachment, which the Speaker and the Chairman both drawn from the ruling party refused to entertain in April. In practice, the Supreme Court is the only truly independent body that can hold the ECI to account. Yet legal commentators have argued that, in this lopsided system, the Court has been a poor counterweight. We examined the Court’s record over the past six years in cases involving the ECI using The Professor’s CourtsDataLab, and found that the Court has rarely told the Commission “no”. Instead, it has resorted to not-yets, not-nows, and not-heres. In the rare instances that it has finally acted, it has either been too late or inadequate.

We tracked every time the Supreme Court had to review the ECI’s decisions over the last six years with a looming election. In all these cases, the Court had a deadline the election date beyond which some remedies would cease to be meaningful. The discussion below shows the results of our inquiry. Let us consider two possible scenarios. The first is when the Court disposes of a petition with a decision on record allowing citizens to criticise its actions. The second, more insidious, is the one where the Court intentionally delays its decision until it is far too late for the verdict to have any real consequence. Judicial evasion, or “deciding by not deciding”, as Constitutional lawyer Gautam Bhatia calls it, allows a challenged government action to proceed without deciding its legality and defers to the ECI by default. We see many such instances in the figure below. In many cases, the Court cites the proximity of polling as a reason to refuse intervention, and reneges on its higher responsibility as a check against the ECI. This is the first type of deference mentioned above. In April 2024, when displaced voters from Manipur sought special

voting arrangements, the Court refused to intervene “at this belated stage”. In November, it dismissed Jan Suraj’s challenge to Bihar’s by-election schedule because it was “too late to interfere”. These were explicit decisions where the Supreme Court deferred to the ECI’s stance—irrespective of one’s opinions on their correctness.

However, in 15 of the 44 disputes, the Court reached a final decision after the election took place. The Bihar and West Bengal SIRs fall within the ‘acting too late’ category. In Bihar’s case, petitions were filed in July 2025. That month, the Court asked the Commission merely to “also consider” Aadhaar among acceptable documents. In August, it directed the Commission to publish the names of deleted voters with reasons. Only in September did it expressly direct that Aadhaar be accepted as proof of identity. These were useful orders, but they were interim ones. Neither did the court decide on the central question of whether the exercise was lawful at all, nor were the interim reliefs by themselves consequential enough to prevent the damages SIR could potentially cause. In November 2025, Bihar voted on these revised rolls. On 11 November, as the SIR was extended to other states, the Court went further and directed high courts to keep in abeyance or defer any challenges before them, ensuring that no other court could step in while it waited. Arguments on the validity of the exercise began only after Bihar’s results were declared, and the judgment came on 27 May 2026, six months after the results and four months after the judgment was first reserved. In those four months, West Bengal, Assam, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala went to the polls on rolls prepared through the same exercise. By the time the Court ruled, in the ECI’s favour, the question had long ceased to be live. One wonders what remedy the Court could have offered to the wronged voters, had its finding been otherwise. A court that waits until after the vote to examine the process may find that it has nothing left to remedy. West Bengal’s challenges repeated the pattern on a larger scale. The challenge to the SIR was filed in November 2025. In January 2026, the Court directed the Commission to

display the names of the 1.36 crore voters flagged for “logical discrepancies” and to give them more time—but did not stay the exercise. Appellate tribunals were set up in March; polling followed on 23 and 29 April. Results were declared in May. Most of the appeals remain pending. On 28 September this year, with about 38 lakh appeals by voters pending in West Bengal, Chief Justice Surya Kant declined to advance the hearing before the 6 October bypolls in Nandigram and Rajinagar stating “these are just by-elections.” The repeated practice the Court shows is simply to not take action until it realises it is too late to take action. Timing, in other words, is not incidental to judicial review of election related matters; it is often decisive. In such moments, a calibrated yet assertive judicial response becomes not an encroachment on democratic institutions, but their necessary guardian. This does not mean courts should run elections or second-guess every administrative choice. It means that where the integrity of the franchise is genuinely at stake, they must be willing to act while action can still make a difference.

Asked in August 2026 to reconsider the cut-off year for Sikkim’s intensive revision, the Court called it “essentially a policy decision against which no political party or other stakeholders from the State of Sikkim have come forward to oppose” and went on to say that the “goal post cannot be shifted in the middle of the exercise”. The same instinct surfaced in the West Bengal matter a week later. When informed that in 31 constituencies, the winning margin was smaller than the number of voters deleted, CJI Kant asked: “Can the Court direct fresh elections like this?” In March 2023, in the Anoop Baranwal case, the Court had held that the executive should not appoint Election Commissioners alone. Parliament overturned that within the year, replacing the Chief Justice on the selection panel with a Union minister. On 22 March 2024, a week after two new Commissioners had been appointed under the 2023 Act, and days after the general elections were announced, the Court refused to stay the Act. Its reason was that any stay “would disturb

Sovereignty over speed: why digital Independence trumps musk’s convenience

Elon Musk recently launched an offensive against India’s regulatory pace over his company Starlink, a SatCom service not getting the licence to operate despite compliance with Indian authorities. Expressing his frustration over delayed commercial approvals, Musk accused “oligarchs” of keeping a monopolistic chokehold on the Indian market, going as far as calling the delays a “crime against the people”. It was, to be honest, quite amusing to see a trillion dollars’ worth oligarch himself have a go at others, and a misplaced attack at that. While his ire was directed at the telecom companies that have partnered with him, his aim was to hit out at the Indian government. The government has rightly and firmly pushed back, saying that its regulatory framework is fair, transparent, and uniformly applied, and also confirmed that all major satellite communication licensees, including Starlink, Bharti Airtel-backed Eutelsat OneWeb, and Reliance Jio Satellite Communi-

cations, are currently at the exact same stage of security evaluation. So why the tantrum? Does Elon believe that processes can be bypassed to accommodate him if he tries arm-twisting? It isn’t how this works! In fact, there has been a long-standing concern about allowing Starlink permits to operate in India. As part of the Standing Committee of IT & Communications, I had repeatedly expressed concerns about the IT Ministry and Telecom Ministry’s red-carpet welcome to Starlink. It took

the Home Ministry to go through the checks and balances and rigorous procedures when dealing with strategic communication infrastructure, national security, and digital sovereignty. These issues must outrank the convenience of an impatient foreign corporation. While Starlink presents itself as a simple broadband provider designed to bring high-speed internet to remote villages, beneath it lies a not-so-noble intent, because whatever price band that the SatCom is offering as per publicly

available information makes it an expensive proposition. However, the concern is not merely pricing; the company is a vital asset for the American military and its intelligence apparatus. SpaceX holds highly classified contracts with US intelligence agencies to build robust spy satellite networks. For a nation like India—where an entity is deeply intertwined with a foreign military apparatus to control vital communication nodes without exhaustive vetting—this is a proposition fraught with risks.

FM invites global steel body to set up India office

New Delhi: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday invited the World Steel Association (Worldsteel) to consider setting up an office in India, citing the country’s growing contribution to global steel demand and its expanding industrial base. She also called for greater focus on decarbonisation, speciality steel and resilient supply chains. “As Worldsteel enters its 60th year, I would invite the association to consider establishing an office in India,” Sitharaman said at the Worldsteel General Assembly 2026 here, adding that a stronger presence would bring the global industry body closer to one of the world’s key sources of steel demand and industrial expansion. India’s steel sector has continued to expand despite a contraction in global output. Crude steel production rose 10% to 165 million tonne (MT) in 2025 and grew a further 6% in January-August 2026, even as global production declined. Sitharaman said India’s development trajectory

offered opportunities for the global steel industry, with finished steel consumption reaching 164 million tonne in 2025-26. However, per capita steel consumption remains at around 109 kg, against the global average of 209 kg, indicating significant scope for further growth. The government’s infrastructure push will remain a key driver of steel demand.

Capital expenditure in the Union Budget is pegged at Rs 12.2 lakh crore for 2026-27, while effective capital expenditure, including grants to states for creating capital assets, stands at Rs 17.15 lakh crore. “Specialty steel is, in that sense, a return to an old Indian competence,” she said, referring to India’s historical wootz (ultra-high-carbon crucible) steel tradition. The government has introduced a production-linked incentive scheme for speciality steel with an approved outlay of Rs 6,300 crore to encourage domestic manufacturing and technology upgrades.

Kalpataru Projects bags Rs 2,225 crore orders, FY27 inflows cross Rs 20,000 crore

New Delhi: Kalpataru Projects International (KPIL) has secured new orders worth approximately Rs 2,031 crore in its power transmission and distribution (T&D) business in India and international markets. Additionally, Linjemontage i Grästorp AB, a Swedish subsidiary of Kalpataru Projects International, has received an order worth around Rs 194 crore, equivalent to approximately SEK 200 million. Kalpataru Projects’ FY27 order inflows rise over 30%

The latest order wins take Kalpataru Projects International’s total order inflows to around Rs 20,000 crore so far in the current financial year, FY27, marking a growth of over 30% year-on-year (YoY).



Manish Mohnot, managing director and chief executive officer of Kalpataru Projects International, said the new orders reflect customers’ confidence in the company’s execution capabilities and techni-

cal expertise. “This sustained momentum in order inflows highlights the massive investments happening in transmission infrastructure, grid expansion, and renewable energy integration across India and

global markets. Favourable industry tailwinds, paired with

our end to end integrated EPC offerings in the T&D business, perfectly position us to sustain this growth going forward.” Mohnot said in its regulatory filing. Kalpataru Projects International (KPIL), part of the Kalpataru Group, is one of India’s largest listed engineering and construction companies. Established in 1981, the company provides engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) services across power transmission and distribution, buildings and factories, water supply and irrigation, railways, oil and gas pipelines, urban mobility, highways and airports.

TVS family dispute: Mallika, Lakshmi deny Venu Srinivasan’s economic settlement claim

New Delhi: A day after TVS Motor Chairman Emeritus Venu Srinivasan told Republic Business that the division of business interests between his children was a carefully considered and fair succession arrangement, his wife Mallika Srinivasan and daughter Lakshmi Venu on Monday asserted that no economic settlement had been reached within the family and that their rightful ownership interests remained unresolved. In a joint public statement that brought into sharp focus the differences within one of India’s most prominent business families, Mallika and Lakshmi countered Srinivasan’s contention that the businesses and assets were his to allocate and that the separation had been undertaken transparently, after consultations with family members.

“The suggestion that all family assets belong exclusively to one individual, who is therefore free to



distribute them unilaterally, is neither an agreed nor an established position,” the two said. In a statement to Republic Business on Sunday, Srinivasan had maintained that he had the authority to allocate his assets and business interests in what he considered the best interests of the family and its businesses. He described the separation of responsibilities between Lakshmi Venu and Sudarshan Venu as a deliberate

succession decision rather than a family dispute. His stated philosophy was to give the next generation ownership and control of businesses while they were still young enough to build and expand them. Under this arrangement, Lakshmi was entrusted with growing Sundaram-Clayton (SCL), while Sudarshan was given responsibility for the motors business. Srinivasan maintained that the allocation was

fair and had taken into account several factors, including the respective business interests and the anticipated succession at TAFE, the tractor manufacturer headed by Mallika Srinivasan. According to him, Mallika’s intention to eventually pass ownership and control of TAFE to Lakshmi had also been factored into the succession arrangement. He further maintained that the separation had been carried out openly, after careful consultation with family members, and that their views had been considered before the arrangements were accepted and implemented. However, Mallika and Lakshmi said “management responsibilities must not be confused with economic ownership.” Their statement added allocating leadership roles or opportunities to manage businesses did not constitute a division of family assets or substitute for the rightful economic interests of family members.

