

SIFFYW boycotts SUMP talks in Arunachal, listing four preconditions

DEMANDS OUTLINED FOR DIALOGUE

Itanagar, Oct 10: The Siang Indigenous Farmer's Forum Youth Wing (SIFFYW) has declared a complete boycott of all consultations and negotiations regarding the proposed 11,000-MW Siang Upper Multipurpose Project (SUMP), placing four mandatory preconditions before any engagement with the Arunachal Pradesh government can proceed.

The resolution follows growing tensions and recent violent clashes in the Siang valley between local indigenous villagers and security forces during opposition to Pre-Feasibility Report (PFR)



activities. Escalating its stand after preventive detentions under the Arunachal Pradesh Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (APUAPA), the youth organization issued a strict ultimatum prohibiting community leaders, student bodies, clan representatives,

and political figures from negotiating with state authorities.

Immediate Withdrawal of Security Forces: Complete recall of Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) and state police personnel deployed across traditional village

lands. Unconditional drop of all FIRs, criminal charges, and legal proceedings registered against anti-dam activists and local villagers.

SIFFYW warned that any organization breaking the collective boycott while residents remain detained will be held fully liable for any resulting social and financial consequences. Meanwhile, state authorities maintain that Pre-Feasibility Report (PFR) activities aim to conduct necessary technical assessments, while indigenous Adi communities continue to oppose potential land submergence, environmental disruption, and cultural displacement.

Nagaland explores long-term philanthropic partnership for school education

Kohima, Oct 10: The Nagaland government is exploring a comprehensive five-year partnership with domestic and international philanthropic organizations to significantly upgrade learning outcomes in state-run schools and optimize education spending.

Advisor for School Education Kekhrielhoulie Yhome announced that high-level discussions have been ongoing between state officials and a visiting delegation comprising Martin Kasper, President of the Germany-based Childaid Network Foundation, and Nikunj Jhaveri, President of the Rotary Club of the Queen's Necklace, Mumbai. The proposed initiative aims to address persistent learning gaps across Nagaland's public education framework through

systematic, sustainable interventions rather than temporary relief measures.

The strategic roadmap will prioritize crucial academic sectors, including teacher training, digital classroom infrastructure, early childhood care and education, vocational skills development, and project-based learning methodologies. Emphasizing an integrated approach, Yhome noted that the collaboration will enhance existing government institutions rather than establishing parallel administrative structures. Highlighting the urgency for intervention, Kasper pointed out that fewer than 50 percent of students in Nagaland's government schools currently clear the Class 10 board examinations, underlining a critical need to

match physical infrastructure growth with tangible academic performance. The Childaid Network, which invests between 2 million to 3 million euros annually across 1,500 project sites in Northeast India, plans to combine international funding with expertise from specialized educational partners like Mantra for Change, ShikshaLokam, and Elevate.

In addition to pedagogical improvements, Jhaveri stated that the initiative will leverage corporate networks to channel non-governmental resources, expertise, and technological tools into Nagaland's rural classroom network. Organizers envision that long-term educational upliftment will ultimately attract corporate investments to key urban hubs like Kohima and Dimapur.

Priyanka slams Govt over detentions

New Delhi, Oct 10: Senior Congress leader and Member of Parliament Priyanka Gandhi Vadra launched a sharp attack on the Central government, alleging that the detention of peaceful protesters in the national capital demonstrates that the ruling dispensation is "terrified" of democratic dissent and public accountability. Her reaction came after Delhi Police detained several activists, political workers, and student representatives who were attempting to march toward Central Delhi to protest against economic policies, administrative crackdowns, and rising unemployment. Police personnel erected multi-layered barricades and invoked restrictive orders near key government zones to prevent demonstrators from assembling. Taking to social media platform X (formerly Twitter), Priyanka Gandhi stated that peaceful assembly and peaceful protest are fundamental rights guaranteed by the Indian Constitution. She asserted that resorting to mass preventive detentions, police force, and heavy barricading whenever citizens demand answers shows a fundamental insecurity within the government. "Suppressing the voices of youth, farmers, and citizens through administrative force does not erase their grievances; it only highlights a regime terrified of truth and democratic dialogue," Gandhi remarked.

Dimapur Police extends vehicle document deadline to Nov 11

Dimapur, Oct 10: The Dimapur Police Commissionerate has officially extended the deadline for motor vehicle document verification and compliance by an additional 30 days, setting November 11 as the revised cut-off date for all vehicle owners and drivers across the district.

According to an official press release issued by the Deputy Commissioner of Police (Crime) and Public Relations Officer (PRO), the extension applies across all categories of motor vehicles operating within the jurisdiction. The decision follows an earlier notification issued on September 11, which had

granted a initial 30-day window ending October 11 for drivers to inspect, renew, update, or rectify deficiencies in their vehicle paperwork, including Registration Certificates (RC), driving licenses, insurance policies, and pollution clearance certificates.

The 30-day deadline extension follows representation from civil society bodies, including the Naga Council Dimapur (NCD). The council had submitted an appeal to the Commissioner of Police highlighting severe public inconvenience, lengthy queues, and traffic congestion along the road leading to the Regional Transport Office at Purana

Bazaar. The NCD had also pointed out that approaching final examinations for school students required immediate relief from traffic disruptions and procedural delays during peak hours.

In light of the revised timeline, Dimapur Police urged all vehicle owners to actively utilize the additional grace period to complete all necessary verifications and legal updates. Authorities emphasized that strict enforcement drives under the Motor Vehicles Act will commence immediately after the November 11 deadline expires, with non-compliant vehicles subject to penalties, fines, and legal action.

RIWATCH, Kohima Science College partner for research and cultural preservation

Roing, Oct 10: The Research Institute of World's Ancient Traditions, Cultures and Heritage (RIWATCH), based in Arunachal Pradesh, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Kohima Science College (Autonomous), Jotsoma, Nagaland, establishing a collaborative framework to advance interdisciplinary academic research, traditional knowledge documentation, and cultural preservation across Northeast India.

The strategic agreement was formally executed at the RIWATCH campus in Khinjili, Roing. Officials highlighted that the institutional partner-



ship aims to bridge modern scientific methodologies with indigenous knowledge systems. By combining the academic rigor of Kohima Science College with the extensive field research infra-

structure and ethnographic archives of RIWATCH, both institutions seek to foster joint research projects, faculty and student exchange programs, and community-centric documentation initiatives.

Under the framework of the MoU, primary areas of joint exploration will include local biodiversity, ethnobotany, indigenous health systems, climate resilience, and the documentation of endangered oral traditions and intangible cultural heritage across tribal communities in Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland. The initiative will also facilitate specialized field studies, joint workshops, academic seminars, and collaborative publications focusing on regional cultural and ecological sustainability. Partnerships between Northeastern institutions are crucial for regional problem-solving.

Prasad slams Opposition over protests

New Delhi, Oct 10: Senior Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader and former Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad delivered a sharp counterattack against the Opposition on Saturday, asserting that India is not a "banana republic" and emphasizing that the country will be governed by Parliament and constitutional mandates rather than diktats from the streets. Senior Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader and former Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad delivered a sharp counterattack against the Opposition on Saturday, asserting that India is not a "banana republic" and emphasizing that the country will be governed by Parliament and constitutional mandates rather than diktats from the streets.

Referring to recent election results where the BJP-led NDA secured victories in key Assembly bypolls across Assam, West Bengal, and Puducherry, Prasad noted that Indian voters have repeatedly rejected tactics of chronic confrontation. He stated that while peaceful protest remains an integral component of democratic functioning, attempting to hold public life hostage or derail governance through street agitation undermines the dignity of India's democratic framework. "Based on the events of the past few days, two facts stand completely clear. First, Indian democracy has defeated attempts to ferment anarchy. Second, this nation will be governed through Parliament and constitutional processes, not from the streets," Prasad remarked, accusing opposition figures of engaging in competitive political drama to capture headlines.

Adinno Phizo's place in Naga history remains significant: Rio

Kohima, Oct 10: Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio paid rich tributes to Adinno Phizo, President of the Naga National Council (NNC), asserting that her enduring place in Naga political history and the national movement will remain deeply significant for generations to come.

Speaking at a condolence gathering and memorial service in Kohima, Chief Minister Rio highlighted the remarkable legacy of the veteran Naga leader, who passed away recently at her family residence in Peace Hall, Nagakidima. As the daughter of Zapu Phizo—the historic pioneer of the Naga political movement—Adinno Phizo dedicated her entire life to the political self-determination and cultural rights of the Naga people, maintaining an unwavering commitment to her principles.



Reflecting on her decades-long leadership, Rio noted that Adinno Phizo assumed the presidency of the NNC during an exceptionally tumultuous era in regional history. Despite facing severe political pressures, exile, personal sacrifices, and ideological challenges, she remained a steadfast custodian of the historic Naga political mandate. He emphasized that her life represented an unyielding devotion to the dignity, heritage, and collective aspirations of the Naga

community.

The condolence service was attended by prominent leaders spanning political parties, tribal hohos, civil society bodies, women's organizations, and student federations across Nagaland. Speakers recalled her distinct dignity, courage, and lifelong perseverance, describing her as an iconic matriarchal figure who preserved the historical narrative of the Naga national cause without compromising on foundational values.

Extending heartfelt condolences on behalf of the state government and citizens of Nagaland, Chief Minister Rio prayed for eternal peace for the departed leader's soul and strength for the bereaved family members and supporters, concluding that her firm conviction will continue to inspire future generations.

CM Khandu attends release of Arunachal Trilogy by NITI Aayog

Itanagar, Oct 10: Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu attended the formal release of The Arunachal Pradesh Trilogy, a comprehensive three-volume visual documentation project published under the aegis of NITI Aayog at Vanijya Bhawan in New Delhi.

The grand launch event took place in the presence of Arunachal Pradesh Governor Lt. Gen. K. T. Parnaik (Retd.), Vice Chairperson of NITI Aayog Dr. Ashok K. Lahiri, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Rao Inderjit Singh, and State Adviser (Arunachal Pradesh) and Programme Director for Security & Strategic Affairs at NITI Aayog, Maj. Gen. K. Narayanan.



Authored by renowned writer and filmmaker Shiv Kunal Verma, the landmark three-volume series—comprising Arunachal: The Sap Runs Perennial, The Wild Green Earth, and Ladders to the Sun—offers an exhaustive visual and narrative chronicle of the state. The trilogy documents Arunachal Pradesh's diverse topogra-

phy, rich history, cultural heritage, ecological biodiversity, and critical strategic importance as India's eastern frontier.

Speaking at the release, Chief Minister Khandu expressed deep gratitude to NITI Aayog and the author for creating a historical archive that highlights the vibrant living traditions of

Arunachal's 26 major tribes and over 100 sub-tribes. He noted that the publication serves not only as a cultural touchstone and educational resource for future generations but also as a powerful medium to showcase the state's rapid development in infrastructure, tourism, and connectivity while remaining firmly rooted in its ecological values.

Governor Parnaik commended the initiative, emphasizing that the visual documentation effectively bridges the gap between historical heritage and modern progress. Dignitaries expressed confidence that the trilogy will generate global interest, encouraging scholars, tourists, and citizens to explore the Land of the Rising Sun.

Tribal Affairs Ministry distributes 25 lakh Forest Rights titles

SECURING LAND RIGHTS NATION-WIDE

New Delhi, Oct 10: The Ministry of Tribal Affairs has announced that over 25 lakh individual and community titles have been distributed across the country under the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 (FRA), granting formal land tenure to forest-dwelling tribal communities.

According to the latest progress report released by the ministry, state governments have processed and granted a total of 25.42 lakh



titles, covering approximately 1.78 crore acres of forest land. Out of the total approvals, individual forest rights (IFR) titles account for near-

ly 24.3 lakh claims, securing agricultural and residential holdings for forest-dwelling households. Meanwhile, community forest rights

(CFR) titles—which empower Gram Sabhas to manage, protect, and sustainably harvest traditional forest resources—total around 1.12 lakh claims.

Official data highlights that states such as Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Andhra Pradesh lead in processing and distributing titles. Odisha stands at the forefront of implementing community rights, while Maharashtra has registered the largest acreage under community forest resource management.

INDIA bloc leaders in J&K protest under democracy campaign

Srinagar, Oct 10: Key leaders of the INDIA bloc in Jammu and Kashmir staged a coordinated protest rally in Srinagar as part of the nationwide 'Save Democracy Week' campaign, demanding the immediate restoration of full statehood, early conduct of civic body elections, and safeguards for constitutional rights.

The agitation saw senior leaders and party workers from the Jammu & Kashmir National Conference (JKNC), Indian National Congress (INC), People's Democratic Party (PDP), and CPI(M) assemble with placards and banners near the press enclave. Demonstrators raised slogans calling for

democratic decentralization, an end to bureaucratic governance, and protection of local land and employment guarantees. Addressing the gathering, coalition leaders emphasized that delaying grassroots elections and keeping Jammu and Kashmir as a Union Territory undermines democratic representation. They argued that while legislative assembly elections were a welcome step, transferring comprehensive administrative powers back to the elected government remains essential for genuine public governance and accountability. Protesters also voiced strong concerns over economic challenges, including rising youth unem-

ployment, inflation, and administrative delays in major infrastructure projects. They urged the Central government to honor its commitment made on the floor of Parliament regarding the unconditional restoration of statehood without further procedural delays.

Local police and administrative personnel maintained a vigilant presence along the protest route to ensure law and order. Coalition representatives announced that similar peaceful demonstrations, public conventions, and civil society dialogues will continue across district headquarters throughout the week to mobilize public support and highlight key regional demands.

NE/EAST

Two Dead, Two Critically Injured in Separate Assam Road Accidentsc

Dispur, Oct 10: Two separate road accidents on National Highway-27 in Assam's Dima Hasao district on Friday, October 9, claimed the lives of two youths and left two others critically injured, raising concerns over road safety along the busy highway. The accidents occurred at different locations along the national highway, with the first reported at around 11 am at Semdikhoh, under Mahur Police Station.

According to preliminary reports, two girls travelling on a scooter from Maibang towards Haflong reportedly lost control of their vehicle and collided with roadside barriers.

The impact of the collision left the riders injured, although further details about the extent of their injuries and the circumstances leading to the accident were not immediately available.

The incident once again highlighted the risks faced by two-wheeler riders on highway stretches, where losing control of a vehicle can lead to serious consequences. The second accident occurred



separately on National Highway-27 in Dima Hasao district.

Together, the two incidents resulted in two fatalities and left two other people critically injured. Details regarding the exact location, vehicles involved and sequence of events in the second accident were not immediately available.

The deaths and serious injuries have brought renewed attention to road safety in the hill district, where motorists must remain alert while travelling along highway routes. Accidents can occur because

of several factors, including loss of vehicle control, road conditions, speeding and sudden manoeuvres. However, the specific causes of Friday's incidents have not been established from the available information. National Highway-27 serves as an important transport route in the region, connecting different parts of Assam and facilitating movement between towns and settlements. For residents, commuters and other road users, the highway is pro essential for daily travel.

At the same time, accidents on the route can have serious consequences for those travelling on two-wheelers and other vehicles. The first crash at Semdikhoh involved a scooter travelling from Maibang towards Haflong. The riders reportedly lost control before striking roadside barriers.

Such collisions can result in severe injuries, particularly when riders are not adequately protected against the force of impact.

The circumstances surrounding the incident, including whether road conditions or other factors contributed to the loss of control on highways, maintaining control is especially important because vehicles of the victims and any official findings on the causes of the accidents remain unconfirmed. The incidents serve as a reminder of the need for caution among motorists and the importance of strengthening road safety awareness across highway routes in Assam's hill districts.

Himveers Honoured at ITBP Event in Sonapur

Dispur, Oct 10: Assam Governor Lakshman Prasad Acharya paid a heartfelt tribute to the courage, sacrifice and unwavering dedication of personnel of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) during a special programme held on October 9.

The event recognised the contributions of the force in safeguarding the nation and acknowledged the commitment of its personnel to their duties under challenging circumstances. During the programme, the Governor lauded the bravery and sense of responsibility demonstrated by ITBP personnel in the line of duty.

He highlighted the importance of their service to the country and expressed appreciation for the sacrifices made by members of the force while carrying out their responsibilities. The ITBP is one of India's central armed police forces and plays a significant role in securing the country's borders, particularly along the Himalayan frontier. Its personnel are trained to operate

in difficult geographical and climatic conditions, including high-altitude regions where extreme cold, rugged terrain and limited accessibility can make routine duties particularly demanding. The Governor's tribute served as a recognition of the dedication required to perform such responsibilities. Border personnel often work in remote locations, where they must remain alert and prepared to respond to security challenges while dealing with the physical demands of the environment.

Acharya's remarks also highlighted the broader significance of service and sacrifice in national security.

The work carried out by border forces is essential to maintaining vigilance along sensitive frontiers and supporting the country's efforts to protect its territorial integrity.

Their contribution extends beyond operational duties to include discipline, teamwork and a strong commitment to the nation. The special programme pro-

vided an opportunity to acknowledge the role of ITBP personnel and recognise their commitment to public service.

Such events also help bring attention to the challenges faced by security personnel who work away from their families for extended periods while fulfilling their responsibilities. The ITBP has a specialised role in operating across some of India's most demanding border environments. Its personnel undergo rigorous training to prepare for high-altitude deployment. The ITBP's role is closely associated with the protection of India's Himalayan borders.

Its personnel are deployed in high-altitude contribution to national service and the value of acknowledging the sacrifices made by its personnel. Their work remains an important part of India's border security efforts, particularly in the challenging terrain of the Himalayan region.

VPP, CoMSO Target Government Over AG Issue

Shillong, Oct 10: The Voice of the People Party (VPP) and the Confederation of Meghalaya Social Organisations (CoMSO) on Friday criticised the Meghalaya government for failing to take action against Advocate General Amit Kumar despite growing opposition from sections of the state's legal fraternity.

The two organisations questioned the government's decision to allow Kumar to continue representing the state, alleging that it had failed to honour assurances given to the legal community.

They also raised concerns over his remarks concerning the ability of the Bar to protect its women members, as well as issues surrounding legal appointments and public expenditure, going back on its word after the Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister had reportedly assured members of the Bar that Kumar would no longer appear on behalf of the state.

NDA Win Is a Clear Message to Rahul Gandhi, INDIA Bloc Biplab Deb



Agartala, Oct 10: Tripura BJPMP and party national general secretary Biplab Kumar Deb on Saturday, October 10, said the National Democratic Alliance's (NDA) successive victories in by-elections had sent a clear political message to Rahul Gandhi and the INDIA alliance, reflecting what he described as the continued faith of the electorate in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership. In a statement, Deb said the electoral successes in West Bengal, Assam and Puducherry demonstrated public confidence in Modi and the policies pursued by the NDA government.

He maintained that the results reflected the political support enjoyed by the ruling alliance and presented a challenge to opposition parties seeking to strengthen their position against the BJP-led coalition.

Deb said the victories should be viewed as an indication of the electorate's assessment of the leadership and direction provided by the Prime Minister. He argued that the results carried a message for Rahul Gandhi and other leaders of the INDIA alliance, which has sought to bring together opposition parties to challenge the BJP and its allies. The BJP leader's remarks came amid continuing political competition between the NDA and opposition parties across several states.

By highlighting the by-election outcomes, Deb sought to underline the BJP-led alliance's electoral performance and portray the results as evidence of sustained public support. According to Deb, the victories in West Bengal, Assam and Puducherry reflected confidence in Modi's leadership. He de-

scribed the outcomes as a strong response from voters and said they demonstrated the political significance of the Prime Minister's leadership at a time when opposition parties have been attempting to present a united front against the NDA. The INDIA alliance, which includes several opposition parties with different regional interests and political priorities, has positioned itself as an alternative to the BJP-led government. Its leaders have repeatedly challenged the NDA on governance, economic issues and other matters of public concern. Against this backdrop, electoral results in individual states and constituencies often become part of the wider political debate between the two sides.

Deb's statement sought to place the recent by-election victories within that broader contest. By directly referring to Rahul Gandhi and the INDIA alliance, the Tripura MP presented the results as a message that the opposition would need to consider while assessing its political strategy. By-elections are generally held to fill legislative vacancies and can be influenced by local issues, candidate selection, party organisation and the performance of state-level leadership. Although their results can offer insights into voter preferences, they do not necessarily provide a complete picture of public opinion across an entire state or the country. Nevertheless, political parties frequently use such outcomes to demonstrate momentum and strengthen their claims of public support.

Jharna Basti Survey Begins Amid Cracks in Buildings

Guwahati, Oct 10: A geological expert from Gauhati University has visited Jharna Basti in Ledo, under Margherita co-district in Assam's Tinsukia district, where ground fissures have been spreading across residential premises and roads. Meanwhile, North Eastern Coalfields (NEC), a subsidiary of Coal India Limited, is urging relevant agencies to conduct a comprehensive scientific survey to determine the causes of the alarming development.

Prof Sarat Phukan of Gauhati University's Department of Geological Sciences visited the affected locality after reports of cracks emerging in the area. His visit is expected to contribute to efforts to understand the nature and possible causes of the ground fissures, which have raised concerns among residents. Speaking to The Sentinel on Friday evening, Margherita co-district commissioner KN Chandana Jahnvi confirmed that Phukan had inspected the site soon after the issue came to light. She said the administration was also working to involve other agencies in a reassessment of the affected area.

Meghalaya Chiefs Reject NOCs for Proposed Kulsidam



Dispur, Oct 10: Three traditional Khasi chiefs from Meghalaya have pledged not to issue no-objection certificates (NOCs) for the proposed Kulsidam Multipurpose Project, joining more than 2,000 members of indigenous Rabha, Bodo, Garo and Khasi communities in opposing the dam near the Assam-Meghalaya border.

The protest rally was held at Kyrshai playground near Ukiam in Meghalaya and was organised by the Assam-Meghalaya Joint Protection Committee. Formed in 2025, the committee brings together communities and stakeholders opposed to the proposed project.

Participants expressed concerns over the possible displacement of local residents, environmental consequences and the potential impact on traditional land rights and livelihoods across the two states. The gathering highlighted the opposition among indigenous communities who fear that the project could affect their ancestral lands and the natural resources on which they depend.

The three traditional chiefs who attended the rally were Kestor Manik Syiem Ich, Syiem of Hima Nongkhaw; Phlowing Syiem Nongbak, Syiem of Hima Nongmynsaw; and Order Syiem Sad, Syiem of Hima Rambrai.

They assured the gathering that they would not support the proposed dam and would stand alongside communities resisting the project. Their position adds a significant dimension to the opposition, as traditional institutions play an important role in land-related matters in several parts of Meghalaya.

The chiefs' decision to withhold NOCs signals that the concerns of traditional authorities and indigenous communities will remain central to discussions surrounding the project. Speaking to the media, Nongkhaw Syiem Kestor Manik Ich said projects involving land in Meghalaya require the consent of the relevant traditional authorities, including the concerned Syiem and village headmen. He stated that no NOC had been issued for the proposed Kulsidam and confirmed that the required consent would not be granted. The chiefs' stand reflects concerns about the process through which land-related projects are considered and questions of consultation, consent and protection of customary land rights remain important elements of the debate.

FCRA Row James Urges JPC to Visit City, Meet Stakeholders

Shillong, Oct 10: Rajya Sabha MP James P.K. Sangma, a member of the Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) examining the proposed amendments to the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA), has written to the committee's chairman, suggesting that the panel visit Shillong to consult local stakeholders before finalising its report.

Sangma said the committee had already conducted meetings and was in the process of consulting stakeholders and relevant departments as part of its examination of the proposed legislation. He expressed confidence that the panel would complete its work within the stipulated timeframe and submit its report before the conclusion of Parliament's Winter Session. "I am sure that under the chairmanship of Dr Jaiswal, the panel will be able to complete its task," Sangma said, expressing confidence in the committee's ability to fulfil its responsibilities. The MP declined to disclose details of the committee's internal deliberations but confirmed that he had personally written to the chairman to suggest a visit to Shillong. He said holding a meeting in the Meghalaya capital would provide an opportunity to hear the concerns and perspectives of stakeholders from the region. According to Sangma, consultations with people and organisations directly affected by the proposed amendments would be important in helping the committee arrive at a balanced understanding of the issue. He indicated that a visit to Shillong could make it easier for local representatives and organisa-

tions to present their views before the panel. The proposed FCRA amendments have attracted attention in Meghalaya, where church organisations and civil society groups have expressed concerns about the possible implications of tighter regulations on foreign contributions. These organisations fear that additional restrictions could affect funding for activities linked to education, healthcare and community development. Several institutions and voluntary organisations in the state rely on contributions from abroad to support social and community-based initiatives.