Gold, silver prices are precious metals headed, resistance

New Delhi: Gold and silver futures remained mixed in domestic and international markets on Tuesday, as investors assessed cues from the US dollar, crude oil prices and expectations around the Federal Reserve’s interest-rate decisions. Upcoming US inflation data could provide fresh direction to prices. At around 9:30 AM, MCX gold futures were trading at ₹1,49,502 per 10 grams, down 0.03%. MCX silver futures stood at ₹2,22,600 per kilogram, declining 0.12%. In the international market, gold futures were trading at \$4,207 per ounce, up 0.40%, while silver futures were at \$60 per ounce, gaining 0.23%. Sugandha Sachdeva, Founder of SS WealthStreet, said the strengthening US dollar and uncertainty surrounding the Federal Reserve’s interest-rate trajectory were restricting the recovery in precious metals. “The strengthening greenback, coupled with persistent uncertainty

surrounding the Federal Reserve’s interest rate trajectory, has been exerting downward pressure on precious metals, restricting their ability to stage a meaningful recovery,” Sachdeva said in the analyst note shared. Elevated crude oil prices are another factor to watch, as persistent energy-driven inflation could encourage the US Federal Reserve to maintain a restrictive monetary policy for longer. Market attention is now focused on US Consumer Price Index (CPI) data. Higher-than-expected inflation could strengthen the dollar and weigh on bullion prices, while softer inflation could ease pressure on the dollar and bond yields, potentially supporting gold and silver. For international gold, \$4,100 per ounce remains a crucial support level, while \$4,240 is a key resistance. In the domestic market, MCX gold has support at ₹1,48,000 per 10 grams, with immediate resistance at ₹1,51,500.



For international silver, \$58.50 per ounce is a key support, while \$62.50 is the resistance to watch. In the domestic market, ₹2,17,500 per kilogram is an important level identified in the analyst note. Whether gold and silver become cheaper will depend on inflation data, movements in the US dollar and crude oil prices, and the Federal Reserve’s policy outlook. These support and resistance levels are technical indicators, not guaranteed price targets.

FM invites global steel body to set up India office

New Delhi: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday invited the World Steel Association (Worldsteel) to consider setting up an office in India, citing the country’s growing contribution to global steel demand and its expanding industrial base. She also called for greater focus on decarbonisation, speciality steel and the resilient supply chains. “As Worldsteel enters its 60th year, I would invite the association to consider establishing an office in India,” Sitharaman said at the Worldsteel General Assembly 2026 here, adding that a stronger presence would bring the global industry body closer to one

of the world’s key sources of steel demand and industrial expansion. India’s steel sector has continued to expand despite a contraction in global output. Crude steel production rose 10% to 165 million tonne (MT) in 2025 and grew a further 6% in January-August 2026, even as global production declined. Sitharaman said India’s development trajectory offered opportunities for the global steel industry, with finished steel consumption reaching 164 million tonne in 2025-26. However, per capita steel consumption remains at around 109 kg, against the global average of 209 kg, indicating significant scope for further



growth. The government’s infrastructure push will remain a key driver of steel demand. Capital expenditure in the Union Budget is pegged at Rs 12.2 lakh crore for 2026-27, while effective capital expenditure, including grants to states for creating capital assets, stands at Rs 17.15 lakh crore. “Specialty steel is, in that sense, a return

to an old Indian competence,” she said, referring to India’s historical wootz (ultra-high-carbon crucible) steel tradition. The government has introduced a production-linked incentive scheme for speciality steel with an approved outlay of Rs 6,300 crore to encourage domestic manufacturing and technology upgrades.

Mazagon Dock, GRSE, Cochin Shipyard: Defence stocks to trade Check key levels, targets & stop

New Delhi: Indian equity benchmark indices gave up early gains and settled lower on Monday amid the weak sentiments over rising bond yields and persistent FII outflows. The Indian rupee saw some rebound following RBI’s efforts. The BSE Sensex tanked 547.85 points, or 0.76 per cent, to end at 71,924.68, while NSE’s Nifty50 cracked 157.10 points, or 0.70 per cent, to settle at 22,363.35 for the day.

Select buzzing defence stocks including Cochin Shipyard, Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers Ltd and Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Ltd are likely to remain under the spotlight of traders for the session today. Here is what Jigar S Patel, Senior Technical Research Analysts at Anand Rathii Share and Stock Brokers Ltd has to say about these stocks for Tuesday’s trading session:

GRSE is approaching a crucial support zone of Rs 1,970–2,000, which will be important in determining its near-term price direction. The stock is currently trading at Rs 2,087, relatively close to this support

area. However, the RSI on both the daily and weekly charts is below the 50 mark, indicating subdued momentum and a lack of strong bullish strength across short- and medium-term timeframes. Given this technical setup, a cautious approach is warranted. We expect the stock to undergo potential base formation near the Rs 1,970–2,000 support zone before any meaningful upside emerges. On the upside, Rs 2,150 is the immediate resistance level. A sustained move above this resistance, supported by improving RSI, could strengthen the recovery outlook. Until then, traders should avoid aggressive positioning and monitor price action closely. Cochin Shipyard Ltd is approaching a crucial support zone of Rs 1,185–1,200, which will be important in determining its near-term price direction. The stock is currently trading at Rs 1,235, relatively close to this support area. However, the RSI on both the daily and weekly charts is below the 50 mark, indicating subdued momentum and a lack of strong bullish strength across short- and medi-



um-term timeframes. Given this technical setup, a cautious approach is warranted. We expect the stock to undergo potential base formation near the Rs 1,180–1,200 support zone before any meaningful upside emerges. On the upside, Rs 1,300 is the immediate resistance level. A sustained move above this resistance, supported by

improving RSI, could strengthen the recovery outlook. Until then, traders should avoid aggressive positioning and monitor price action closely.

Mazagon Dock is approaching a crucial support zone of Rs 1,950–2,000, which will be important in determining its near-term price direction. The stock is currently trading at Rs 2,027, relatively close to this support area. However, the RSI on both the daily and weekly charts is below the 50 mark, indicating subdued momentum and a lack of strong bullish strength across short and medium term timeframes. Given this technical setup, a cautious approach is warranted. We expect the stock to undergo potential base formation near the Rs 1,950–2,000 support zone before any meaningful upside emerges. On the upside, Rs 2,120 is the immediate resistance level. A sustained move above this resistance, supported by improving RSI, could strengthen the recovery outlook. Until then, traders should avoid aggressive positioning and monitor price action closely.

ICICI Prudential AMC declares Rs 30 interim dividend

New Delhi: India’s second-largest asset management company, ICICI Prudential AMC, has announced an interim dividend of Rs 30, marking its first dividend payout for FY27. The AMC will check its record books next week to determine shareholder eligibility. Here are all the details you need to know about ICICI Prudential AMC’s dividend payout and quarterly result. ICICI Prudential AMC has announced an interim dividend of Rs 30 per share for FY27. The company will check its record books on Wednesday, October 21, to determine shareholder eligibility for the same. Declaration and payment of interim dividend of Rs 30 per equity share to the equity shareholders of the Company, whose names appear in the Register of Members of the Company or in the records of Depositories as beneficial owners of the shares as on October 21, 2026, being record date fixed for this purpose,” the company said in its regulatory filing. Under the Companies Act, 2013, the entities are mandated to pay the dividend within 30 days from the date of declaration. This means beneficiaries are likely to receive the dividend by mid-November. For the July-September quarter of FY27, ICICI Prudential AMC posted its consolidated net profit at nearly Rs 889 crore, rising 6% year-on-year from Rs 838 crore reported in the same quarter last year. The AMC’s consolidated revenue from operations for the second quarter of FY27 stood at Rs 1,673 crore, advancing 16% YoY against Rs 1,439 crore reported in Q2 FY26.

Latin American organised crime ‘may operate in 16 European countries’

America: A four-month investigation by the Guardian has revealed that the surge in cocaine trafficking to Europe is directly linked to the expanding presence of Latin American criminal networks in Europe, where they have forged close ties with local mafia organisations.

The investigation, utilising databases, police and intelligence agencies, along with interviews with judges, prosecutors and experts from eight countries, shows that cartels and factions from Colombia, Brazil, Ecuador, Venezuela, Mexico and the US are active in at least 12 European countries. Between 2014 and 2024, there was a 471% rise in the quantity of cocaine seized and more local laboratories processing cocaine derivatives were dismantled.

The figure could be even higher, as it includes only groups officially identified in Europe through police operations, transnational investigations and ongoing court cases involving brokers, active members, cells or operational networks. It does not include gangs that lack a physical presence in Europe while working in “joint ventures” with European mafias.

The identified groups include Mexico’s Sinaloa cartel and the Jalisco New Generation cartel (CJNG); the Clan del Golfo ma-

fia, and the guerrilla organisations ELN and dissident factions of Farc in Colombia; Brazil’s Primeiro Comando da Capital (PCC, or First Capital Command) and Comando Vermelho (CV, or Red Command); Venezuela’s Tren de Aragua; and the US-originated Barrio 18 and MS-13 gangs, which are also prevalent in El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala and, to a lesser degree, in Mexico.

These organisations have built a more prominent presence in Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, Belgium and France, while their activities have also been noted in Germany, Romania, Croatia and Slovakia. The Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime (Gi-Toc) also includes Bulgaria.

Daniel Brombacher, a political scientist and director of the Europe Observatory at Gi-Toc, said: “There is something new happening with a presence of Latin American groups in geographies where there’s no pre-existing infrastructure. “This phenomenon is no longer limited to the traditional gateway countries,” he says. “Recent police operations have uncovered Mexican-run methamphetamine labs in southern France, north-eastern Poland and Brandenburg, south of Berlin. Latin American groups are



also appearing in Romania and Bulgaria along the Balkan route.”

Latin American national authorities and experts suggest the list may be even longer. An unpublished report by the São Paulo public prosecutor’s office, partly based on data from the Brazilian intelligence agency (Abin) – which the Guardian reviewed

– shows, for example, that the PCC, now Brazil’s biggest criminal group, operates in 16 European countries, including the UK, Ireland, Iceland, Serbia, Sweden, Switzerland and Turkey.

The suspicion that Latin American cartels and factions are seeking to become established in Europe is not new. Since at least

the 1980s, Colombian criminal organisations such as the Cali and Medellín cartels had foot-holds in regions of Spain such as Galicia. In 2013, a Europol report in 2103 warned of their rise. But what authorities are witnessing now is on an another level. A Europol report this year states that “Latin American MTCNs [most

threatening criminal networks] have also settled in the EU, from where they direct operations that affect the EU. This is particularly the case for mobile criminal networks involved in organised property crime.”

Interpol, led by the Brazilian federal police officer Valdecy Urquiza, has been approached, but has not commented.

The problem has become more visible over the past decade. Drug production in Latin America in that time has increased roughly fourfold to reach a record of about 4,100 tonnes in 2024. This comes after growth of up to 35% at the beginning of the decade. More cocaine is now produced in Colombia than during the era of the notorious drug lord Pablo Escobar. Nearly all the world’s cocaine and many related substances originate from Latin America, particularly Colombia.

Víctor Manuel Sánchez Valdés, an academic at the Autonomous University of Coahuila in Mexico who is an expert on organised crime, says: “The main ones are the Sinaloa cartel and the Jalisco cartel [CJNG] in Mexico; the Comando Vermelho and the PCC of Brazil; the Gulf Clan and different factions of the Colombian Farc; the Lobos and the Choneros of Ecuador; and Tren de Aragua of Venezuela.”