Concerns have therefore emerged over whether changes to the existing regulatory framework could make it more difficult for such organisations to secure and utilise funds for their activities. The FCRA governs the acceptance and utilisation of foreign contributions by individuals, associations and organisations in India. Its provisions are intended to regulate overseas funding and ensure that such contributions to ensure that stakeholders from Meghalaya and the wider Northeast have an opportunity to share their views directly with the panel. As the committee moves towards completing its report, the question of how to balance the regulation of foreign contributions with the operational needs of organisations engaged in social and community work remains central to the debate. A visit to Shillong, if accepted, could provide another avenue for the panel to hear regional concerns before reaching its conclusions.

Five-Decade Run Nears End for Assam's Kohinoor Theatre

Dispur, Oct 10: Assam's renowned mobile theatre group Kohinoor Theatre may be approaching the end of its remarkable journey, after director Tapan Lahkar hinted at a possible closure in a social media post.

The development has sparked questions about the future of one of the state's prominent Bhramyamaan theatre institutions, which has a history spanning five decades.

Lahkar's post has drawn attention from theatre enthusiasts and audiences familiar with Kohinoor Theatre's long-standing contribution to Assam's cultural landscape. Although the director did not make a detailed announcement, his words appeared to suggest that the group could be preparing to bring its operations to an end.

Reflecting on his association with the theatre group over the past year, Lahkar wrote, "Bahut kotahi ase... But No More Kohinoor The-



atre". The statement, which hinted at a possible farewell, has left audiences wondering whether the theatre institution will continue its journey or prepare to close its curtains permanently. However, the post did not explain the reasons behind the possible closure.

It also did not clarify whether a formal decision had been taken by the theatre management or whether the group would issue an official announcement regarding its future. The

uncertainty surrounding Kohinoor Theatre has brought renewed attention to the significance of mobile theatre in Assam. Known locally as Bhramyamaan theatre, the format has become an important part of the state's performing arts tradition, taking theatrical productions to audiences across different towns and rural areas. Unlike conventional theatre companies that perform primarily from fixed venues, mobile theatre groups travel from place to place, setting

up temporary stages and presenting productions to local audiences. Their performances often combine dramatic storytelling, elaborate stage arrangements, music and popular themes to attract people from diverse backgrounds.

Over the decades, Bhramyamaan theatre has developed a distinct identity in Assam's cultural life. For many audiences, touring theatre performances are more than a source of entertainment; they are an annual cultural event that brings communities together and provides access to live performances beyond major urban centres.

Kohinoor Theatre's five-decade history places it among the established names associated with this tradition. Its possible closure would therefore raise questions about the future of an institution that has been part of Assam's theatre landscape for generations. The

group's journey has unfolded alongside the wider development of mobile theatre in the state, a format that has helped bring professional performances to audiences across geographically diverse areas.

Touring companies have traditionally relied on a combination of ticket sales, local arrangements, performers and production teams to stage shows across different locations. Maintaining such operations requires extensive planning, coordination and resources.

Theatre groups must organise performers, technical crews, costumes, sets, transport and temporary venues while adapting productions to different locations. These demands make mobile theatre a distinctive but complex statement from the management, it would be premature to draw conclusions about what may have prompted the remark.

Delhi Police Seeks Cancellation of Sharjeel Imam’s Interim Bail

New Delhi, Oct 10: The Delhi Police on Friday sought the cancellation of interim bail granted to student leader Sharjeel Imam in the 2020 Delhi riots larger conspiracy case, alleging that he had violated the conditions imposed by the court during his temporary release. The police claimed that Imam interacted with media persons while out on interim bail, which they cited as a breach of the restrictions governing his release .The application seeks judicial intervention over the alleged violation of bail conditions. The matter relates to the larger conspiracy case linked to the February 2020 communal violence in northeast Delhi, which resulted in deaths, injuries and extensive damage to property.

Imam was granted interim bail for a limited period, subject to conditions laid down by the court. Such conditions are intended to regulate the conduct of an accused while temporarily released and ensure compliance with judicial directions. According to the police, Imam’s alleged interaction with media representatives was inconsistent with the restrictions imposed on him. The police have therefore approached the court seeking the withdrawal of the



relief granted to him. The request places the focus on whether the alleged interaction amounts to a violation of the specific conditions attached to his interim bail. Interim bail is temporary relief granted by a court for a specified period or purpose. Unlike regular bail, it does not necessarily determine the question of continued release for the entire duration of a criminal proceeding. Courts may impose restrictions depending on the circumstances of a case, and the person receiving relief is expected to comply with those directions. Any allegation of a breach must be considered in light of the exact terms of the bail order and the circumstances cited by the investigating agency. The court will determine whether the alleged con-

duct amounts to a violation warranting cancellation of the relief. A request by the police does not, by itself, mean that bail has been cancelled. The case against Imam forms part of the broader investigation into the alleged conspiracy behind the February 2020 Delhi riots.

The violence erupted in parts of northeast Delhi amid protests over the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and left several people dead and hundreds injured. The unrest also led to damage to homes, shops and other properties. Investigators have alleged that the violence was connected to a wider conspiracy. The case has involved several activists and student leaders, with the prosecution examining allegations relating to the events leading up to the riots. Those

accused in the case have faced legal proceedings under provisions that include the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, alongside other relevant laws.

The case has attracted considerable public attention because of the seriousness of the allegations, the length of the legal proceedings and the questions raised over bail and personal liberty. Court decisions in such cases involve consideration of the applicable legal provisions, the material presented by the prosecution and the rights of the accused.

The latest application by the Delhi Police concerns the conditions of Imam’s temporary release rather than a final determination of the underlying allegations. The question before the court is whether the conduct cited by the police violated the restrictions imposed when interim bail was granted. The conditions of his interim release at the centre of the immediate dispute. Further proceedings will determine how the court responds to the police request. Until a judicial order is passed, the allegation that Imam violated his bail conditions remains the position advanced by the Delhi Police. celled rests with the court.

Delhi Police Debunks Viral Video of Jantar Mantar Crowd

New Delhi, Oct 10: A video circulating on social media claiming to show a massive crowd gathered outside Jantar Mantar ahead of a planned protest by the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) has been disputed by the Delhi Police.

The police said the footage, which has been shared with claims that it shows the situation at the protest venue at 7 am, is old and was originally recorded during the party’s earlier demonstration on July 20.

The clarification came amid online circulation of the video, which has drawn attention because of the planned CJP protest against Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar. Social media posts accompanying the footage have presented it as a recent visual of the crowd outside Jantar Mantar.

However, the Delhi Police said the clip does not depict the current situation and urged people to recognise that it relates to an earlier demonstration. In its response, the police specifically referred to the July 20 protest, saying the footage being circulated was from that event. The clarification challenges the claim that a large crowd had assembled at the location at 7 am ahead of the latest planned demonstration. The incident highlights how



older videos can resurface online and be shared without their original date or context. When footage from a previous gathering is presented as current, it can create a misleading impression of the scale of participation or the situation at a particular location. In this case, the police statement sought to distinguish the earlier demonstration from the protest being planned against the Chief Election Commissioner.

Jantar Mantar, located in central Delhi, is a recognised venue for public demonstrations, rallies and other forms of protest. Political parties, social organisations and groups representing different causes have used the site to draw attention to their demands. Images and videos from such gatherings frequently circulate on social media, where they can reach large audi-

ences within a short period. The CJP had planned to hold a demonstration against Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar. The video began circulating with claims that it showed a large crowd outside the protest site early in the morning.

The Delhi Police’s clarification, however, identified the footage as belonging to the party’s earlier side Jantar Mantar at 7 am. lished can help determine whether it accurately represents the event described in a social media post. Reminder that viral videos do not always provide a real-time picture of events. Establishing when and where footage was recorded remains essential to understanding public demonstrations accurately and avoiding confusion caused by old visuals being presented as recent developments.

BMC Launches Chatbot to Track Civic Complaints in South Mumbai



Mumbai, Oct 10: Residents of Colaba, Cuffe Parade and Fort can now register and track civic complaints through WhatsApp, following the launch of an artificial intelligence-powered chatbot by the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC). The initiative aims to make grievance redressal simpler, faster and more transparent by providing residents with a digital channel to report civic issues and follow the progress of their complaints.

The new chatbot is intended to improve communication between residents and the civic administration by making complaint registration and tracking more accessible. By using WhatsApp, a widely used messaging platform, the BMC aims to provide citizens with a convenient way to raise concerns without relying solely on traditional complaint submission methods. The service covers the South Mumbai localities of Colaba, Cuffe Parade and Fort.

Residents in these areas can use the chatbot to submit complaints about civic issues and monitor their status through the messaging platform.

The system is designed to make it easier for citizens to remain informed about the progress of grievances after they have been reported. Civic complaints are an important part of municipal administration, as residents frequently encounter problems that require attention from local authorities. These may include concerns relating to roads, sanitation, waste management, drainage and other public infrastructure issues. A clear mechanism for reporting such problems can help civic bodies identify areas requiring intervention and improve communication with the public. The introduction of an AI-powered chatbot reflects the growing use of digital technology in public services. Municipal corporations and other government agencies are increasingly exploring digital platforms to simplify routine processes, reduce the need for physical visits and make information more readily available to citizens.

Delhi University’s SOL Supports Treatment of Child with Rare Disorder

New Delhi, Oct 10: The University of Delhi’s Centre for Distance and Online Education (CDOE) has initiated steps to facilitate financial assistance for the treatment of a faculty member’s child suffering from a rare genetic disorder, according to an official statement issued on Saturday.

The initiative reflects the university centre’s efforts to extend support to a member of its academic community facing a serious medical challenge involving a child. The financial assistance process is aimed at helping facilitate treatment, although details regarding the amount of support, the nature of the disorder and the treatment required were not provided in the statement. Rare genetic disorders can present significant challenges for affected children and their families.

Depending on the condition, patients may require specialised medical consultations, diagnostic tests, long-term treatment and regular monitoring. In some cases, the complexity of the disorder can make treatment particularly demanding, both medically and financially.

For families dealing with such conditions, access to appropriate healthcare and the ability to meet treatment expenses can become major concerns.

The cost of specialised care may vary depending on the diagnosis, the availability of treatment options and the duration of medical intervention. Financial support can therefore play an important role in helping families manage the burden associated with treatment. The CDOE’s decision to initiate steps towards facilitating assistance brings attention to the role educational institutions can play in supporting members of their communities during difficult circumstances. Universities are primarily responsible for education, research and academic development, but they also comprise communities in which the welfare of faculty members and their families can become an important consideration.

The University of Delhi, one of India’s prominent public universities, has a broad academic network comprising departments, colleges, teaching staff and administrative units. Its Centre for Distance and Online Education provides educational opportunities through distance and online learning. The latest initiative concerns support for a faculty member whose child is affected by a rare genetic disorder. According to the statement, the centre has begun taking steps to facilitate financial assistance for the child’s treatment.

The wording indicates that the process has been initiated, but the available information does not establish whether the assistance has already been disbursed or whether the treatment has begun. The development highlights the financial and emotional pressures families may face when a child is diagnosed with a rare medical condition. Parents often have to coordinate consultations, medical investigations and treatment plans while continuing to manage their professional and personal responsibilities. Where specialised care is required, families may also need to seek treatment beyond their immediate area of residence, depending on the facilities available. Genetic disorders arise from changes or variations in genetic material and can affect different aspects of a person’s health. Some conditions become apparent early in childhood, while others may be identified as symptoms develop.

The severity and progression of these disorders differ widely, and treatment options depend on the specific diagnosis. In this context, institutional assistance can help families navigate some of the practical difficulties associated with medical care. Support from an employer or educational institution may ease financial pressure and allow a family to focus more closely on the child’s healthcare needs. The extent of the impact, however, depends on the nature and scale of the assistance provided.

Delhi Govt Acts on Delays in Old Age Pension Approvals

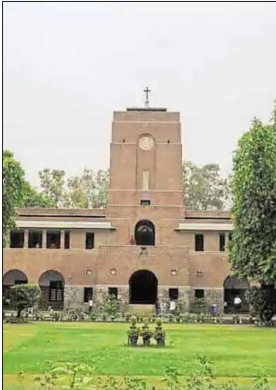
New Delhi, Oct 10: The Delhi government has directed district social welfare officers to clear all pending old-age pension applications within seven working days after a departmental review revealed significant delays in processing requests. Officials said on Saturday that more than half of the applications had neither been sanctioned nor disposed of within the prescribed 45-day timeline, prompting the government to instruct district-level authorities to expedite the process.

The directive aims to address the backlog and ensure that eligible senior citizens do not face prolonged waits for financial assistance.

The seven-working-day deadline is intended to speed up the disposal of pending applications and improve the delivery of welfare benefits to elderly residents who depend on pension support. According to officials, the review found that a substantial proportion of applications had remained unresolved beyond the stipulated period.

The prescribed 45-day timeline is intended to provide a defined period for processing social welfare office delays and bringing greater urgency to the processing of applications that have been awaiting a decision.

DU Orders Safety Checks Across Campus Buildings



New Delhi, Oct 10: The University of Delhi (DU) on Friday directed college principals, heads of departments and hostel wardens to conduct comprehensive safety audits of their respective premises, with a particular focus on strengthening the safety of women on campus. The directive aims to assess existing security arrangements and identify areas that may require improvement across university-affiliated institutions and facilities.

The university has asked the officials responsible for colleges, academic departments and hostels to examine safety measures within their respective premises.

The exercise is intended to ensure that potential gaps in campus security are identified and addressed through appropriate action. The officials have also been directed to submit their audit reports by October 12. The move places renewed emphasis on the responsibility of educational insti-

Aijhya Shinde Takes Charge of CJP Stir in Delhi

New Delhi, Oct 10: Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) founder and convener Abhijeet Dipke has said that the pressure group’s key member, Ajinkya Shinde, will lead its planned protest against Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar.

The announcement comes after Dipke was detained and allegedly taken to an “undisclosed location”, raising uncertainty over his participation in the demonstration.

The party had planned to hold the protest at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi to express its opposition to Kumar. Following Dipke’s detention, Shinde has been named to lead the demonstration in his absence, according to the CJP founder.

Dipke’s statement places Shinde at the forefront of the group’s planned action at a time when the organisation’s leadership has been affected by the reported detention.

The circumstances surrounding Dipke’s detention, including the reason for the action and his current whereabouts, Dipke’s reported detention was detained and allegedly taken to an undisclosed location to establish the sequence of events or the authority responsible. Developments.

‘Dilli Haat Becomes Jantar Mantar’ AISA’s New Protest Call

New Delhi, Oct 10: The All India Students’ Association (AISA) has announced a change in the venue of its planned protest against Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar and the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls. AISA national president Neha Bora said on Friday that the demonstration would be shifted from Jantar Mantar to Dilli Haat, announcing the change through a post on X as police maintained a tight security presence in New Delhi.

The announcement came amid heightened security arrangements in the national capital. The planned demonstration centres on the group’s opposition to the electoral roll revision exercise and its criticism of the Chief Election

Commissioner. The change of venue marks a development in the organisation’s plans for the protest, although further details about the arrangements at the new location were not provided in the information available. Bora’s post on X communicated the decision to move the proposed demonstration to Dilli Haat.

The announcement followed a period of tight police deployment in New Delhi, with security personnel maintaining a visible presence around the planned protest area. The available information does not specify whether the venue change was prompted directly by police restrictions or was made for other organisational reasons. Jantar Mantar, located in central Delhi,

is a recognised site for demonstrations and public gatherings. Political parties, student organisations, social groups and campaigners frequently use the venue to draw attention to their demands and concerns. Security arrangements at the site can vary depending on the nature and scale of an event, as well as the permissions and restrictions against CEC Gyanesh Kumar and the Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls. The SIR process involves the revision of electoral rolls, an exercise intended to examine and update voter lists. Such revisions are part of electoral administration, but the procedures and implementation of the process can become subjects of debate as to its intention planned at Dilli Haat.

Nine Held for Illegally Tracking People’s Movements

Mumbai, Oct 10: The Mumbai Crime Branch has uncovered an alleged racket involving the illegal sale of confidential mobile phone data, including call records and information that could be used to track people’s movements. Nine people, including police personnel, have been arrested in connection with the case, according to the information available. The investigation has brought attention to the alleged misuse of access to sensitive telecommunications data and the risks such

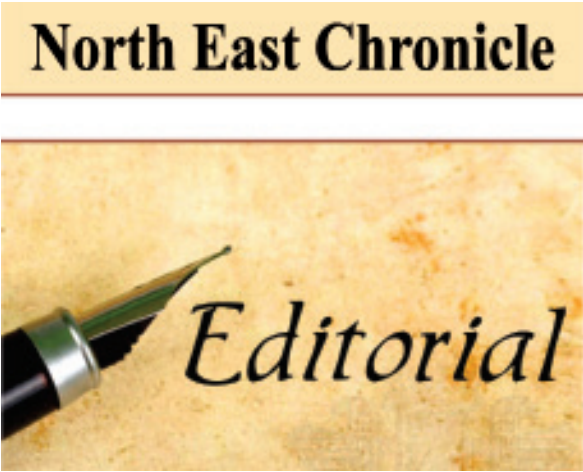


practices pose to individual privacy.

The racket allegedly provided information that could reveal whom a person had been calling, where they had travelled and, potentially, whom they had been meet-

ing. Such details, which are ordinarily expected to remain private, were allegedly obtained and shared in exchange for money. The Crime Branch’s findings point to the alleged involvement of police personnel

in facilitating the unauthorised access to confidential mobile phone information. The Crime Branch’s action highlights the importance of examining not only those who allegedly purchased or sold confidential data but also the methods through which the information was obtained. Establishing how the data was accessed, who facilitated its retrieval and society, mobile phones are provide a detailed picture of an individual’s relationships beyond ordinary privacy violations.



The hidden toll of social media on mental health

Rage bait was the word selected by Oxford as the Word of the Year in 2025. It means “online content deliberately designed to elicit anger or outrage by being frustrating, provocative, or offensive, typically posted in order to increase traffic to or engagement with a particular web page or social media content”. With the drastic increase in the use of social media, have we tried to consider how much time we spend on it? It is often seen in our daily routine that whether at home or in the workplace, while doing any task, if a message alert suddenly beeps or the phone rings, we pick up the phone to answer the call or check the message. Immediately, our fingers spontaneously begin searching for various content on the phone. This happens so rapidly, and our brain becomes so immersed in the pleasure it provides, that we forget how much time we spend doing so. We never think about how frequently our work gets interrupted in this way throughout the day.

This process of moving our fingers up and down on the screen while searching for content one after another on a mobile phone or computer is called scrolling. The Oxford Dictionary defines this word as follows: “to move text or pictures on a computer screen up or down so that you can read or view different parts of it”. Now, holding an electronic gadget and scrolling through social media in this manner has become a habit for us, adversely affecting our body and mind. During the COVID-19 pandemic, when people had to remain confined indoors and spend more time using electronic media, whether for work or study, the use of social media also increased rapidly. Although the severity of the pandemic later subsided, the level of unnecessary scrolling increased even further. The habit of scrolling has now reached such a stage that most people cannot sit peacefully even for a short while without an electronic gadget in their hands. Without consciously realising it, they repeatedly reach for their gadgets, and their fingers automatically begin scrolling. At such times, our addiction to content, such as funny videos, content depicting criminal behaviour, or any other material capable of creating excitement, increases to such an extent that we lose control over our minds and keep scrolling. Any kind of stimulating content further strengthens our urge to move from one item to another, and we begin scrolling faster in response to signals from the brain. At one point, the situation reaches such a stage that we lose the patience to watch even a short video in its entirety and simply keep scrolling.

It is observed that much of this content is either stimulating or creates a negative mindset. The process of continuously scrolling through a screen under the influence of such negative content or news is known by another term: doomscrolling. It means “overconsumption of negative short-form content or news, especially on social

media platforms that have an infinitely populating feed of new posts”. Excessive consumption of such negative content adversely affects the mind, sometimes causing people to feel lonely, angry and hopeless. Several studies on the effects of scrolling on the human body have revealed various negative consequences. A study conducted among a group of medical science students showed that students who studied using non-digital media had better memory retention than those who studied using digital media. Another study has shown that the habit of excessively scrolling through short videos reduces the functioning of certain important parts of the brain, thereby adversely affecting the ability to concentrate, make stable plans and maintain self-control. In addition, memory power also gradually begins to decline. Another study involving approximately nine million young people under the age of 25 from several countries showed that when scrolling becomes an uncontrollable addiction, it affects mental health, increases insomnia and makes people less interested in physical activity. A joint study by the American Brain Foundation and Harvard has shown that continuously engaging in doomscrolling makes the amygdala more active. As a result, the secretion of cortisol and adrenaline in the human body increases, raising blood pressure and worsening depression.

The contemporary era is marked by the widespread reach of the internet and social media. To keep pace with the times, we have no alternative but to embrace them. However, we also need to consider the changes that excessive use of such media can bring about. Increasing impatience, a lack of restraint, emotional numbness, depression and feelings of hopelessness are directly or indirectly associated with excessive use of these platforms. It is also noteworthy that the content available through these platforms may contribute to the increasing breakdown of relationships, rising suicide rates and criminal tendencies in society. Therefore, perhaps no one will disagree that it is high time we controlled our access to social media and other content available on the internet. It has now become necessary for people to develop certain habits to protect themselves from the negative impacts of social media and use it in a controlled manner. For example, setting aside fixed periods of the day without using any electronic gadgets, enjoying nature, developing the habit of reading physical books, chatting with friends without keeping electronic devices nearby, and pursuing personal interests without connecting to social media can help reduce addiction to these platforms. Various countries around the world are now preparing to ban mobile phones in schools, impose age restrictions on social media use and make it compulsory for students to spend a specified period without electronic devices while reading books.

The unexpected upside of agricultural burning

The annual stubble-burning season has started. In this widely dreaded practice, farmers set fire to crop residue the thick remnants left rooted in the soil after paddy harvest in the field. Rising labour costs, a narrow window between paddy harvest and sowing period for the next crop, and declining farm incomes have pushed farmers in several states, from Punjab to Madhya Pradesh, to treat stubble burning as routine. This year, however, there is a silver lining amid the dark clouds of carbon that threaten the air, most noticeably in the national capital and abutting cities. It comes from process innovation and collaborative governance in Shahjahanpur, Uttar Pradesh.

Shahjahanpur district was once infamous for recording the highest number of stubble-burning incidents in Uttar Pradesh. Since 2021, such incidents have fallen by 67%. Ramji Mishra, a rural reporter who investigated this small miracle for ON AIR, our monthly bilingual webzine on air quality, travelled from village to village in the district and sent us the details, including block-level fire count data. As we checked and cross-checked the evidence, we identified three key innovations that changed the game. First, the administration worked closely with local farmers small and mar-

ginal, as well as well-off farmers. The district magistrate and local officials visited villages at night, when most of the stubble burning occurs, and held chaupals (village meetings). They discussed the health risks for the farmers’ own families while also listening to their concerns. Farmers who emerged as local leaders then began peer discussions. As a result, farmers and the administration jointly agreed to look for alternatives. This stands in contrast to the vilification of farmers in Punjab, where fines are preceded by stern diktats. Even the courts have contributed to the criminalisation of Punjab’s farmers, by signalling a willingness to jail them for burning stubble. If their land is marked red, indicating a stubble-based fire, they may be debarred from several basics, such as mortgaging their lands, receiving government benefits, and availing of loans. Such an approach does not encourage collaboration; it breeds mistrust and reduces an agricultural and public-health crisis into a law-and-order problem. Second, the Shahjahanpur collaboration tested market-based solutions that allowed farmers to earn from stubble. Crucially, it created incentives to use technology and modern machinery to cut and remove stubble from fields the single biggest

hurdle across states. Although the tools are well known and available, persuading time-pressed farmers to use them has long been difficult. Through the Central-state Crop Residue Management (CRM) scheme and UP Krishi Yantra Anudan Yojana, subsidised farm equipment was offered to farmers. Deployment of industrial balers machines that sweep loose straw from fields and compress it into tightly bound, dense rectangular or cylindrical blocks was very useful.