He believes that the Latin American presence in Europe is even more widespread than is generally recognised. “Sinaloa cartel and the CJNG have a presence in more than 20 European countries. Obviously, that does not mean they dominate or have large cells,” he says. “Rather, they are business emissaries.”

The UN Office on Drugs and Crime’s 2026 World Drug Report on illicit crimes states that global cocaine production in 2024 was between 3,800 and 4,700 tonnes – more than four times higher than it was in 2014. South America remains the main production hub, with coca cultivation covering a record 385,000 hectares over the past decade – three times the 2014 figure.

Europe has emerged as a key market because it offers organisations higher profit margins than the US. Since the beginning of the decade, European police have confiscated more drugs than American forces, and data indicates that Europe now represents about a quarter of global consumption. Europol recently reported that out of 731 MTCNs operating across Europe, 149 are connected to Latin American organisations. Of these, 67 have Latin American members, and 22 mainly consist of Latin Americans.

UK holiday demand may have peaked amid cost of living squeeze, says travel industry

UK: The UK’s cost of living squeeze means fewer people plan to ringfence money for holiday abroad next year, the travel industry warned on Tuesday.

Despite war, wildfires and EES border checks, the numbers of Britons taking holidays climbed back to pre-pandemic levels this year – but rising costs may mean the numbers have peaked, according to an annual travel industry report.

Numbers taking holidays both at home and abroad continued to rise, although late bookings and shorter city breaks have been an increasing feature of holidays through 2026.

Confidence in travel dropped slightly year on year but rebounded as fears over jet fuel shortages and flight disruption faded since the start of the US-Israel war with Iran in February, according to research from the industry body Abta.

Overall, 88% of Brits took a holiday this year, matching the 2019 pre-pandemic peak, with a new high of 74% in the UK and 62% abroad.

However, Abta’s report found that almost one in



three people were planning to spend less on travelling abroad next year, suggesting that the annual holiday is no longer sacrosanct. Fewer people now say they are willing to reduce spending on phones or other gadgets than the holiday abroad.

Abta said the holiday business remained resilient, despite a dip in its travel confidence index to +50 – this measures the net proportion

of people who felt secure in going abroad, compared with those who were worried. But it said that score had rebounded since disruption from the Middle East conflict and fears about fuel availability and the EU’s entry/exit system (EES).

The Abta chief executive, Mark Tanzer, said it “had been a tough year for the travel industry”. But he added: “Demand has held

up well despite a range of challenges this year, and that looks set to continue, as does the willingness to prioritise spending on travel over other discretionary items.”

Speaking at the annual Abta travel convention in Madeira, Tanzer added: “It’s been a stop-start year but the market did come back in the summer. “We saw people switch-

ing their holiday plans and booking later, waiting and seeing – maybe hoping for better deals but also managing the uncertainty.”

He said the industry would continue to lobby ministers hard to reduce aviation taxes and increase help in the switch to sustainable aviation fuels, to help cut costs and support an industry that contributed £57bn to the UK economy.

Tanzer said the investment in tourism continued but he admitted: “The pressures of the last few months are not going to go away in the next 18 months.”

Spain increased its dominance of the British outbound market. The number who said they visited Spain was up four percentage points to 36%, while Portugal moved up to sixth in popularity for holidays.

Polling next year’s travel intentions, only 26% said they were planning to visit Spain, with places such as Japan and Norway cited in the top 10. However, previous surveys have underlined that, despite dreams of somewhere more exotic, Britons head resolutely back to Spain.

Ukraine war briefing: Russia attacks multiple power plants after Trump energy ceasefire claim



Ukraine: Russian strikes hit multiple Ukrainian power plants after Donald Trump claimed both sides had agreed to stop hitting each other’s energy infrastructure, Volodymyr Zelenskyy said. The Ukrainian president said on social media a drone had hit a power plant in Kyiv on Sunday, leading to power outages in the capital. Shortly after, he said there had been a strike on the CHP-5 power plant in the eastern city of Kharkiv, adding: “Ukrainian skies have been infested with Russian ‘shaheds’ [drones] all day.”

Trump said earlier that “effective immediately, there is an energy ceasefire in the war between Russia and Ukraine”. “Both parties have agreed. Do not break it!” the US president wrote on his Truth Social platform on Sunday morning in Washington, without further details. Zelenskyy expressed surprise at the announcement, saying the deal was “news to me” and he was seeking further details. Russia has yet to confirm it agreed. The ceasefire appeared to garner support on Sunday from Ukraine’s key western allies, including the UK, France, Canada and the European Commission. British prime minister Andy Burnham said a sustained energy ceasefire was “the best route to get energy and fuel back into world markets”. French president Emmanuel Macron said Paris supported a “real en-

ergy ceasefire” between Russia and Ukraine.

Ukrainian officials said Russian attacks killed six people in two Ukrainian cities on Sunday, including a strike on a grocery store in Kharkiv, Ukraine’s second-largest city, where three people died and 20 were injured. Two children were among the injured, regional governor Oleh Syniehubov said. In a separate attack in western Ukraine, officials said a Russian strike killed three people.

Trump’s energy truce claim came two days after he announced a controversial agreement to buy Russian diesel fuel while temporarily easing US sanctions, prompting outrage from Ukraine and its European allies, who said it would embolden Moscow. Canadian prime minister Mark Carney added to the chorus of disapproval after a Sunday call with Zelenskyy, saying the diesel deal “is in direct opposition to the efforts of Ukraine, Canada and our allies to create peace and stability in Europe”.

EU chief Ursula von der Leyen also backed Zelenskyy “as he leads the fight for his people’s freedom”, while Germany foreign minister Johann Wadephul said Berlin continued to “fully support” him.

Trump lashed out at Zelenskyy when asked about criticism of the Russia diesel deal, saying it was “time for Ukraine to get a

new president” who would finally settle the war. Zelenskyy pushed back, telling US ABC News on Sunday: “First of all, with all respect to President Trump, it’s up to our society, up to our people to choose one or another leader.”

The Trump administration is threatening to stop the procurement system that provides Ukraine with weapons in order to press Kyiv to halt its deep strikes on Russian energy infrastructure, the Financial Times quoted officials in Europe as saying. The US was lobbying European capitals and Kyiv in an attempt to end the attacks on Russian oil refineries, they said.

A Ukrainian drone killed one person in Russia’s border Belgorod region on Sunday, officials said. The operational headquarters in Belgorod region said the drone struck a car on a road near the border. In the part of Ukraine’s eastern Donetsk region held by Russian forces, Moscow-installed officials said one person had been killed in a Ukrainian attack.

Russia’s military said it struck a logistics centre in southern Ukraine’s Mykolaiv region and a cargo vessel in the Black Sea. The logistics centre in the town of Ternivka was used to store military and dual-use cargoes for the Ukrainian military, the Russian defence ministry claimed on Sunday.

Riyadh airport hit again after deadly Houthi missile attack

Riyadh: A projectile hit a passenger terminal at the airport in Riyadh on Sunday, the day after a deadly missile attack on the facility carried out by Yemen’s Iran-backed Houthi rebel group killed 13 people.

An unidentified projectile hit terminal 4 at King Khalid international airport, starting a fire, killing one person and injuring 11, according to Saudi civil aviation authorities. Air defences also intercepted a cruise missile in the vicinity of the airport. It was the latest of several attacks on the airport in the past week. The escalating attacks threatened to draw more countries into the Yemen conflict and further widen the regional fallout of the US-Iran war, which has

already spread to Lebanon and Iraq.

In a post on X, the British embassy in Saudi Arabia advised against all but essential travel to the cities of Jeddah and Dammam and to avoid almost all airports.

After Saturday’s strike on Riyadh airport, the US president, Donald Trump, said he was weighing whether to join the Saudi military campaign in Yemen, telling reporters: “We’re going to look into it.”

The Iran-allied Houthis claimed to have launched several attacks on the airport, including the attack on Saturday, which killed 13 people and injured more than 300 – the deadliest attack on a Gulf country since the war with Iran started in

March and an apparent escalation in the Houthis’ war with Saudi Arabia and the Yemeni government that Riyadh sponsors.

In response to the attack, Saudi authorities extended the closure of the airport and said schools would be moved online until Thursday.

The Houthis claimed that Saudi Arabia struck the airport in Yemen’s rebel-held capital, Sana’a, on Sunday, without providing more information on damage or casualties. Videos circulated on social media showing travellers walking through debris-strewn ground in the Riyadh airport as sirens blared. Four Saudi citizens, two Bangladeshi nationals, a Palestinian, a US citizen, an Egyptian, a Jordanian, a

Syrian and a Sudanese were killed in the missile strike.

On Sunday evening, Saudi authorities also confirmed King Fahd international airport in the eastern city of Dammam had been attacked, with the country’s civil aviation authority saying on X: “The assessment of the damage and verification of the safety of airport facilities were still under way, in coordination with the relevant authorities.”

On Saturday night, the spokesperson for the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen, Maj Gen Turki al-Maliki, said the coalition would “respond firmly” to the attack, offering few other details.

The Houthis said a Saudi airstrike on Sana’a on Sunday hit a home and killed a

child, as well as injuring six others.

The Houthis doubled down on their threats on Sunday, warning airlines, passengers and staff to stay away from Saudi airports. The group said “the worst is yet to come” if Saudi military action in Yemen continued.

“We renew our warning to all airlines, experts, employees, workers and travellers against using Saudi airports and airspace, as they are vulnerable to attack and have become a theatre of operations for our forces,” the Houthis said on X.

Trump said on Saturday night that he would speak to the Saudi crown prince, Mohammed bin Salman, after the previous attack on the airport.

How to achieve a flawless Garba makeup look that lasts all nite

Garba evenings are characterized by vivid clothing ensembles, conventional adornments, dynamic choreography, and cosmetic applications that align with the celebratory atmosphere. Whether one opts for a traditional Gujarati-influenced aesthetic featuring pronounced eye definition and vibrant lip tones, or a modern sophisticated appearance with luminous complexion and shimmering eye embellishments, the cosmetic application must maintain its integrity throughout extended periods of movement, elevated temperatures, and moisture exposure. The objective is to achieve a refined appearance that provides comfort, photographs with clarity and vibrancy, and preserves its aesthetic appeal until the festivities conclude. The secret to long-lasting Garba makeup lies in preparing your skin correctly, choosing suitable formulas and layering your products strategically. A few simple changes to your routine can help prevent a greasy base, smudged kajal, creased eyeshadow and fading lipstick. Here is how to create a festive makeup look that stays put all night.