Making stubble removal part of the value chain was central to this smart approach. By collecting, compressing and selling stubble blocks, some farmers reportedly increased their annual incomes, an outcome that would not have been possible without first focussing on non-burning alternatives. Not every farmer appears to have benefited in such a manner, but most now see a clear pathway for using stubble without incurring losses. They are willing to try these options because they have already been part of the conversation. Third, the solutions are rooted in the state economy and are strikingly circular. Compressed biogas (CBG) plants powered by stubble meet energy needs. These plants are funded through existing government schemes such as GOBARdhan

(Galvanizing Organic Bio-Agro Resources Dhan) that support public good and reduce project risk. Under the supply agreements in Shahjahanpur, CBG plants purchased compressed stubble bales directly from farmers and baler operators right at the farm, paying a guaranteed price ranging between ₹300 and ₹350 per quintal. Some farmers sold it for ₹250 per quintal. Sending stubble to local gaushalas or making farm compost is also an undervalued practice. Dalit women working as informal farmhands, whom one of us had earlier interviewed in Punjab, described it as a valuable source of seasonal income. Without state support, however, they faced barriers they could not overcome on their own. Such economic chains create local interdependence, strengthening social pressure on farmers to continue managing stubble responsibly. These local gains make the system both accountable and sustainable, and they offer a pathway for scaling similar systemic changes across the country. In a country as diverse as India, the Shahjahanpur model might not be the perfect solution for every stubble burning crisis. Instead, it shines a light on the less-discussed idea of process innovation and reminds other states and districts that a solution does exist to this problem.

Revisiting the middle east paradigm: Tehran takes precedence over Palestinian statehood

It has been three years since Hamas attacked Israel on 7 October 2023, but the Israel-Palestine conflict and its many wars and escalations have dominated regional peace and stability since the dawn of the 20th century. The Arab states appropriated the Palestinian cause and fought multiple wars with Israel in 1948, 1967 and 1973. Then Egypt signed a bilateral peace with Israel in 1978, and Jordan did the same in 1994. Abraham Accords of 2020 further ended the regional Arab boycott of Israel, keeping aside the Palestinian issue. Since 1979, it is the Iranian radicals who carry the rhetoric for the liberation of Palestine.

The Middle East has turned out to be one of the most complex regions in world politics since the end of World War II. Its political life has been peculiar, with monarchies, autocracies, dictatorships and theocracies, whereas its oil economy became a vital cog in the international energy market. The Soviet Union and the US both played their great games during the Cold War, but the end of that war didn’t leave the Middle East in a better place either. In the early 1990s, the grand Oslo Peace Process took place between the Israelis and the Palestinians but unfortunately failed in early 2000. Hamas came up with suicide bombings and the militant Al-Aqsa Intifada in the region; Al-Qaeda

took Jihad at the global level with its attack on the US Twin Towers in September 2001. The “war on terror” started by the US pushed the region into more violent decades with the invasion and occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan thereafter. The Palestinians got divided into the jihadist Hamas and secular-nationalist Palestinian Authority and they were left on their own by the regional actors as well as the US and the European powers.

There were also promising events in between these many violent episodes, like the Arab Spring, when the common people arose against authoritarian regimes in Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Yemen, Oman, Jordan, Morocco, and Algeria in the 2010s. One of the most diplomatic breakthroughs was the Abraham Accords led by US President Donald Trump in his first term in 2020, when the Gulf states decided to end the diplomatic boycott of Israel. It was a pragmatic move on the part of the UAE, Bahrain, and Morocco to move on from the Palestinian issue that was hijacked by the radical Hamas after the death of Yasser Arafat in 2004. It was also the idea of transactional diplomacy driven by the logic of a win-win situation with Israel against the rising Iranian threats. Thereafter, came the bold vision for the region from New Delhi. The India-Middle-East-Europe Economic Corri-

dor (IMEC) was announced in the presence of the US President Joe Biden and Mohammad Bin Salman of Saudi Arabia in September 2023 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the G20 Summit in India. Thus, the Middle East was charting a new chapter altogether and most believed inside as well as outside the region in Delhi, Washington and Brussels that the Middle East is capable of breaking the jinx and stepping into multilateral alliances based on peace, stability and prosperity. Even if it is limited peace based on economic dividends rather than justice and historical reconciliation. Hamas (harakat al-muqawama al-islamiya, Islamic Resistance Movement) carried multiple terror attacks on southern Israel on 7 October 2023. According to the Israeli reports, the Hamas militants, Palestinian Islamic Jihad and Nukhba Forces breached the security barrier between Gaza and Israel at 119 spots and attacked on 21 communities of civilians, which resulted in more than 1,200 deaths in less than 24 hours and 251 hostages who were taken into Gaza alive.

Israel retaliated and bulldozed Gaza, and the deaths there reached over 74,245 Palestinians, according to Gaza’s health ministry, which does not distinguish between Hamas militants and civilians. Hezbollah and Iran’s religious re-

gime were also actively involved in the war from 8 October 2023. Hezbollah started attacking northern Israel. Then the Houthis, another proxy of Iran, joined this war from Yemen against Israel. It took several months for Israel, but it took the war into Lebanon’s Beirut with the assassination of Hassan Nasrallah in September 2024, and then, with the American forces, Israel reached Iran in June 2025 and again in February 2026 when it assassinated Iran’s Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Iran involved in its attacks the major Gulf states like Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Oman, Kuwait, Bahrain and Arab states like Jordan and Egypt. One of the key takeaways of the last three years from the Middle East is that without a resolution of the Palestinian issue, the region remains captive to instability, radicalisation and conflict escalations from time to time. Israelis, in the aftermath of 7 October, are far more skeptical of the two-state solution, and the Palestinians are far more radicalised by Hamas and Iran. Does the Middle East remain captive to history? Can it have the resolve to fix the seemingly hopeless scenario between Israel and the Palestinians? If not, is there an alternative? Another takeaway is that wars in the Middle East last longer, and there are several spoilers at every turn. What started on 7 October is not over yet.

There are several fronts of hostilities open, including between Israel and Hamas in Gaza, Israeli settlers and Palestinians in the West Bank, Iran and the US, Iran and Saudi Arabia, and the Houthis in Yemen and Saudi Arabia. It is going to be a Herculean task to carry on with the ideas behind the Abraham Accords or IMEC anytime soon, but these are the only promising initiatives that need more faith and work now. Additionally, the three years of multi-layered wars have cleared the decks for alliances of the future. Most of the Arab states are with Israel and the US, even if Saudi Arabia is reluctant to pursue diplomatic normalisation with Israel at the moment. Iran has lost Lebanon and Syria in a significant way, and it is clinging to Russia, China, or Turkey-Pakistan. However, the last two have ambiguously promised to fight against Iran under the Mecca Pact recently. Last and perhaps one of the most ironic takeaways is about the Palestinians who have once again become a footnote in the larger politics of the Middle East. The attack of 7 October began with them, but they are out of the headlines. Now it is about Hormuz, the Iranian regime and its survival or fight for civil nuclear rights. The Palestinian issue does not even appear in the long demands of the Iranian regime when it is asking for the moon before opening Hormuz.

Geopolitical hurdles stalling India’s ambitions

The peaks and troughs that have come to define the development of Iran’s strategically located Chabahar port offer a stark reminder of how geopolitics can hamper major infrastructure projects. Vital for Iran, the port is also crucial for India, which views it as a strategic anchor for its own sub-regional connectivity efforts. The Chabahar project, however, remains severely hobbled by an ever-shifting global landscape. Over the years, the port’s development and operational use have been crippled by unilateral US sanctions stemming from long-drawn Washington-Tehran tensions.

The recent completion of a key rail link between Chabahar and Iranshahr, part of the larger planned 630-km line extending to Zahedan near the Afghan border, should have given India cause for cheer. But use of this rail link by India will have to wait, with Chabahar under sanctions. Construction of the Chabahar-Iranshahr-Zahedan rail link has also suffered from prolonged delays. But Iran now says the entire Chabahar-Zahedan rail link, designed to carry 7.7 million tonnes of freight and 2.2 million passengers annually, will be ready by January next year. Once operational, this rail link could be a game-changer for regional connectivity and commerce. Chabahar and Iranshahr are key cities in its Sistan and Baluchistan province, which shares long, porous borders with both Pakistan and Afghanistan, while Zahedan is its capital. Iran is also hopeful that the Chabahar connectivity project will bring economic prosperity to this underdeveloped province.

Yet, India’s ability to utilise this infrastructure remains on hold. Amid Iran’s ongoing conflict with the US and Israel,

the Strait of Hormuz, which is so vital for global trade and commerce, has been under a blockade. First imposed by the Iranians after military strikes by the US and Israel, Washington also initiated a naval blockade in retaliation. With the Strait of Hormuz becoming a choke point, Chabahar, Iran’s only oceanic port located close to the Gulf of Oman and overlooking the Indian Ocean, can be an alternative trading gateway. For India, Chabahar port also offers an invaluable sea-land route to landlocked Afghanistan, Central Asian countries and even Europe, effectively bypassing its hostile neighbour Pakistan and giving it the much-needed access to countries in its extended neighbourhood and beyond. With the likelihood of Pakistan allowing transit rights to India in the foreseeable future being remote, Chabahar seems a viable alternative route to Afghanistan and beyond. The denial of transit rights by Pakistan found indirect mention by a senior Indian diplomat, who was recently in Islamabad to participate in the SCO coordinators’ meet, where he stressed the need for regional connectivity. To secure this strategic foothold, India has assisted Iran in developing the port’s Shahid Beheshti terminal. However, the US sanctions have seriously impacted India’s ambitions to use the Iranian port. The waiver India had obtained for using the port lapsed on April 26 this year. The Trump administration, which has been riding roughshod over Indian interests, threatening tariffs of up to 100 per cent for purchasing Russian oil being one such instance, did not grant a further extension to the waiver. India had used the previous waiver to good effect, providing humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan.

India, however, was forced to withdraw hastily from operating the Shahid Beheshti terminal in Chabahar for fear of inviting US sanctions. This has been a huge setback for India’s regional connectivity ambitions. Amid heightened US-Iran tensions, it’s unlikely that a sanctions waiver will come again anytime soon. While Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian, during his visit to India last month, pressed upon New Delhi to increase its investments in Chabahar and deepen economic ties with his country, US sanctions preclude any such thing happening for now. The ongoing sanctions on this strategic connectivity project are part of US strategy to apply maximum pressure on an adversary that has, over the decades, refused to be cowed down by Washington’s arm-twisting tactics. Beyond trade access, Chabahar for India can serve as a strategic counterweight to Pakistan’s Gwadar port, which is located just 140 km away and has been built with China’s assistance. India has justifiable concerns about China actively using Gwadar as a military outpost. In the long term, India also envisions Chabahar as the maritime anchor for the ambitious International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC), a multi-modal transport network to access regions beyond its extended neighbourhood, right up to St. Petersburg in Russia and beyond. Backed by India, Iran and Russia, the INSTC project, however, also remains a challenging one, given the geostrategic turmoil that is currently at play. The continuing Russia-Ukraine war and the consequent nosedive in Moscow’s relations with European countries are further setbacks for this ambitious connectivity project.

Tata Tech, Bajaj Finance, Bajaj Auto Sri Lotus Developers shares

New Delhi: Deven Choksey, MD of DRChoksey Finserv, has identified Bajaj Finance Ltd, Bajaj Auto Ltd, Tata Technologies Ltd and Sri Lotus Developers and Realty Ltd as stocks worth considering, citing their business growth prospects, valuations and long-term opportunities. “Within the large-cap space, a no-brainer would be the largest NBFC company, Bajaj Finance, because consumer spending is increasing and the stock is available at a compelling valuation. They are recently raising money also,” the market veteran Choksey noted that Bajaj Finance, with a loan book of around Rs 5.5 lakh crore, is looking to double its book size in the next three to four years. “So I think that’s a time when I think you should buy such a company,” he



said.Choksey also highlighted Bajaj Auto, citing its business model, exports to 110 countries and upcoming product ranges. He said the company is available at a valuation

that isn’t far too expensive, making it an opportunity to consider during the market fall.Turning to mid-cap and small-cap stocks, Choksey said Tata Technologies

remained a relatively strong proposition. He cited the company’s programmes for original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) such as BMW and Honda, apart from its own Tata Group’s Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) business Within the discretionary spending theme, the veteran liked Sri Lotus Developers and Realty. “I think this company looks good from the investment perspective as well. Don’t look at it on a quarter-to-quarter (QoQ) basis, but I think if you’re looking at a five-year horizon, it should be seen as a good company from an investment perspective,” he said.Choksey concluded that the market offered several opportunities, but investors needed to identify and accumulate stocks in a systematic manner.

Power crunch turns into cost squeeze for discoms

New Delhi: India’s worsening power shortage is turning into a cost squeeze for electricity distribution companies, with utilities increasingly forced to buy expensive short-term power after sunset as available generation struggles to keep pace with evening demand. “During tight supply periods, discoms are sometimes having to procure bilateral power at around Rs 20 per unit just to secure electricity,” an industry official said on condition of anonymity. That is nearly three times the average short-term power price seen in September. The pressure follows a sharp rise in unmet electricity demand. India faced a shortage of about 560 million units in September, nearly six times the roughly

98 million units in August. One unit here is the same unit that appears on a household electricity bill. The September shortage was equivalent to the monthly electricity use of about 28 lakh households, assuming a consumption of 200 units a month. At September’s average Day-Ahead Market price of Rs 7.3 per unit, electricity equivalent to the shortfall would be valued at about Rs 409 crore. The figure illustrates the scale of electricity involved and is not the actual loss incurred by discoms, an industry expert said on condition of anonymity.The stress has carried into October. On October 7, demand exceeded available electricity by 31.29 million units over the day, about 67% higher than Sep-

tember’s average daily shortage of around 18.7 million units. The squeeze becomes sharper in the evening, when solar generation falls but household, commercial and industrial demand remains high. At 7 pm on October 7, India required around 236 GW of power but could supply about 232 GW, leaving a shortfall of 4,256 MW, or close to 2% of requirement. Average prices consequently stood at around Rs 7.8 per unit, while rates touched the exchange ceiling of Rs 10/ unit during some periods. Ahead Market prices on IEX more than doubled year-on-year to Rs 7.3/unit, while Real-Time Market prices rose 108% to Rs 6.9/ unit.

RBI opens special dollar window for oil PSUs

New Delhi: The RBI on Saturday (October 10) announced a special window to meet the entire daily dollar requirements of three public sector oil marketing companies from October 12. The announcement comes as the rupee remained under pressure near record lows.The facility will cover Indian Oil Corporation, Hindustan Petroleum Corporation and Bharat Petroleum Corporation, the central bank said. It will remain operational until further notice. “Under the facility, the Reserve Bank will undertake sale of USD to the public sector OMCs through designated bank/s,” the RBI said.Oil companies need dollars to pay for crude imports. By providing a separate supply channel, the arrangement could reduce their demand for dollars in the spot market. The RBI said its decision followed an assessment of current market conditions. The announcement comes after the rupee closed at 96.73 against the dollar on Friday, compared with 96.79 in the



previous session. Alongside the oil company facility, the RBI announced tighter rules for foreign exchange derivatives, saying the measures were intended to strengthen market discipline and ensure orderly market functioning. Authorised dealers cannot allow users to rebook rupee-linked derivative contracts cancelled after the directions were issued. Contracts can still be rolled over at maturity, subject to existing rules.The RBI also reduced the threshold for hedging contracted exposures without establishing the underlying exposure to \$5 million from \$100 million across authorised dealers. The corresponding threshold for rupee-linked exchange-traded currency derivatives was lowered across

recognised exchanges. Separately, dealers must maintain a cash foreign exchange risk reserve with the RBI equal to 20% of the rupee equivalent of eligible contracts’ notional value.This requirement applies to rupee-linked contracts exceeding \$2 million that hedge current account exposures where users buy foreign currency against rupees. The reserve must be maintained until the contract ends.Dealers must also obtain undertakings confirming that the same underlying exposure has not been hedged elsewhere.The central bank did not identify the designated banks for the oil company window or disclose the pricing mechanism and the volume of dollars expected to be supplied under the arrangement.

ITC, RIL, BEL, JFS among 13 Nifty stocks to hit 52-week lows target prices Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL)

New Delhi: Bharat Electronics Ltd (BEL), ITC Ltd, Bharti Airtel Ltd and Jio Financial Services Ltd are among 13 Nifty constituents that hit their 52-week lows in October so far. This comes even as Bloomberg consensus estimates suggest 27 per cent potential upside for the Nifty over the next 12 months. RIL and BEL hit fresh lows earlier today, with consensus estimates suggesting potential upsides of 31-40 per cent for the two stocks.BEL hit a one-year low of Rs 360.50. Amid the ongoing weakness, the stock received at least four ‘Buy’ calls in the past week. Kotak Institutional Equities said the correction offered a more balanced risk-reward, supported by a strong pipeline of large defence programmes, with missiles and exports emerging as key growth drivers. BEL’s 12-month consensus target price of Rs 488 suggests 31.7 per cent potential upside.RIL hit a 52-week low of Rs 1,160.20 today. Jefferies said largecaps such as RIL are better placed as the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) begins a rate-hike cycle. Nuvama



last week retained its ‘Buy’ rating on the stock, with a target price of Rs 1,766, saying the oil-to-telecom major could report stronger-than-expected Ebitda growth in the September quarter. The domestic brokerage expects RIL’s consolidated Ebitda to rise 17 per cent year-on-year (YoY), against its earlier estimate of 12 per cent, driven by a further expansion in middle distillate crack spreads.

The consensus target price stands at Rs 1,639, implying 39.8 per cent potential upside. ITC shares surged 5 per cent to Rs 266.90 intraday, a

day after hitting a 52-week low of Rs 253.15 following block deals worth nearly Rs 9,400 crore involving GQG. For the September quarter, Emkay expects ITC’s net sales to grow 3 per cent YoY, while Ebitda is likely to decline 15 per cent, mainly due to the drag from the cigarettes segment. Nonetheless, the FMCG major’s 12-month consensus target price of Rs 325 suggests 21.9 per cent potential upside

Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd (M&M) and Maruti Suzuki India Ltd were among the auto stocks

that hit 52-week lows on Thursday. Max Healthcare Institute Ltd, NTPC Ltd, Oil & Natural Gas Corporation Ltd (ONGC), Power Grid Corporation of India Ltd and Tata Consumer Products Ltd (TCPL) also touched their one-year lows on the same day. Among Nifty stocks, M&M offers the highest potential upside of 47 per cent, according to Bloomberg consensus estimates, with a 12-month target price of Rs 4,127.61.

TCPL’s target price of Rs 1,318 implies 38 per cent potential upside, while NTPC’s target price of Rs 427 suggests 37 per cent upside. Consensus targets for Max Healthcare, Maruti Suzuki and ONGC also point to significant potential gains.Bharti Airtel Ltd, Hindustan Unilever Ltd (HUL) and Jio Financial Services Ltd hit their one-year lows on October 1.

Bharti Airtel’s 12-month consensus target price of Rs 2,300 suggests 27 per cent potential upside, while HUL’s target implies 28 per cent upside. Jio Financial’s consensus target price of Rs 300 indicates 29 per cent potential upside.

Jio Platforms IPO: Offer price estimates for India’s likely largest issue; what latest GMP hints at

New Delhi: Jio Platforms IPO: Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL)-led Jio Platforms (JPL) is reportedly planning to launch its initial public offering (IPO) in October. If market sources are to be believed, the Mukesh Ambani-led digital entity may launch its offering on Wednesday, October 21, a day after Dussehra.

The draft red herring prospectus (DRHP) of Jio Platforms suggests that the IPO will be entirely a fresh issue of 27 crore equity shares, with the majority of the proceeds to be utilised towards debt repayment. However, the company has not clarified the issue size, although market buzz suggests that it may raise Rs 30,000-35,000 crore through the IPO. Based on market sources, we have calculated the estimated IPO size and tentative share price for Jio Platforms, considering an issue of 27 crore fresh shares. The following calculation is only an estimate based on available figures, and Business Today does not claim these numbers to be official. The calculation shows a linear relationship between the issue size and the estimated cut-off price per share. Every additional Rs 1,000 crore in issue



size adds exactly Rs 37 to the estimated cut-off price. However, Jio Platforms has not yet announced the official price band. Indian telecom giant Jio is gearing up for the 6G era. The company says India could be among the first countries to roll out 6G once global standards are finalised in 2030. Jio has already developed its pre-6G stack and Giga MIMO Radio, both of which are on display at the ongoing India Mobile Congress (IMC) 2026 in New Delhi.According to Akash Ambani, Managing Di-

rector of Jio Platforms, the proposed listing will mark the beginning of a new phase of growth for the company. Speaking to the media at the India Mobile Congress in Delhi, he said the IPO was just the start of the journey. He added that the company was focused on delivering value and quality solutions to Indian consumers. According to reports by Bloomberg, Jio Platforms may raise \$3.4 billion through its maiden stake sale at a valuation of \$114 billion. If these reports prove accurate, Jio Platforms

Grey market premium (GMP) of ₹175-₹180 per share

While the official price band and issue size have not been finalized, market buzz suggests the company may look to raise ₹30,000-₹35,000 crore, which would make it India’s largest-ever IPO. The offering is expected to launch as early as Wednesday, October 21, 2026.

would become India’s third-most-valued company, after its parent, Reliance Industries, and telecom rival Bharti Airtel. It would surpass the likes of HDFC Bank Ltd and ICICI Bank Ltd.Jio Platforms is set to become India’s largest-ever IPO, surpassing Hyundai Motor India’s Rs 27,870 crore IPO, which was launched in 2024. Even before any official announcement regarding the Jio Platforms IPO, the company was reportedly commanding a grey market premium (GMP) of Rs 175-180 per share.

Adani stocks are falling Rs 2.7 lakh crore gone in 3 months; explained

Mumbai: Adani Group stocks have lost a combined Rs 2.66 lakh crore in market capitalisation over the past three months, with flagship Adani Enterprises Ltd, Adani Green Energy Ltd, Adani Energy Solutions Ltd and New Delhi Television Ltd plunging 15-23 per cent amid volatile markets. The volatility in the broader market and Adani stocks prompted Adani Group CFO Jugheshinder Robbie Singh to comment on Thursday, saying, “While the crowd reacts to ticker noise, our infrastructure continues to weigh heavy and true.” Broad-based selling in largecaps has been a major drag on the market, while the global AI trade has contributed to foreign portfolio investor (FPI) outflows from India, which have approached Rs 3 lakh crore this year. The Adani portfolio, one of India’s largest integrated infrastructure platforms, has also been caught in the broader sell-off. Rising bond yields, the case these days, typically increase borrowing and debt-servicing costs for capital-intensive businesses, potentially adding to pressure on their margins. Kranthi Bathini, Equity Strategist at WealthMills Securities, noted that Adani stocks had been resilient and resurgent of late. “But

now, the general market weakness, with the Nifty in a corrective phase, and rising bond yields could be weighing on sentiment. The Adani group carries debt, as do companies across the infrastructure sector, and rising bond yields can put pressure on margins in the short to medium term,” he said. Adani group has interest across energy and utilities, transport and logistics, metals and materials, and consumer sectors

GQG Partners, an Adani investor known for its early bets on the group’s stocks during the \$150 billion rout triggered by the Hindenburg episode, has been trimming its stakes in the group companies. Its sale of nearly Rs 9,400 crore worth of ITC Ltd shares on Thursday fuelled speculation over whether Adani stocks could be next in line for a reduction in exposure. “In the end, substance always outlasts speculation. Look at the assets, not at the hyperventilating speculators,” Singh said in a post on X, without elaborating further. The Rajiv Jain-led asset management firm recently cut its stake in Adani Energy Solutions Ltd to 3.46 per cent as of August 31 from 4.14 per cent at the end of the June quarter, the Adani company informed stock exchanges in September.