1. Start with a well-prepped base
Long-lasting makeup begins with well-prepared skin. Cleanse your face to remove excess oil, dirt and sweat before applying your skincare products. Follow up with a lightweight moisturiser suited to your skin type and allow it to absorb fully. If you have oily skin, choose a lightweight, non-greasy moisturiser that hydrates without leaving a heavy film. Those with dry skin should opt for a nourishing moisturiser to prevent foundation from clinging to dry patches. Apply a broad-spectrum sunscreen with SPF 30 or higher if you are attending an outdoor Garba event before sunset. Allow it to settle before moving on to makeup. Avoid introducing new skincare products just before a major celebration, as unexpected irritation can affect how your makeup looks and feels.
2. Use a primer to improve makeup longevity
A primer can help create a smoother base for foundation and improve how makeup wears throughout the evening. Choose one based on your skin's needs rather than following a one-size-fits-all approach. A mattifying primer can help manage shine around the forehead, nose and chin, while a hydrating primer may work better for dry skin. If your main concern is visible pores, look for a smoothing primer that helps blur their appearance. Apply a thin layer, focusing on areas where makeup tends to separate or fade. Using too much primer can make the base feel heavy, so allow the product to settle before applying foundation.
3. Choose a lightweight, long-wear foundation
Garba involves plenty of movement, so heavy layers of foundation may feel uncomfortable as the night progresses. Choose a long-wearing foundation with a natural or soft-matte finish, depending on your skin type and preferred look. Apply a thin layer using a damp makeup sponge or foundation brush, blending carefully around the nose, jawline and hairline. Build coverage only where necessary instead of applying several layers across the entire face. For a more natural finish, use concealer to cover blemishes, redness or dark circles. This targeted approach helps keep the base looking fresh rather than cakey. If you expect to sweat, choose products labelled long-wear or transfer-resistant, while remembering that no formula is completely sweat-proof.
4. Set your base without making it look cakey
Setting powder is useful for helping foundation and concealer stay in place. Use a finely milled translucent or tinted powder to set areas prone to creasing and shine, such as the under-eyes,



- sides of the nose and forehead. If your skin is oily, you can lightly powder the rest of your face. For dry skin, keep powder application minimal to preserve a natural finish. Avoid repeatedly layering powder over sweat, as this can make your makeup look patchy. Instead, gently blot perspiration with a clean tissue or blotting paper before touching up.
5. Make your eye makeup the star of the look
Traditional Garba outfits pair beautifully with expressive eye makeup. You can experiment with metallic gold, bronze, copper, emerald green or royal blue eyeshadows to complement your chaniya choli. Start with an eyeshadow primer to help reduce creasing and improve colour payoff. Apply a neutral transition shade before blending your chosen festive colours across the eyelids. Press shimmer or metallic eyeshadow onto the centre of the lid for a more intense finish. For definition, use waterproof eyeliner and smudge-resistant kajal. A winged liner or a softly smoked-out kajal look can make the eyes stand out without requiring too many products. Finish with waterproof mascara if you tend to sweat around the eyes. If you prefer false lashes, choose a lightweight pair and use a reliable lash adhesive. Allow it to become tacky before placing the lashes for a more secure fit.
6. Opt for blush and lipstick that last
Cream blush can give the cheeks a fresh, skin-like finish, while powder blush can help add staying power. For a longer-lasting result, apply a small amount of cream blush and lightly layer a coordinating powder blush over it. Choose a blush shade that complements your outfit, such as rose, peach or berry. Blend it well to avoid harsh edges, and add a touch of highlighter to the high points of your cheeks if you enjoy a luminous finish. For lips, begin by gently exfoliating only if needed, then apply a comfortable lip balm and blot away excess. Use a lip liner to define the edges before applying a long-wear lipstick or lip stain. Berry, brick red, rosy pink and classic red are festive options that work with a range of traditional outfits. Carry your lipstick for touch-ups after eating or drinking, as even long-wearing formulas can fade.
7. Lock everything in with setting spray
A setting spray is the final step that can help your makeup wear more evenly. Choose a formula suited to your skin type and desired finish, whether matte, natural or dewy. Hold the bottle at the recommended distance and mist your face evenly, keeping your eyes and mouth closed. Allow the spray to dry naturally instead of rubbing or fanning your face vigorously. A setting spray can help improve makeup wear, but it cannot prevent all fading caused by sweat, humidity or friction.

The Top 10 Women's Handbags to Complete Your Festive Look

- An appropriately selected handbag possesses the capacity to unify a festive ensemble, regardless of whether one is attired in a saree for a family puja, an Anarkali for a Diwali dinner, or a contemporary ensemble for a social gathering. Whereas prominent clutches demonstrate suitability for evening functions, structured satchels, compact sling bags, and refined shoulder bags provide enhanced versatility for festive occasions and familial assemblies. When choosing a handbag, consider the occasion, the essentials you need to carry and how the design complements your outfit. A compact evening bag can add polish to a dressier look, while a spacious tote is useful when you need room for everyday essentials alongside your festive plans.
1. ZOUK Baguette Bag for Women: The ZOUK baguette bag combines a compact handbag silhouette with a vegan leather design, according to the listing. Its crossbody styling makes it worth considering if you want a bag that can transition between festive outings and everyday use without requiring you to carry a larger tote. Why consider it: A baguette-style bag offers a more compact alternative to a traditional handbag, making it suitable for outings where you only need your phone, cards and a few essentials. How to style it: Pair it with a kurta set, a contemporary saree or a festive co-ord. Choose jewellery that complements the bag's colours and finish.
 2. Lyrovo Clutch Purse for Women: If you're looking for a bag for a wedding, cocktail party or evening celebration, this Lyrovo clutch is worth considering. The listing describes it as a formal evening clutch with crossbody styling, giving you the option to compare it with more traditional handheld clutches. Why consider it: An evening clutch can add a dressier finishing touch to an outfit without competing with elaborate embroidery or statement jewellery. How to style it: Carry it with a saree, an embellished Anarkali or an evening dress. Coordinate the bag with your footwear or jewellery for a more cohesive look.
 3. Miraggio Mimi Hobo Bag: The Miraggio Mimi Hobo Bag is positioned as a shoulder bag for casual outings and travel. The listing also states that it fits an 11-inch iPad, making it worth considering if you prefer a more spacious bag that can serve purposes beyond occasional festive wear. Why consider it: A hobo bag offers

- a relaxed alternative to a structured clutch or satchel. Its everyday orientation may make it useful for shopping trips, casual celebrations and travel. How to style it: Pair it with a simple kurta set, a relaxed festive co-ord or a contemporary fusion outfit. Let the bag complement the outfit rather than compete with heavily embellished clothing.
4. ZOUK Women's Office Laptop Tote Bag: For women who need a bag that works beyond festive occasions, this ZOUK tote is designed to accommodate a laptop of up to 15.6 inches, according to the listing. Its vegan leather construction and office-focused design make it an option for those who want a larger everyday bag that can also accompany them to work-related events. Why consider it: A laptop tote is practical when you need space for work essentials, documents and other daily belongings. It is less suited to occasions where a compact evening bag would be more convenient. How to style it: Pair it with a tailored kurta set, a solid saree or a polished ethnic-fusion outfit for an office Diwali celebration.
5. Lavie Women's Ushawu Satchel Bag: The Lavie Ushawu Satchel is a structured handbag option for women who prefer a defined silhouette. The listing positions it for work and everyday use, making it worth considering if you want a bag that can be carried beyond the festive season. Why consider it: Satchels offer a more structured look than relaxed hobo bags. Depending on the colour and finish you choose, the style can work with both smart casual and dressier daytime outfits. How to style it: Carry it with a straight-cut kurta set, tailored trousers or a contemporary saree look. Keep the rest of your accessories coordinated for a polished finish.
6. Lavie Women's Mono Freya Monogram Print Tote Bag: This Lavie tote features a monogram print and is listed as a work-oriented shoulder bag. It is an option to explore if you prefer a bag with a visible pattern rather than a plain, minimalist design. Why consider it: A printed tote can introduce another layer of detail to a relatively simple outfit. Its everyday positioning also makes it a practical alternative to buying a bag exclusively for one celebration. How to style it: Pair it with a solid kurta set or a monochrome festive outfit so the printed design remains noticeable without over-



- whelming the look.
7. Miraggio Sierra Satchel Handbag for Women: The Miraggio Sierra Satchel is another option for shoppers who prefer a structured handbag. Compare its product photographs, dimensions and compartment details with other satchels in this list to see whether it suits the essentials you usually carry. Why consider it: A structured satchel can complement a polished outfit for a festive lunch, family gathering or daytime event. Its suitability for evening occasions will depend on the design, colour and finish shown in the listing. How to style it: Wear it with a tailored kurta set, a solid saree or a dressy Indo-Western outfit. Choose footwear and jewellery that complement the bag rather than matching every accessory exactly. This Symbol Premium tote is described as a poly-canvas and PU bag designed for office use, with space for a 14-inch laptop. It is worth considering if you want a roomy handbag that can carry work essentials and still be useful for shopping or daytime outings during the festive season.
 8. Kalankit Sling Bag for Women and Girls: The Kalankit sling bag is described as a vegan leather crossbody purse with an adjustable strap. Its crossbody format makes it worth exploring if you prefer to keep your hands free while shopping, attending daytime festivities or visiting family. Why consider it: A sling bag offers convenience for outings where carrying a larger handbag would be unnecessary. Check the dimensions and compartments to confirm whether it fits your phone, wallet and other essentials.
- How to style it: Pair it with a printed kurta, a casual festive suit or a fusion outfit. Keep the colour palette coordinated for a more intentional look.

Which is preferable for weddings and other festive events, silk or georgette sarees



The selection of a saree for a wedding or festive occasion encompasses considerably more than the mere selection of a colour or embroidery design, extending deep into the realm of textile science and heritage craftsmanship. The material composition significantly affects the manner in which the saree falls, determining whether it drapes with a crisp, structured stiffness or clings in fluid, cascading waves around the body. Furthermore, it dictates the level of comfort experienced throughout an extended duration of celebrations that often span many hours, the degree of formality conveyed by the ensemble within culturally significant settings, and the rigorous maintenance requirements necessary for the long-term preservation of delicate fibers and intricate metallic zari work. Silk and georgette represent two widely favoured alternatives in the vast landscape of traditional and contemporary ethnic wear; however, each addresses distinct styling requirements and functional demands. Traditional silk sarees,

such as Kanjivarams, Banarasis, and Patolas, are celebrated for their natural sheen, substantial weight, and regal opulence, making them the quintessential choice for bridal trousseaus and high-solemnity rituals where a majestic presence is paramount. Conversely, lightweight fabrics like georgette offer a modern, ethereal alternative characterized by a pebbled texture, remarkable breathability, and effortless drape, allowing wearers to navigate crowded venues and participate in dynamic festivities with unmatched agility and grace. While silk demands meticulous care—often requiring professional dry cleaning and careful climate-controlled storage to prevent fiber degradation and tarnishing of gold threads—georgette provides a more resilient, low-maintenance experience that effortlessly transitions from afternoon pre-wedding ceremonies to high-energy evening receptions. Ultimately, balancing these distinct attributes enables individuals to curate an ensemble that harmonizes aesthetic grandeur with practical wear-

ability, ensuring both visual distinction and physical ease during life's most cherished milestones.

Silk sarees are deeply embedded in the cultural tapestry of traditional celebrations, revered for their opulent textures, heavy handloom weaves, intricate zari craftsmanship, and a majestic appearance that instantly commands attention during momentous occasions like weddings and grand festivals. This regal elegance stems from the natural protein fibers of silk, which absorb rich dyes brilliantly and provide a structured, dignified drape that honors centuries of textile heritage. On the other hand, georgette sarees offer a contemporary counterpoint defined by their featherlight feel, fluid drape, and remarkable versatility. Crafted from highly twisted yarns, georgette creates a distinctive pebbled texture that allows the fabric to cascade softly around the body, making it a beloved choice for modern wardrobes. Whether transitioning effortlessly from a sunlit daytime ritual to a high-energy evening reception, georgette strikes a harmonious balance between comfort and sophistication, ensuring the wearer can move with ease while still exuding effortless grace. Neither fabric is automatically better than the other. The right choice depends on the occasion, the saree's construction, the weather, your personal style and how long you expect to wear it. So, if you are deciding between a silk saree and a georgette saree for your next wedding invitation or festive event, here is what you should consider before making a purchase. Silk vs georgette sarees: Understanding the difference

Silk is a natural protein fibre traditionally valued for its lustre, drape and association with Indian textile craftsmanship. Depending on the weave, silk sarees can range from lightweight and fluid to structured and substantial. Kanjivaram, Banarasi and Mysore silk sa-

rees, for example, offer different weaving traditions, appearances and styling possibilities. Georgette is a lightweight fabric characterised by a slightly crinkled surface and a fluid drape. It is commonly made from silk or synthetic fibres such as polyester. This distinction matters because a silk georgette saree and a polyester georgette saree may differ in feel, care requirements, price and finish. In practical terms, silk often appeals to those seeking a traditional, rich-looking occasion saree, while georgette offers flexibility for people who prefer softer movement and a less structured silhouette. However, the actual weight and comfort of either saree depend on the fabric composition, weave, embellishments and lining.

1. Appearance: Which saree looks more festive?
Silk sarees are a natural choice for people who enjoy traditional Indian occasionwear. Their appearance can range from a subtle sheen to a more pronounced lustre, depending on the type of silk and weave. Designs featuring zari borders, brocade patterns, woven motifs or intricate craftsmanship can make them particularly suitable for weddings and formal family celebrations. A silk saree can also be styled with a traditional blouse, temple jewellery, gold-toned accessories or a structured hairstyle for a classic occasionwear look. Georgette sarees offer a different aesthetic. Their fluid fall can create a softer silhouette, while printed patterns, sequins, embroidery, ruffles and embellished borders allow them to work across traditional and contemporary styles. A georgette saree with delicate embroidery may suit a daytime function, while a heavily embellished version can work for a cocktail evening or reception.

Which should you choose? Consider silk if you want a traditional, statement-making look, particularly for a ceremony or a formal family occasion.

Choose georgette if you prefer fluid movement or a contemporary style. Remember that embellishment, colour and construction can be just as influential as the fabric itself.

2. Comfort and weight: Which is easier to wear for hours?
Comfort is an important consideration when dressing for weddings, where ceremonies, photographs, meals and celebrations can stretch across several hours. Silk sarees vary considerably in weight. A lightweight silk saree may be comfortable for extended wear, while a heavier weave or a saree with substantial zari work and embellishments can feel more demanding. The blouse, petticoat, pleating and draping technique also affect how comfortably the saree sits. Georgette is often chosen for its fluid drape, and many georgette sarees are relatively lightweight. This can make them appealing for events involving plenty of movement, dancing or travel between venues. However, a heavily embellished georgette saree may still feel heavy, and some versions may require careful pinning to keep the pleats in place. If you are attending a wedding in warm weather, consider the complete outfit rather than the fabric name alone. Check the saree's weight, lining, embellishments and blouse material. A breathable blouse and a comfortable drape can make a noticeable difference.

Which should you choose? A lighter georgette saree may be practical for a long reception or a celebration involving dancing. A lighter silk saree can also work well for extended wear. Try the complete outfit before the event if possible, particularly if you are unfamiliar with the fabric.

3. Weddings and festive occasions: When does each fabric work best?
The type of event can help narrow down your options. For a traditional wedding ceremony, a silk saree can be a fitting choice, especially when the

dress code calls for ethnic occasionwear. Rich woven patterns, zari details and traditional jewellery can create a cohesive look for the ceremony or a formal family gathering. For a wedding reception, cocktail event or evening celebration, both fabrics can work. A silk saree offers a classic formal appearance, while a georgette saree with considered embellishments can create a contemporary evening look. For festivals such as Diwali, silk sarees with woven borders or traditional motifs can complement the celebratory mood. Georgette sarees in jewel tones, festive prints or embroidered designs can be equally suitable, particularly if you want an outfit that feels lighter or less traditional. For daytime functions, the decision may come down to colour, embellishment and comfort. A lighter silk saree can look elegant at a family puja, while a printed georgette saree can be an option for a daytime mehendi or a festive lunch. The important point is that there is no universal rule that silk is reserved for weddings or georgette is meant only for parties. Both can be appropriate across occasions when their design and styling match the event.

4. Styling: How to accessorise silk and georgette sarees
Silk sarees can require careful handling, depending on their weave, dye and embellishments. Some may need professional dry cleaning, and they should be stored in a clean, dry place away from direct sunlight and moisture. Follow the care label and the seller's guidance rather than assuming every silk saree needs the same treatment. Georgette care depends largely on its fibre composition and construction. Polyester georgette may be easier to maintain than some delicate silk-based versions, but embellished sarees can still require specialised care. Delicate fabrics may snag, and aggressive washing or ironing can damage the surface or embellishments.

ENTERTAINMENT

James Gunn talks clayface, mike Flanagan, and DC's distinct identities

Agency : DC Studios is taking a horror-driven approach with Clayface, its upcoming film centred on one of Batman's most recognisable villains. Directed by James Watkins and written by Mike Flanagan and Hossein Amini, the film stars Tom Rhys Harries as Matt Hagen, a Hollywood actor whose life takes a dark turn. For DC Studios co-chief James Gunn, the film is another example of the studio's

approach to telling stories across genres rather than following a single formula. "All of our projects so far have been very different. Our animated series Creature Commandos is very different from Superman, Supergirl, Lanterns or Peacemaker. It is really just continuing our tradition of creating something that maybe isn't what people were expecting but I do believe is what people want. Which is, a true hor-



ror film like the films that I grew up loving, John Car-

penter, David Cronenberg but within the DCU. Not a

fake horror movie (laughs), but an actual horror movie."

Gunn says the project also reflects the studio's emphasis on finding strong screenplays rather than starting with a predetermined list of characters it wants to bring to the screen. "It also follows up on another thing that is important to DC Studios, which is, we always make our movies based on the script. When we took over, we expected that we were

going to make a Superman movie, a Batman movie. We didn't say, 'Hey, one of the things we need to do is a Clayface movie.' What happened was Mike Flanagan came to us and said he had an idea for a Clayface movie. He pitched us the story, and it was impressive. He had been thinking about it for years. And we decided that it was worth the risk to have a screenplay written and that screenplay turned

out to be even better than the pitch. We have this thing that just dropped into our lap, this wonderful horror movie about a character in DC who is loved by the fans but not necessarily well known to people outside of those fans. And that gave us an opportunity to do something really different within the DC brand. At the end of the day, if a screenplay is great, we're going to find a way to make that movie."

Choreographer Terence Lewis discusses his film debut in 'Aaj Ka Mahishasur'



Mumbai : Choreographer Terence Lewis has opened up about his acting debut with "Aaj Ka Mahishasur." In an exclusive quote shared with IANS, he revealed that the film's thought-provoking storyline and its reflection of the harsh realities of contemporary society drew him to the project. Terence said the film goes beyond the traditional understanding of Mahishasur to explore the evils that exist around us as well as those within ourselves that often go unnoticed.

Speaking about the film, Lewis added, "Making my film debut with Aaj Ka Mahishasur is a very special experience for me. What drew me to this film is its intriguing and thought-provoking story. It goes beyond what we traditionally associate with Mahishasur and explores the harsh realities of the society we live in today. There are evils around us, but there are also those within us that we often choose to ignore. Being part of a story that has something meaningful to

say makes this debut even more special for me." The makers of "Aaj Ka Mahishasur" released the film's first look and devotional song 'Jagdambe Rani' during Navratri. The film's team also visited Mumbai's Mumba Devi Temple to present the poster and seek blessings on the occasion.

Produced by Gaurang Bhaskar and directed by Dhiraj Kumarr, "Aaj Ka Mahishasur" features an ensemble cast comprising Terence Lewis, Padmini Kolhapure, Chandan Roy, best known for his role in the acclaimed series Panchayat, and Ayesha Aiman. The song is composed by Amol - Abhishek, lyrics written by Abhishek Talented and sung by Dev Negi, Divya Kumar. "Aaj Ka Mahishasur" draws upon this powerful symbolism to encourage audiences to confront the evils that exist around them.

Dasara box office: 'Jailer 2' vs. 'Ranabaali' sets up mega festive clash



Mumbai : It is a healthy market with two big bets lined up for Dasara. Jailer 2 opens in Telugu-dubbed form on October 15, followed by Ranabaali on October 16. Both arrive at a time when the Telugu box office is enjoying a strong run. The market has been buoyant since June, with films such as Irumudi and Maa Inti Bangaram emerging as blockbusters.

The original Jailer was a hit in Telugu in 2023, and its sequel arrives with the advantage of an established franchise and Rajinikanth's enduring star power. Nelson Dilipkumar returns as director, with Anirudh Ravichander back on music. The trailer shows Muthuvel Pandian in a quieter phase of life before events from his past draw him back into violence. SJ Suryah plays the new antagonist, while Vidya Balan and Mithun Chakraborty join the cast. Ramya Krishnan, Yogi Babu and Mohanlal return to the franchise.

The combination of Rajinikanth's screen presence, Nelson's distinctive dark humour and the familiarity of the original should give Jailer 2 a strong opening draw. The film is likely to attract Rajinikanth loyalists, mass-market audiences and viewers keen to revisit the world of Muthuvel Pandian. Set in 19th-century Rayalaseema, Ranabaali follows a warrior, played by Vijay Deverakonda, who rises against British colonial

oppression. Rashmika Mandanna co-stars in the period drama, which is believed to be the most expensive project of Deverakonda's career, given the scale of its period recreation.

The stakes are high, with the film combining historical themes, regional identity and large-scale spectacle. Its portrayal of the devastating impact of famine adds an emotional dimension to the narrative, potentially drawing

audiences who seek more than conventional action and entertainment. While Jailer 2 offers franchise familiarity, swagger and dark humour, Ranabaali promises a more emotionally charged experience rooted in history and regional storytelling. The contrast could work in both films' favour, allowing them to appeal to different audience preferences even as they compete for attention during the same festive window.

If both films generate positive word of mouth, the Telugu box office could enjoy a particularly rewarding Dasara. The festival period may offer room for two successes, although sustained audience interest and the films' reception will ultimately determine their commercial fortunes. Besides these two big releases, Garividi Lakshmi, a dramatised biopic, and Crazy Kalyanam are also scheduled to release in Telugu.

Saiyami Kher on working with Amitabh Bachchan and her upcoming lineup

Mumbai : Saiyami Kher completes 10 years in the film industry this year, having made her debut with Mirzya in 2016. Since then, she has charted her own course, embracing unconventional choices and carving out a distinctive place for herself in the industry.

Beyond acting, Saiyami has also made a mark in endurance sports, becoming the first Indian female actor to compete in the gruelling Ironman 70.3 triathlon and complete it three times. In this conversation, she reflects on her decade-long journey, her aspirations, upcoming projects and the discipline that drives her athletic pursuits. Here are excerpts from the chat. In the film industry, however hard you work, the result is not really in your hands. On a film set, too, the quest is always to be better than you were in your last film. The whole journey is about constantly try-



ing to improve. While people only remember Mirzya for not working at the box office, for me, it has been one of the best experiences of my life, and I feel that is success. Look at my equation with Rakeysh sir and Gulzar Sahab. Ten years later, I can say that Gulzar Sahab and I have found friendship. So, for me, all of this is a success. Back when I was modelling, you

were supposed to have a certain figure, straight hair and big lips. There was a certain conformity that everyone expected. I feel that, because of the way I was brought up, I was secure in who I was. Even today, when I see a young woman aged 18 to 20 entering the industry, I feel the same kind of advice is being given by managers and agents. There has been a shift, howev-

er, although it has been small and gradual. One would be Mr Amitabh Bachchan. Another would be Waheeda Rehman, for being so true to herself and continuing to be that person even today, at 86. I have been a massive fan of Waheeda ji, and I draw immense inspiration from her. The third is Gulzar Sahab, who isn't an actor, but, as I said, I have developed a friendship with him over the last 10 years. I feel he is one of the most incredible human beings. I would like to step out of my comfort zone and do a rom-com or a comedy.