Juspay repositions as SaaS firm with AI bet

New Delhi: Payments infrastructure company Juspay is turning the AI tools it built for own use into products for other businesses, as it looks to become a software-as-a-service (SaaS) company and not just a payments-as-a-service one, Co-founder and Chief Operating Officer Sheetal Lalwani said.According to Lalwani, the company is building AI products for the world’s largest enterprises that could replace existing internal tools for documents, product management software, video conferencing, among others.Anand Rath Wealth’s Q2 profit rises 22 pc to Rs 122 cr

The biggest of these is Xyne, an open-source AI platform which lets a company build AI tools and agents

on its data, kept on its servers and run on models of its choice. Juspay runs its own messaging, project tracking, documents and support desk on it, and has deployed it with a few partners Others include Breeze Buddy, an AI voice platform that handles a few hundred thousand calls a day for merchants; Breeze Universal, which lets brands and marketplaces sell through AI shopping agents; and Juspay Genius, which lets enterprises analyse payment data and run payments operations using AI. To run these, Juspay rents its own GPUs and runs open-source models on them instead of paying AI labs per token. An eight-node GPU cluster costs Rs 25-35 lakh a month, while the same work bought as tokens could cost 5-10 times more,

Lalwani said.Juspay is looking to procure more GPUs to scale up its offerings. “I wish I could spend more on GPUs. They are in short supply because the high-bandwidth memory they run on is scarce,” Lalwani said. The company expects to receive a rack of 72 GPUs in three to six months, he added. The other bet is overseas, where Juspay is expanding across Asia-Pacific, Europe, the US, Latin America and the Middle East. More countries want their own real-time, account-to-account payment systems, and Juspay’s experience building UPI technology for banks and apps in India is helping it win banks abroad, Lalwani said. It is doing so already in Brazil, and is in talks with a couple of European countries as well.

INTERNATIONAL

UAE Investigators Say Flydubai Co-Pilot Planned to Seize Aircraft and Crash Into Tel Aviv Airport Terminal

Abu Dhabi: United Arab Emirates authorities have alleged that an Omani co-pilot attempted to hijack a Flydubai passenger aircraft and crash it into the main terminal at Israel's Ben Gurion Airport in a planned attack intended to cause mass casualties. The UAE Prosecutor General said the suspect, identified as Hammam al-Hammami, had allegedly drawn inspiration from the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the United States and made preparations to carry out a similar act using a commercial passenger aircraft.

The alleged attempt took place on September 30, 2026, aboard Flydubai flight FZ1073, which was operating from Dubai to Tel Aviv with 174 passengers on board, most of them Israeli nationals. According to the findings announced by the UAE Prosecutor General, the co-pilot intended to seize control of the aircraft during the flight and direct it towards the main passenger terminal at Ben Gurion

Airport. Investigators said the alleged plan was designed to cause the greatest possible loss of life.

Authorities said the suspect had undertaken two earlier flights between Dubai and Tel Aviv to familiarise himself with the route before attempting to cause the alleged attack on his third scheduled journey along the same corridor. During those earlier flights, he reportedly studied the aircraft's flight path, visual landmarks and approach to the Israeli airport. Investigators cited the repeated journeys as evidence that the alleged plan involved advance preparation rather than a spontaneous decision made during the flight.

The situation escalated inside the cockpit when the co-pilot allegedly attacked the captain with an emergency crash axe and attempted to take control of the aircraft. The assault reportedly caused the jet to drop sharply by several thousand feet, placing the aircraft and everyone on

board in immediate danger. The incident raised the possibility of the plane losing controlled flight while travelling along a busy international route.

The captain, cabin crew members and passengers intervened to restrain the co-pilot and prevent him from taking over the aircraft. Their intervention helped avert the alleged attempt to direct the plane towards its intended target. An off-duty reserve Flydubai pilot travelling on the same flight subsequently took over the controls and guided the aircraft away from the immediate danger.

The flight was diverted to Tabuk Airport in north-western Saudi Arabia, where it landed safely. The actions of the captain, crew, passengers and reserve pilot were central to preventing the incident from developing into a larger disaster. The episode also highlighted the risks posed when a member of the flight crew is accused of attempting to use access to the cockpit to



take control of a passenger aircraft.

The UAE Prosecutor General's findings described the alleged plan as a premeditated attempt to turn a commercial flight into a weapon. Investigators said the intended target was the main passenger terminal at Ben Gurion Airport, where an impact could have endangered large numbers of passengers, airport employees and other people in the vicinity. The alleged con-

nection to the September 11 attacks formed a significant part of the authorities' account of the suspect's motivation.

The case has also brought renewed attention to security procedures for recruiting and screening airline pilots. UAE authorities said al-Hammami had satisfied the technical qualification requirements, security-clearance standards and good-conduct criteria when he was hired. The routine

pre-employment vetting process had not flagged the extremist ideology that investigators later attributed to him.

However, separate reports indicated that the suspect had previously attracted scrutiny in Oman over concerns relating to extremism and had faced flying bans. These reports have raised questions about whether information concerning potential security risks was available to authorities be-

fore his employment with the airline and whether such information was adequately considered during the recruitment and clearance process.

The circumstances have placed a focus on the co-ordination of security information across national borders, particularly in an industry where pilots and other aviation personnel may work for airlines based outside their home countries. While technical competence and professional qualifications remain essential for flight crew, the allegations have highlighted the importance of identifying potential security concerns that may not be revealed through routine employment checks.

The incident also underscores the importance of cockpit security, emergency response procedures and the ability of flight crews to respond to an unexpected threat from within the aircraft. The alleged assault on the captain and the sudden loss of altitude

demonstrated how quickly a situation inside the cockpit can place an entire flight at risk. The intervention of passengers and cabin crew, followed by the actions of the reserve pilot, helped restore control and enabled the aircraft to divert safely.

The UAE authorities' account presents the episode as an alleged terrorist plot involving advance planning, route familiarisation and an attempted seizure of an aircraft's controls. The investigation has raised questions about how the suspect's alleged intentions developed, why earlier security checks did not identify the concerns later attributed to him, and whether existing screening arrangements were sufficient to detect potential threats among aviation personnel. The safe diversion of the aircraft prevented the alleged plan from reaching its intended target, while the case has placed aviation recruitment, information-sharing and cockpit security under renewed scrutiny.

Pentagon says execution of Fort Hood shooter will be live streamed



Pentagon: Pete Hegseth has said the execution of Nidal Hasan, the former army psychiatrist who killed 13 people at Fort Hood, will be a public event when the sentence is carried out later this year. A defense department official later confirmed the execution will be live-streamed.

In an interview with Real America's Voice, the Pentagon secretary said the firing squad will carry out the sentence at Fort Hood, Texas, at 1pm on Thursday, 3 December. This would be the first US military execution in more than 60 years.

"It was a radical Islamist attack in uniform inside the ranks, and so he's going to get a firing squad of soldiers, as it should be, and we'll make sure that people are able to watch it, that it's public, because people need to understand there's serious consequences for these types of things," Hegseth said.

Hasan opened fire at a medical processing center on the Texas base on 5 November 2009, killing 13 people and wounding dozens more. A military jury sentenced him to death in 2013, and he has been held at Fort Leavenworth in Kansas ever since. He exhausted his appeals last year, which cleared the way for Donald Trump to approve the sentence this week on a recommendation from Hegseth.

Investigators had found that Hasan had exchanged 18 emails with Anwar al-Awlaki, a radical cleric who was subsequently killed in a US drone strike, in the months before the attack.

At his court martial, Hasan said he had acted to stop American soldiers from de-

ploying to Afghanistan to kill fellow Muslims, before his own impending deployment. A review led by William Webster, a former FBI director, concluded that the bureau should have investigated his correspondence more thoroughly.

In the interview, Hegseth said Barack Obama had called the attack "workplace violence". The Pentagon initially treated the shooting as a workplace-violence incident rather than a terrorist attack, a classification that affected the victims' eligibility for Purple Hearts and other combat-related benefits. But there is no record of Obama himself using the phrase. At a memorial days after the attack, he instead described the victims as Americans who had been unable to escape "the horror of war", while calling the shooting a tragedy and saying the killer would face justice.

The last known case of a military firing squad in the US was in November 1945, but the Trump administration has sought to bring it back in Trump's second term to expedite capital punishment cases. Five US states allow for firing squads: Idaho, Mississippi, Oklahoma, South Carolina and Utah.

Abroad, Amnesty International's most recent annual review lists Afghanistan, China, North Korea, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Taiwan, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen among the countries that still use firing squads.

Asked whether Hasan had made a final request or reached out to Trump, Hegseth replied: "Don't care. We'll see him on December 3."

ICJ judge Navi Pillay wins Nobel peace prize for promoting international law

South Africa: The Nobel peace prize has been awarded to Navi Pillay, the South African former UN human rights chief who chaired the UN commission that concluded Israel was guilty of genocide in Gaza.

The Norwegian Nobel committee said Pillay, who is serving as a judge at the international court of justice (ICJ), has "shown that legal measures can help prevent acts of war and violence".

"Navi Pillay's commitment to universal legal principles and her firm moral compass are constants in a long career," the committee said, mentioning her early work defending Nelson Mandela under South Africa's apartheid regime, serving on the international criminal tribunal, and then as the UN high commissioner for human rights, as well as chairing the UN independent international commission of inquiry on the occupied Palestinian territory.

That commission concluded last year that the state of Israel was guilty of genocidal acts in Gaza "with the specific intent to destroy Palestinians in Gaza", and said the country's prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, its president, Isaac Herzog, and its former defence minister Yoav Gallant had "incited the commission of genocide". "It is clear that there is an intent to destroy the Palestinians in Gaza through acts that meet the criteria set forth in the genocide convention," Pillay said on the publication of the commission's findings in September

last year. Israel refused to cooperate with the commission, arguing it was biased, and rejected its report as "scandalous". The Israeli foreign ministry reacted furiously to news of Pillay's award on Friday.

"If there were an award for lies, hatred, and blood libels, Navi Pillay wouldn't just be a contender. She'd be a frontrunner," the ministry said on X, adding: "Awarding Pillay the Nobel Peace Prize isn't a recognition of justice. It's the grotesque weaponization of an award to legitimize anti-Israel hatred and prejudice."

"Now that the Nobel commission has rewarded the biggest lie of the 21st century, Joseph Goebbels is certainly applauding from hell."

In its statement, the Nobel committee said Pillay, 85, had "contributed to strengthen the institutions of international law".

"Her independence, expertise and steadfastness have made her one of the most respected international jurists of our time," the committee said.

"In awarding this year's Nobel peace prize, the Norwegian Nobel committee wants to remind the world that the rule of law – national and international – underpins the system we have set up to ensure peace and resolve conflicts non-violently," its statement said.

The committee said it had not been able to locate Pillay before its announcement on Friday morning. She was attending a meeting of human rights lawyers and jurists in



Nuremberg, Germany, at the site of postwar war crimes trials of Nazi leaders, and heard the news from colleagues. She responded with disbelief.

"I don't know about it so much. The question is: is it true? Being a lawyer and a judge, I still want to verify it," she said.

"The last thing I did was the report on Gaza naming what's happening there as genocide," Pillay added. "One of the main reactions to that report was people [complimented] me for my courage. You can imagine how surprised I was. Why would you need courage to speak the truth. You interpret the law. You look at all the facts, so it's an impartial decision."

Pillay is currently overseeing a genocide case against Myanmar at the ICJ. The ICJ, a UN body, rules on disputes between states, while the international criminal court (ICC) investigates and

prosecutes individuals accused of atrocities and other grave international crimes. Hours after the announcement, the Trump administration unveiled broad new sanctions against the ICC, on which Pillay also once served. The US secretary of state, Marco Rubio, said the measures were to ensure the court would never prosecute Americans.