There is an endless list of directors I'd like to work with because they are all so incredible. The big names, of course, including Imtiaz Ali and Sanjay Leela Bhansali, are on pretty much everyone's list, but I have also really liked the work of many newer filmmakers.

Bigg Boss 20 drama: Kamya Punjabi blasts love Gill's gameplay

Mumbai : Television actress Kamya Punjabi has called out Bigg Boss 20 contestant Love Gill, saying she needs a serious reality check amid her equation with fellow contestant ScoutOP.

The actress took to X (formerly Twitter) to share her views on the ongoing dynamics inside the reality show, further questioning Love's loyalty and the way she has been navigating her friendships in the house. In one of her tweets, Kamya wrote, "Love Gill needs a serious reality check and she needs it NOW. Sabke ke samne 'best friend' n 'Behen' wali baatein n peeth piche distance kaise banayein ka plan? Yeh loyal banne ke chakkar mein she is literally looking like a fool on national TV. Wake up girl #BiggBoss20".

Talking about Kamya Punjabi herself, is no stranger to the Bigg Boss house. The tele-



vision actress had participated in Season 7 of Bigg Boss in 2013, where she competed alongside contestants including Gauhar Khan, Tanisha Mukerji, Kushal Tandon, VJ Andy, Armaan Kohli, Pratyusha Banerjee, Ajaz Khan and Sangram Singh.

Talking about the controversy surrounding Love Gill and ScoutOP, it intensified after a clip showing their closeness circulated on social media. Kamya had earlier questioned the shift from their previously described brother-sister equation, asking whether their

behaviour was harmless fun or crossing boundaries. The discussion grew after ScoutOP reportedly admitted to fellow contestant Yung DSA that he had developed feelings for Love and felt possessive when he saw her interacting with Gullu. Scout, however, described his feelings as sibling-like. His real-life girlfriend, Kaashvi Hiranandani, also addressed the speculation, saying she wanted him to succeed and that she would not change her feelings because of a few clips or how situations appeared on screen.

Roshan Mathew and Jeo Baby announce new Malayalam film 'Human'

Kochi : Roshan Mathew is set to lead Human, the upcoming film written and directed by Jeo Baby. The filmmaker, who earned widespread recognition for exploring complex social realities through films such as The Great Indian Kitchen and Kaathal - The Core, is now venturing into a new project that appears to carry a crime-driven premise. The film was officially launched in Kochi on Sunday, with the makers unveiling its title poster in the presence of the cast and crew.

While the team has kept the film's narrative under wraps, the first-look material offers a few intriguing visual clues. Featuring a handgun, SIM cards and a colourful mask against a dark wooden background, the poster hints at a story involving crime and potentially concealed identities.



However, the makers have yet to reveal further details about the plot, the supporting cast or the film's specific genre. Human is currently slated for a 2027 release. Human marks another addition to Roshan Mathew's growing slate of projects across Malayalam cinema. The actor, known for his ability to move between unconventional dramas and mainstream narratives, was last seen in M Padmakumar's crime drama Uyir.

He is also part of Ekadeshm, the upcoming film from acclaimed filmmaker Don Palathara, whose work has frequently explored the complexities of human behaviour and interpersonal relationships.

For Jeo Baby, Human follows a filmography shaped by his interest in social structures, intimate relationships and uncomfortable questions. The Great Indian

Kitchen, starring Nimisha Sajayan and Suraj Venjaramoodu, examined the gendered division of domestic labour and the everyday experiences of women within patriarchal households. The film received considerable acclaim for its treatment of the subject and established Jeo as one of Malayalam cinema's prominent contemporary voices.

He subsequently directed Kaathal - The Core, headlined by Mammootty and Jyothika. The drama explored sexuality, marriage and social expectations through the story of a long-married couple confronting deeply personal truths. The film further demonstrated the director's willingness to tackle subjects that are often approached cautiously in mainstream Indian cinema.

Salman Khan reveals his dream of having kids on 'Koffee With Karan 9'

Mumbai : Salman Khan is all set to grace the first episode of Karan Johar's popular celebrity chat show 'Koffee With Karan season 9', and fans can't keep calm! While the episode will drop on October 14, the promos have given fans a glimpse of what they can expect from the episode. From questions about marriage to his much-discussed bachelor status, the superstar has faced plenty of curiosity over the years. Now on Koffee With Karan season 9, a conversation with host Karan Johar brings another personal topic into the spotlight.

During the season premiere, Karan Johar asked Salman whether he ever misses having children of his own, considering the actor's fondness for spending time with his nieces and nephews. According to Variety India, Salman answered in the affirmative, acknowledging that becoming a father is something he would like to experience someday. The 60-year-old superstar, has frequently found himself at the centre of speculation about his relationships and personal life. This time, however, the discussion moved beyond his romantic history to the possibility of having a family of his own.



The conversation with Salman also explored the role family plays in providing emotional support, comfort and a sense of belonging. Meanwhile, the latest promo unveiled today shows Karan Johar bringing back one of the most talked-about moments from Salman's past appearance on the chat show. In the new promo for the ninth and final season of Koffee With Karan, Karan asks Salman the same question that made headlines in 2013: "You still a virgin?" Salman says, "Control, yaar, brother. Control." He then asks Karan, "Ye aisa toh nahi hai na ki last season bol bol ke you got all of us to do Koffee

With Karan?" Salman's original virginity comment came during the opening episode of Season 4 in December 2013. At the time, Karan asked him about his relationships and whether he wanted to save himself for the woman he would eventually marry. Salman replied that he wanted to save himself for his future wife. When Karan asked directly if he was a virgin, Salman said yes and added that he had had friends, but no benefits. He also said he preferred sleeping alone. The exchange made headlines and became one of the show's most remembered moments.

Anupam Kher voices Jatayu in Ramayana



Mumbai : Anupam Kher has joined the cast of Ranbir Kapoor's Ramayana as the voice of Jatayu, the revered bird who attempts to rescue Sita from Ravana. The makers have unveiled a new poster featuring the character, with the announcement coming ahead of the film's advance bookings, which open on Dussehra, October 20.

Jatayu plays an important role in the epic, remembered for confronting Ravana when he abducts Sita. Despite facing a much more powerful opponent, the bird fights to protect her, making him a symbol of courage and dharma. The makers introduced Jatayu through two visuals. One features a close-up of the bird's intense gaze, while another shows him with his wings spread wide. Sharing the poster on social media, the makers wrote, "When evil took flight, courage rose to meet it. He fought not for victory, but for what was right. Jatayu. The Wings of Dharma. Anupam Kher as Jatayu in Ramayana." Anupam Kher's casting adds a big name to the ensemble of the upcoming epic, which features several leading actors in key roles. The film stars Ranbir Kapoor as Lord Rama, Sai Pallavi as Sita, Rocking Star Yash as Ravana, Sunny Deol as Hanuman and Ravi Dubey as Lakshman.

The makers recently confirmed that Ramayana Part 1 will arrive in cinemas worldwide on November 5, 2026. The film will release in India on the same day as its international debut. The announcement also confirmed that advance bookings will open on Dussehra, October 20. The makers shared the release date during Navratri, linking the announcement to the festival's association with the victory of good over evil. The caption accompanying the announcement read, "On the auspicious occasion of Navratri, we celebrate the beginning of a new era. Yeh Ram ke Yug ka Aarambh hai. Namit Malhotra's Ramayana Part 1: In cinemas WORLDWIDE, across all premium formats, from 5th November. Advance bookings open on Dussehra."

Manchester City and PSG Face Off on State-Backed Projects at Different Times



Manchester: With the financial support of Gulf state owners, Manchester City and Paris Saint-Germain have transformed football, but ahead of their most recent Champions League match on Wednesday, there is a sharp disparity in the condition of those initiatives. After being found guilty of violating Premier League financial regulations in a shocking ruling that might jeopardize their spot in the English top division, City will play in the Champions League for the first time. In an attempt to emulate City's period of consistent success, PSG won many Champions League trophies and dominated French football, solidifying their position as Europe's top dogs.

Abu Dhabi-backed City won the race against Qatar-owned PSG to become European champions first in 2023. The triumph over Inter Milan in Istanbul that completed a treble of Champions League, Premier League and FA Cup was the pinnacle of City's rise since a 2008 takeover fronted by Sheikh Mansour, the vice-president and deputy prime minister of the United Arab Emirates. But a cloud now hangs over City's haul of silverware from the past 15 years unless they can overturn the findings of an independent commission on appeal. City were found to have used "sham" commercial deals with Emirati companies to inflate revenue and reduce costs to the tune of

over £900 million (\$1.2 billion) between 2009 and 2018. No sanction has yet been meted out, but a severe points deduction or even expulsion from the Premier League are among the potential punishments. The Premier League season has been thrust into turmoil while clubs await the appeal verdict, with City sitting top of the table after six successive wins, including a 3-0 rout of Liverpool on Sunday.

Winning the Champions League could be City's only way back into the competition next season. To do so they will need to stop PSG's quest to join a very select club of sides to win the Champions League or European Cup in three consecutive seasons. Further UEFA action against City is unlikely as the club successfully fended off European football's governing body when they attempted to act on the same leak of documents in 2018 that led to the Premier League's case. In 2020, City were found guilty of breaking UEFA's Financial Fair Play rules, fined 30 million euros (\$34 million) and banned from playing in European competitions for two years. But City

successfully overturned the ban at the Court of Arbitration for Sport, which ruled that most of the alleged breaches "were either not established or time barred". In the early days of FFP rules, both City and PSG entered into settlement agreements with UEFA in 2014. But the French champions have managed to steer clear of such issues since, with president Nasser Al-Khelaifi becoming an influential figure, both as a member of the UEFA Executive Committee and chairman of the European Football Clubs (EFC) organisation. At a meeting of the EFC in Copenhagen last month, Al-Khelaifi showed support for embattled City CEO Ferran Soriano. "His career is fantastic and Manchester City did a lot of positive things also, but I am not in a position to judge," Al-Khelaifi added. It is not the final verdict, in my opinion, because they have the opportunity to appeal. However, another victory for PSG on the pitch would give Qatar the upper hand in the soft power struggle with regional rivals the UAE, perhaps eliminating City as a Champions League foe for years to come.

PM Modi's New Phrase at the Important Delhi Conclave: "Power To Empower"



New Delhi, Oct 13 In his "power to empower" speech on Tuesday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi emphasized that the true question was not who had power but rather how it was being used for the sake of the people. Speaking at the Bloomberg New Economy Forum, Prime Minister Modi emphasized the need to harness technology, data, knowledge, and innovation to provide opportunity for millions of people. The Prime Minister emphasized the need to make sure that a larger segment of society benefits from technology advancement and stated that the emphasis should be on how power may be used to empower people rather than stay concentrated within a select few. "How this power is being used is the appropriate question. Will a select few benefit from technology, or will it open doors for millions of people? "Will knowledge empower everyone, or will it continue to be the strength of a select few?" he asked. Ac-

cording to PM Modi, the strategy called for a change in perspective, emphasizing collaboration over rivalry, empowerment over control, and supporting the achievement of others over one's own. "Power to empower is the root of a new way of thinking. Power to enable comes before power to control, and power to collaborate comes before power to compete. "Power to help others succeed comes before power to succeed," he stated. The Prime Minister went on to say that the concept of leveraging money, power, and expertise for a greater good was not new in India and that the real worth of power was found in how it was applied. "In India, this is nothing new. We have always emphasized how important it is to use power, money, and expertise. PM Modi stated that the true worth of power is found in its intended use. "Whoever possesses knowledge, wealth, and power, how they use it is crucial. The true value of power lies in its purpose, and

it's crucial to understand this philosophy in today's times... Our thousands of years of tradition have taught us this, and in India, we have demonstrated its application in our governance and work culture," he added. The Prime Minister said India was also sharing its experience with Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) with other countries to help them develop digital systems suited to their needs. "We are sharing our experience with Digital Public Infrastructure with other countries so that they can develop their digital systems according to their needs," PM Modi said. Referring to India's digital initiatives during the COVID-19 pandemic, PM Modi said the country had developed the CoWIN platform as an open-source system. He said India's capabilities should help create opportunities for other countries as well. "During COVID-19, we also created the CoWIN platform, which was open source. Our continuous efforts are aimed at ensuring that India's capabilities open new doors of possibility for other countries as well. In other words, our capabilities should empower humanity," he said. PM Modi emphasized the broader importance of innovation, saying that while turning ideas into products and issues into solutions was a crucial skill, its influence grew as more people got access to these chances. Friends, this is also how the power of invention works. Converting a concept into a product and a problem into a solution is a powerful skill in and of itself. However, the balance of power is preserved and its influence multiplies as more and more members of society are given this chance," the prime minister stated.

Coventry defeats Newcastle to escape the relegation zone

Coventry: Coventry's elegant 4-1 victory over Newcastle on Monday lifted them out of the relegation zone and won them a piece of Premier League history. After losing their first four games without scoring, Frank Lampard's team became the first in 127 years to win back-to-back English top-flight games. Coventry scored their first Premier League goal at the CBS Arena, which became their home in 2005, thanks to a penalty kick from Jack Rudoni early in the first half. After halftime, Guinean forward Sidiki Cherif extended the Sky Blues' advantage. Sven Botman got one back for Newcastle, but Ellis Simms and Stephen Mfuni struck late to ensure Coventry jumped from 19th to 14th place. Lampard's men had taken their first points of the season by beating Nottingham Forest 1-0 before the international break. And Coventry's first win over Newcastle since 1999 bolstered their bid to avoid relegation in their first season in the Premier League since 2001. They will look to make it three consecutive wins when they travel to troubled Tottenham on October 19. "Today we showed a big energy and showed our abilities. Some quality goals went in," Lampard said after Coventry's first top-flight home win for 25 years.

"You have to ride a bit of luck, but we did it. If we don't have that spirit, we haven't got a chance. We need everybody. "We have to keep our feet on the ground because it's so hard in this league. If you think you have cracked it you haven't." A win would have taken Newcastle into fourth place, but instead they were beaten for the second time in six league games this season. Matthias Jaissle's team were punished for squandering a host of chances in the first half. Newcastle goalkeeper Lukas Hornicek handed Coventry a needless penalty in the sixth minute when he fumbled the ball and tripped Cherif in a despairing bid to clear the danger.

An Odisha man goes on a car rampage while out on bail in a fatal crash case, injuring three others

Bhubaneswar, Oct 13: After reportedly crashing his automobile into many persons and cars in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, a man who was previously out on bail in relation to a tragic traffic accident has been detained once more. Soumya Ranjan Rath has been charged with attempted murder by police, who claim that he intentionally attacked individuals with his car during a number of instances on Monday. Additionally, the Regional Transport Office (RTO) has started the process of canceling both his driver's license and the vehicle's registration. The tragedy happened on the Cuttack-Puri Bypass in Bhubaneswar early on Monday. Police said that at about 8:30 in the morning, Rath's vehicle struck a person on the side of the road before driving off. A two-wheeler pair pulled over to aid the injured person and set up medical care. Police allege that Rath then returned from the opposite direction and deliberately rammed his car into the couple's motorcycle with the intention of killing them. During the incident, the car allegedly hit seven motorcycles, leaving three people injured. Bhubaneswar Zone-4 ACP Abhimanyu Nayak said Rath had allegedly targeted people more than once before



being stopped. According to the ACP, Rath had earlier driven his vehicle into a roadside hotel owner and staff members following a dispute at the establishment. Police suspect he was under the influence of alcohol at the time. As Rath allegedly attempted to turn his car around again, the vehicle's electric motor stalled, giving bystanders an opportunity to detain him. An angry crowd surrounded the accused before police intervened and rescued him. Police have registered a case against Rath under relevant Sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). The charges include provisions relating to attempted murder, rash driving, endangering life and causing damage. ACP Nayak said four criminal cases are registered against Rath at the police station. Investigators are examining CCTV footage, eyewitness

accounts and other evidence to establish the sequence of events and verify the allegations. Transport officials visited the police station to collect details of the case. Officials said proceedings would be started to cancel Rath's driving licence as well as the registration of the car allegedly involved in the incident. The move comes amid allegations that the vehicle was deliberately used to target people. An prior accident involving Rath has also come under increased attention as a result of the recent case. Rath is accused of running a guy over with his fancy automobile in Bhubaneswar in July. The tragedy claimed the victim's life. In one instance, Rath was taken into custody before being freed on bond in August. While the RTO is taking independent action against the offenders, police stated the probe is ongoing.

Defense Minister Rajnath Singh congratulates military athletes who won medals at the Asian Games

Aichi-Nagoya: The athletes from the armed services who won 27 medals, including six gold, in the recent Asian Games in Japan were congratulated by Defense Minister Rajnath Singh on Monday. In his conversation with them, he also emphasized the Mission Olympic Wing's importance in spotting gifted athletes and providing them with sporting facilities and scientific training. He called for improved performance in the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics and emphasized a methodical and concentrated approach. Ninety-two competitors from the three services participated in 19 different sports and took home 27 medals, including six gold, eleven silver, and ten bronze. Six gold,



eight silver, and six bronze medals were won by Army competitors alone, making up about 24% of India's total. According to an official release, Chief of the Army Staff Gen. Dhiraj Seth, who was present on the occasion, also congratulated them. The whole Indian team took home 85 medals, including

21 gold, 27 silver, and 37 bronze. A particularly encouraging feature has been the growing contribution of women athletes. Four Army women boxers secured four gold medals at the Commonwealth Games, while women athletes contributed two gold and one silver medal at the Asian Games, the Army

said in a statement. Singh said the journey to winning a medal involves immense dedication, early-morning training, gymnasium sessions, injuries, recovery and consistent efforts while balancing unit duties with sports preparations and staying away from families. Singh also acknowledged the contribution of coaches, support staff, physiotherapists, nutritionists and the families of athletes, emphasising that "a champion is never made in isolation". He reiterated the government's commitment to strengthening India's sporting ecosystem, and underlined that the objective is not merely to increase participation, but to establish India as a "leading power" in the global sporting arena.

Shreyas Iyer and Gautam Gambhir Get Vaibhav Sooryavanshi's Urgent Plea

Lucknow: Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, a teenage batting star, has received backing from former India assistant coach Abhishek Nayar, who has suggested that the 15-year-old be selected in India's playing XI for the fifth Twenty20 International against the West Indies. With needing one more victory to secure the five-match series, India, under the leadership of Shreyas Iyer, presently leads 2-1. They were shocked by a six-wicket loss in the high-scoring second Twenty20 International, but they bounced back with a 14-run triumph in the third game after starting the series with a dominant

eight-wicket victory. Looking ahead to the fourth T20I, Nayar said India should focus on wrapping up the series as early as possible. Doing so would give the team management the freedom to hand Sooryavanshi an opportunity in the final match. The young opener has yet to feature in the series, with India continuing to back Abhishek Sharma and Sanju Samson at the top of the order. "I would want India to go 3-1 up, and for the last game, Sooryavanshi plays. So keep it simple: Go 3-1 up, wrap the series up, and let Sooryavanshi play the last one," said Nayar on Star Sports.

Tilak, an Indian star, was criticized for "taking a walk on the beach" during the third Twenty20 International against the West Indies



New Delhi: Tilak Varma was dismissed during Sunday's third Twenty20 International between India and the West Indies in Indore due to a lack of game understanding. Gudakesh Motie's delivery was flicked into square leg by Axar Patel on the fourth ball of the 17th over. Despite making a dive, Kamil Pooran was able to maintain the ball in play. The West Indies seized the chance

because both Indian hitters thought the ball had reached the boundary rope. The balls were easily snipped off at both ends. Tilak was unaware of what was going on, but Axar reached the striker's end in time. He remained out of the frame when bowler Motie clipped off the balls at the non-striker's end. After the decision was referred upstairs, the TV umpire concluded that Tilak was out.

Speaking on the incident, former India opener Sadagopan Ramesh slammed Tilak. "When the umpires themselves are referring it upstairs because of how far they are from the boundary, how did Tilak Varma and Axar Patel, who are at the same distance, decide it's a boundary? At least Axar Patel eventually became aware. Tilak Varma looked like he was taking a walk on the beach. He had no clue about what was happening around him," he said on his Instagram channel, as quoted by Sportskeeda. "Normally, for any boundary save, the umpires instantly go to the third umpire. The main reason for that is the huge distance between the wicket, where the umpire is, and the boundary.

Because they aren't sure if the fielder made contact, they wait, which means the ball is still in play," he added. India took a 2-1 lead in the five-match series after defeating the West Indies by 14 runs in the encounter. The visitors were limited to 209/7 in 20 overs while chasing a target of 224 runs. Kamil Pooran (42) and Shimron Hetmyer (43) spearheaded the comeback, but India prevailed in a close match. Arshdeep Singh, an Indian left-arm pacer, returned to form with figures of 3/44. Earlier, after being selected to bat, opener Abhishek Sharma quickly hit 69 off 30 balls to help the hosts record a competitive 223 all out. During his knock, the southpaw hit five sixes and six fours.

Due to Saudi tensions, Air India has canceled flights to Riyadh until October 15

New Delhi, Oct 13: Following continuous airstrikes on Saudi Arabia's main airport by the Iran-aligned Houthi rebels in Yemen, Air India on Monday prolonged the suspension of its flights to and from Riyadh till October 15. Other Indian airlines, including IndiGo, Air India Express, and Akasa Air, have also canceled flights to Saudi Arabian locations impacted by the interruption. Due to increased tensions associated with the wider dispute between Iran and the United States, airlines are continuing to alter their schedules as a result of the recent strikes, which have increased disruptions throughout the area. Following the strikes and ensuing security risks, Saudi authorities have temporarily closed Riyadh airport. Besides Air India, several Indian carriers have suspended operations to Saudi Arabia. IndiGo has extended the cancellation of its flights to Riyadh and Damman until October 15. Air India Express has cancelled services to Damman and Jeddah for October 12 and suspended flights to Riyadh until October 15. Akasa Air has also halted flights to Jeddah and Riyadh until October 13. Saudi Arabia said it was facing fresh



incoming drone and missile threats on Monday. The Saudi-led coalition backing government forces in Yemen reported the detection of incoming aerial projectiles, though there was no immediate information on damage from the latest barrage. The Houthis have stepped up attacks on Saudi airports and energy infrastructure over the past week, expanding a conflict that has increasingly spilled across the region. The strikes have led to restrictions on parts of Saudi airspace, disrupted operations at Riyadh airport and significantly reduced air traffic over the capital.

Govt Funds Urgent London Surgery for Long Jumper Murali Sreeshankar



New Delhi: Indian long jumper Murali Sreeshankar is set to undergo ligament reconstruction surgery on his right ankle in London on Tuesday, weeks after sustaining an injury during the men's long jump final at the Asian Games 2026. Union Minister of State Suresh Gopi announced on Monday that the central government would bear the entire cost of the procedure and fund the athlete's treatment and

rehabilitation. The development comes after the 27-year-old had initially indicated that his ankle was not seriously injured and could recover with rest and rehabilitation. The surgery is scheduled for October 13 at the Fortius Clinic in London, under the supervision of sports orthopaedic surgeon Pieter D'Hooghe. In a Facebook post on Monday, Gopi said the government was ensuring that Sreeshankar received the best possible

medical treatment and rehabilitation to help him return to competition and prepare for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics. Sreeshankar injured his right ankle during the men's long jump final at the Asian Games in Nagoya on September 28. Competing on a rain-soaked track, the Indian slipped on the take-off board while preparing for his fourth attempt and twisted his ankle. He winced in pain and was unable to take his final two jumps. However, the injury did not prevent him from securing a silver medal, as his second-round effort of 8.07m proved sufficient to finish second. China's Shi Yuhao won gold with a jump of 8.17m, while Uzbekistan's Anvar Anvarov claimed bronze with an effort of 8.06m. The initial assessment had offered hope that Sreeshankar would recover without surgery. Speaking to PTI after the competition, his father and coach, S Murali, said the injury was not serious and that proper rehabilitation and rest would help his son recover. "It (Sreeshankar's injury) is not a serious one. It will be OK with proper rehabilitation and rest. Moreover, the season is over and there is no competition left," Murali had said.

CSK CEO Remains Optimistic About MS Dhoni Returning After Missing Entire Season

New Delhi: Chennai Super Kings CEO Kasi Viswanathan believes that there is more cricket left in the legendary MS Dhoni. The CSK talisman, now 45 years of age, did not play a single match in the Indian Premier League earlier this year due to multiple injury concerns. However, the team CEO feels that Dhoni will try his best to play one last season for the Chennai-based team. Asked about Dhoni's status in the CSK side ahead of the upcoming IPL auction, Kasi told the local media in Chennai that the decision to play or not to play was one that the franchise left entirely to the former India captain. He added that the process had been the same for some time, with Dhoni informing the team of his decision when he arrives in Chennai. "It's a question you need to ask him. I also have to ask him. He informs



us of his decision when he arrives in Chennai. I have a feeling that the chances of him continuing to play for CSK are there. He is still a player, you know," Kasi Viswanathan said. Dhoni did not feature in a single match in IPL 2026, a season that many had expected to be his farewell campaign. The veteran wicketkeeper-batter remained with the

team for most of the tournament, however, participating in training sessions and offering support from the dugout as CSK struggled through a difficult transition. Amid criticism, former CSK head coach Stephen Fleming had defended Dhoni's non-playing role towards the end of the season, stressing that the former captain remained an

important presence for a team undergoing significant changes. Following CSK's final home game at the MA Chidambaram Stadium, Fleming said Dhoni's experience had been particularly valuable for the younger players in the squad. "MS has been around a lot this year, which has been really important for the team, for a lot of the young players, and for continuity," Fleming said. "So, he's been a big part of it. He hasn't played, but he's still had a big influence on the team." Former CSK batter Suresh Raina has also made it clear that he wants to see Dhoni return for another IPL season. Following Dhoni's participation in CSK's traditional lap of honour at Chepauk, Raina revealed that he had urged his former teammate to return for IPL 2027, insisting that the 2026 campaign should not count as his final season.

Shami Responds to Fitness Critics via a Message to Reporters

Mumbai : Mohammed Shami appears to have had enough of the questions surrounding his fitness and a possible India comeback. The Bengal fast bowler let his performance do the talking on the opening day of the Ranji Trophy 2026-27 season, claiming four wickets in the first innings against Delhi in Kalyani before delivering a pointed message to those ques-

tioning his readiness. "You people can see and write. It's your job, right?" Shami told reporters when asked what he wanted to say to his critics. The 36-year-old returned figures of 4 for 30 from 17.3 overs, including nine maidens, as Bengal bowled Delhi out for 240 on Sunday. Shami dismissed middle-order batters Yash Dhull and Ayush Doseja before removing Hrithik

Shokeen, Delhi's lone half-centurion, and wrapping up the innings by rattling Divij Mehra's stumps. Shami bowled more overs than any of Bengal's other frontline seamers. Akash Deep sent down 17 overs for two wickets, while Mukesh Kumar bowled 17 overs and claimed one. Shami's economy rate of 1.71 was the best among them. "I don't feel any



change. People express their opinions all the time. I have heard people saying

I don't have the rhythm and fitness. I don't care about all this, and I enjoy my

game," he said. Asked how he continued to trouble batters with movement in both directions, Shami offered a reminder of the experience behind his craft. "You should have the smartness to know when to make the ball move in and out. It's inbuilt," he said. The questions around Shami's fitness have followed him through repeated omissions from India's squads. He

last represented the country in the Champions Trophy final in March 2025, after which he was overlooked for several international assignments despite continuing to play domestic cricket. The debate intensified in September and October 2025, when then chief selector Ajit Agarkar cited a lack of clarity over Shami's fitness and match readiness following his ab-

sence from India's squads. Shami pushed back, arguing that his availability for Bengal demonstrated that he was fit to play. In May 2026, Agarkar said there had been no discussion about Shami's return to Test cricket, adding that, according to the information available to the selectors, his body was allowing him to play T20 cricket at that stage.

WPL History-Maker USA Pacer Joins Mumbai Indians for 2027 Edition



New Delhi: USA left-arm pacer Tara Norris will represent Mumbai Indians (MI) in the 2027 Women's Premier League (WPL) after being traded from UP Warriorz, the franchise confirmed. Norris will join the five-time champions at

her existing fee of Rs 10 lakh, marking her return to the tournament after making history in its inaugural edition. Norris became the first bowler to take a five-wicket haul in WPL history when she claimed 4-0-29-5 for Delhi Capitals

against Royal Challengers Bengaluru on March 5, 2023. Her sensational spell helped Delhi Capitals secure a commanding 60-run victory after posting 223/2. The American pacer dismissed Ellyse Perry, Disha Kasat, Richa Ghosh, Kanika Ahuja and Heather Knight to register the tournament's first five-wicket haul. She was named Player of the Match for her outstanding performance. Norris also made history at the inaugural WPL auction by becoming the first player from an Associate nation to be picked by a franchise. Her selection marked a significant moment for players from emerging cricketing nations, opening up opportunities to feature in one of the leading women's T20 leagues. Norris represented Delhi Capitals in the inaugural WPL season in 2023, taking seven wickets in five matches at an economy rate of 8.09. She did not feature

in the franchise's subsequent squads before joining UP Warriorz at the WPL 2026 auction for her base price of Rs 10 lakh. However, she missed the season after being selected for the USA's Women's T20 World Cup Qualifier campaign. Her move to Mumbai Indians gives Norris another opportunity to make an impact in the WPL with a franchise that has won the title five times. Norris has been a key bowling option for the United States in international cricket. She has taken 21 wickets in 17 Women's T20 Internationals, with best figures of 4/33 against Scotland in Kirtipur earlier this year. Her left-arm pace provides variation and allows her to trouble batters with movement and changes of angle. She has also played five Women's ODIs, taking seven wickets at an economy rate of 4.33 since making her debut in 2024.

Aiming for LA Olympics, Abhishek Verma Eyes 2030 Commonwealth Games Next

Kolkata: India's most decorated compound archer Abhishek Verma is determined to fight his way back into the national team after missing the country's historic Olympic qualification at the Asian Games and is targeting not just the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics but also the 2030 Commonwealth Games on home soil. India became the first country to secure an Olympic quota in compound archery at the recently-concluded Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games, where the discipline will make its Olympic debut in the mixed team event. Sahil Jadhav and Chikitha Taniparthi clinched the mixed team gold to secure the berth, while India also won the men's and women's team titles. The 37-year-old, who missed out on selection for what would have been his fourth consecutive Asian Games, admitted that being away from action was disappointing but took solace in the performances of youngsters he has mentored. "Of course, I felt bad about missing the Asian Games," Verma told PTI in an interview from Hyderabad, where he is competing for Prithviraj Yodhas in the Archery Premier League (APL). "But my students and juniors were there, and they performed the way I would have wanted them to. India has established itself as a strong



force in compound archery, and they proved that once again." Olympic Quota places belong to the country and not to the athletes who secure it and a trial closer to the Games determines the final entries. With India's qualification secured, he believes the country can now focus entirely on preparing for Los Angeles, with around 18 months to fine-tune combinations and raise performance further. "The pressure of qualifying is off our backs now. We

can focus fully on the Olympics without that distraction. We have around a year and a half to prepare, and we have to make the most of it," he said. Verma is not ready to give up on his own Olympic ambitions. Having won five medals including two gold across three Asian Games appearances, along with multiple World Cup honours, the 37-year-old remains hungry for more. "It is human nature that the more you achieve, the more you want.

Zverev Becomes First German Men's World No. 1 Since Becker

New Delhi: Alexander Zverev has achieved a historic milestone in men's tennis, becoming the first German to reach the top of the ATP rankings since Boris Becker in 1991. The 29-year-old's rise to the summit has been confirmed following Carlos Alcaraz's third-round elimination at the Shanghai Masters, with Zverev finishing the season as the world's top-ranked player. The achievement marks a significant moment in Zverev's career, which has featured several major titles and years of competing among the sport's elite. He has emerged as one of the leading players on the ATP Tour in 2026, winning the French Open and US Open to establish himself as a formidable force in men's tennis. Zverev's ascent also brings an end to Germany's long wait for a men's world No.1. Becker re-



mains the only German man to have occupied the position, having topped

the rankings twice in 1991 for a combined total of 12 weeks.

BCCI Rejects Venue Change Rumors for India-Sri Lanka First ODI Match

New Delhi : India's opening ODI against Sri Lanka will remain in Delhi on December 13, with BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia on Monday dismissing reports that the match could be shifted to Ahmedabad because of ongoing construction work at the Arun Jaitley Stadium. The clarification puts an end to speculation over a possible venue change ahead of Sri Lanka's limited-overs tour of India. Reports had suggested that Ahmedabad, which is scheduled to host the third and final ODI, could be considered as an alternative venue. However, the BCCI has maintained that no such decision has been



taken, with Delhi continuing to be the designated venue for the series opener. "Reports suggesting that the India-Sri Lanka ODI match scheduled in Delhi may be shifted to Ahmedabad are not accurate. There has been no such decision by the BCCI," Saikia said, as quot-

ed by PTI. "Further, it needs to be reiterated that bilateral matches are primarily allotted by following a standard policy," he added. India and Sri Lanka are scheduled to play three ODIs and three T20 Internationals during the December tour. The ODI series will begin in Delhi on

December 13, before moving to Bengaluru for the second match on December 16. Ahmedabad will host the third ODI on December 19. The three-match T20I series will follow the ODIs, beginning in Rajkot on December 22. The second T20I is scheduled to be played in Cuttack on December 24, while Pune will host the series finale on December 27. India are currently playing a five-match T20I series against the West Indies, with the final match scheduled for October 17 in Bengaluru. They will then tour New Zealand for a multi-format series later this month, featuring five T20Is, three ODIs and two Tests.