The ICC has not charged any US nationals, and has previously pointed out that it is a court of last resort, unnecessary in the case of countries with effective legal systems. Last year, Donald Trump, who has long coveted the Nobel peace prize, imposed personal sanctions against ICC officials deemed to be involved in investigations of Americans or Israelis. The new sanctions target the court as an institution, blocking any ICC assets in the US and giving US companies and individuals six months to wind down any

business with the court.

The ICC said the sanctions were "an attempt to obstruct the course of justice and to prevent the court from doing what it was created to do".

"It is an assault on the rule of law and on the very foundations of the international legal order which strikes at the simple principle that no one stands above the law," the court said in a statement.

Pillay's award was welcomed by human rights activists and hailed in South Africa, home to four previous laureates. The country's president, Cyril Ramaphosa, said: "Justice Pillay's crowning as winner of the Nobel prize allows us to celebrate the progressive contributions she has made to strengthen peace, uphold human dignity and bring hope in South Africa and to peoples globally."

Edwin Cameron, a retired South African constitutional court justice, said: "The award of the prize to Navi Pillay re-emphasises that the prize embodies an international aspiration to peace, and to respect and understanding across borders – and that leaders of great stature in our country – [Desmond] Tutu, Mandela, now Pillay – are recognised outside it, on the international stage. "This may help reset our national debate on South Africa's position in the region, and in Africa," he said. Yasmin Sooka, a human rights lawyer and commissioner on both South Africa and Sierra Leone's truth and reconciliation commissions, said Pillay "follows in the footsteps of Chief Albert Luthuli and

Archbishop Desmond Tutu, carrying forward South Africa's proud tradition of linking peace with justice and human dignity".

"From defending apartheid's most vulnerable to her pioneering role in the Akayesu judgment, she has transformed international justice. That judgment helped establish rape and sexual violence as weapons of war – a historic breakthrough that placed survivors' experiences at the heart of international justice," Sooka said.

In 1998, the international criminal tribunal for Rwanda found Jean-Paul Akayesu, a former mayor of Taba, guilty of genocide and crimes against humanity.

"At the ICC, as UN high commissioner for human rights, and leading the inquiry that found Israel responsible for genocide in Gaza, she has brought unwavering integrity and courage to holding power accountable," Sooka added.

Last year's award of the peace prize to the Venezuelan opposition leader, Maria Corina Machado, drew widespread criticism because of her calls for US military intervention in her country. Machado heightened the controversy in January by handing her winner's medal to Trump. The prize committee insisted that the honour of being a Nobel laureate could not be transferred. On Friday, Pillay joked that she could do the same: "If you clap a little bit more, I'm going to share this prize with Trump."

Virgin unveils its future cross-Channel train as it gears up to take on Eurostar

London: Flash interiors, fancy food and maybe even a bar: Virgin has unveiled a mock-up of its future cross-Channel train, with a pledge to create "something genuinely new".

The group is planning to launch rail services from London to the continent in 2030, with Eurostar facing competition for the first time since the opening of the Channel tunnel.

Virgin has ordered 12 trains from the manufacturer Alstom, and will hope to outshine Eurostar on design and

customer experience as it fits them out. While Virgin's last stab at reimagining UK train travel may have peaked with the talking toilet seat on its intercity services in 2013, it has said the future trains will be inspired from its airline, cruise and hotel arms. Although details are being kept firmly under wraps, it said it would draw on Virgin Atlantic's airport lounges, or Clubhouses, for "pre-departure and onboard social spaces" with "more flexibility to work, re-



lax or socialise in style". Food will be influenced by its cruise line menu and the design by its Virgin Hotels brand. Josh Bayliss, the chief executive of Virgin Group, said: "Virgin has a proud history in UK rail.

With our latest venture we are drawing on more than four decades of experience across travel and hospitality to create something genuinely new. "We're confident that more journeys between the UK and

Europe will be made by train. We're adding capacity for millions more international rail journeys each year, growing the market as a whole. We're looking forward to seeing our distinctive red and black trains travelling across Europe."

Virgin will also look to connect its rail and airline networks, potentially bringing passengers from France for Virgin Atlantic flights.

The Office of Rail and Road on Thursday published an agreement with Eurostar for

Virgin to maintain its trains at the Temple Mills international depot in east London, with track access in the UK confirmed until at least 2040. Italy's state-owned Trenitalia is also expected to launch cross-Channel high-speed services. It already runs international trains as far as Paris and recently announced its own €2bn order for 19 new trains from Hitachi, some of which are expected to be based in France and run through the tunnel to London.

Seven straighteners to make styling simpler

When you frequently rely on heat-styling tools such as a blow dryer, curling iron, or flat iron to craft your desired daily look, incorporating an investment-grade, high-performance hair styling device into your regular beauty arsenal can fundamentally revolutionize and substantially streamline your entire grooming regimen from the ground up. Beyond merely granting you the creative freedom to experiment with sleek, pin-straight strands, soft bends, or polished waves right from the comfort of your own home, a truly top-tier styling tool is engineered with advanced ionic and ceramic technologies that actively work to diminish persistent frizz, effortlessly manage unruly or cowlick-prone strands, and seal your hair cuticles against environmental humidity. This capability allows you to consistently achieve impeccably smooth, salon-quality, and highly refined hair within minutes, effectively eliminating the frequent inconvenience, significant time investment, and recurring financial expense of scheduling regular professional salon appointments while simultaneously empowering you to maintain effortless control over your personal presentation day in and day out. However, navigating the saturated beauty market to select the ultimate styling companion involves far more than simply opting for the most aggressively heated model with the highest maximum temperature gauge; rather, a truly informed decision requires a meticulous evaluation of numerous intricate technical specifications that dramatically dictate your daily styling experience. From the foundational plate material—such as classic ceramic, tourmaline-infused crystals, or titanium—and customizable digital heat settings to rapid-action heating elements, ergonomic plate widths, and intelligent automatic safety shut-off features, every single structural component directly dictates how effortlessly the device glides through your tresses and safeguards your hair’s overall integrity. For instance, classic ceramic plates are widely favored by hair care professionals for their superior ability to distribute heat with absolute uniformity, preventing damaging hot spots, whereas wider plate dimensions can drastically accelerate the styling process for individu-

als blessed with exceptionally long, dense, or coarse hair, ensuring that your comprehensive beauty routine remains both exceptionally efficient and gentle on your precious strands over the long haul. If you are looking for a hair straightener on Amazon India, here are seven options worth considering for different styling needs and budgets.

1. Philips Ceramic Hp 8303/06 Hair Straightener: Philips HP8303/06 is a practical choice for everyday at-home styling. It features ceramic plates designed to distribute heat evenly and can be useful for creating a smooth, straight finish. Its compact design also makes it convenient to store in a vanity or carry while travelling. The model is particularly suitable for people who want a straightforward straightener without too many complicated controls. It is a good option for beginners and occasional users who want to tame frizz and straighten their hair quickly.

2. Remington S3500 Ceramic Straight 230 Hair Straightener: Remington’s S3500 Ceramic Straight 230 is designed for people looking for higher-temperature styling. Its ceramic-coated plates glide through sections of hair while the adjustable temperature gives users more control over the styling process.

The higher heat range can be useful for thick, coarse or difficult-to-straighten hair, although it is important to use a heat-protectant product before styling. The longer plates can also help cover more hair with each pass.

3. Remington Hair Straightener Shine Therapy Wide Styling Plates: If shine is one of your priorities, the Remington Shine Therapy range is worth considering. The straightener is designed with ceramic plates and shine-focused technology to help create a smoother-looking finish.

It can be particularly useful when you want your straight hair to look polished rather than simply flat. As with any heated styling tool, using smaller sections and avoiding repeated passes over the same section can help reduce unnecessary heat exposure.

4. Syska HS6810Pro SalonFinish Hair Straightener with Ceramic Coating Aluminium Plate: For shoppers looking for a more affordable styling tool, Syska HS6810 is an

option to explore. Its slim design makes it convenient for everyday use and for styling smaller sections of hair.

A compact straightener can also be useful for touching up the front sections, bangs or flyaways rather than using a larger styling tool over the entire head.

5. VEGA PROFESSIONAL Pro Cera Smart Hair Straightener With Tourmaline Ceramic Floating Plates: VEGA has several styling tools aimed at home users, and the Pro-Cera is designed for people who want a more salon-inspired styling experience. Its flat plates can be used to straighten hair as well as create subtle bends or waves when used with the right technique. This makes it a versatile addition to a home styling kit, particularly if you do not want to buy separate tools for every hairstyle.

6. Nova NHS 860 Hair Straightener: Nova’s hair styling tools are known for offering accessible options for home users. The NHS 860 is a practical choice for those who want a basic straightener for occasional styling. A model in this category can be useful for college students, working professionals or anyone who does not straighten their hair every day but wants the option available for meetings, occasions or outings.

7. Ikonic Professional Glam Hair Straightener: If you are willing to spend more on a professional-style styling tool, Ikonic offers several hair straighteners designed with salon-inspired features. These models can be worth considering if you frequently straighten your hair or experiment with different hairstyles. Professional-style straighteners can offer better control and more styling flexibility, but they should still be used carefully. Start with a lower temperature and increase it only if your hair requires more heat. Best for: Frequent styling and advanced users.

How to choose the right hair straightener

Before adding a straightener to your Amazon cart, consider your hair type and how frequently you plan to use it. Fine or damaged hair generally benefits from lower heat settings, while thick or coarse hair may require higher temperatures. Look for ceramic or ceramic-coated plates if even heat distribution



is important to you. Wider plates can make straightening long or thick hair faster, while narrow plates offer better control around the roots and shorter hair. Also check for features such as adjustable temperature settings, fast heating, an automatic shut-off function and a swivel cord. These small details can make a noticeable difference when you use the tool regularly. Most importantly, as a fundamental rule of thumb that safeguards the long-term health, structural integrity, and natural moisture barrier of your precious tresses, you must strictly refrain from ever applying a standard hair straightener to damp or soaking wet hair unless the appliance has been explicitly engineered and manufactured with advanced wet-to-dry styling technology. To further mitigate any potential thermal damage or heat-induced degradation, it is vital to consistently apply a premium, high-performance heat-protection serum or spray evenly throughout your strands prior to utilizing any hot styling equipment, ensuring that a protective shield is established between your hair cuticles and the high-temperature plates. Additionally, you should deliberately avoid the damaging habit of repeatedly clamping and passing

the straightener over the exact same section of hair multiple times in succession, opting instead for smooth, single-pass glides at a steady pace to achieve your desired sleek finish efficiently without subjecting your hair to unnecessary thermal stress. Whether you are on the hunt for a straightforward, user-friendly everyday styling tool designed for quick morning touch-ups or a heavy-duty, professional-grade straightener engineered to withstand rigorous, salon-level performance, the expansive digital catalog on Amazon India offers a vast, meticulously curated spectrum of choices spanning every conceivable price point, feature set, and brand preference. Ultimately, navigating this extensive marketplace to pinpoint the absolute best choice for your unique vanity setup requires a deeply personalized assessment that extends far beyond flashy marketing claims, hinging instead on a careful appraisal of your specific hair texture—whether fine, chemically treated, wavy, or tightly coiled—alongside your styling frequency and the degree of granular control you demand over customizable temperature settings to safeguard your hair’s long-term health and vitality.

Ten women’s Anarkali kurtas to wear during Diwali



An Anarkali kurta represents a quintessential festive garment for well-established reasons. The garment’s characteristically flared cut imparts both fluidity and sophistication, whereas coordinated trousers and a dupatta facilitate streamlined ensemble composition. During Diwali celebrations, this silhouette serves as a pragmatic substitute to an ornately embellished lehenga, proving equally suitable whether one is participating in a family puja, receiving guests within one’s residence, or attending a festive dining engagement.

The key is to choose a style that suits the occasion. Embroidered Anarkalis bring a more traditional feel to festive dressing, while printed designs are easy to wear for daytime celebrations. Fabric, fit and embellishment also matter

if you plan to spend hours moving between family visits and festivities.

Here are eight Anarkali kurta sets to consider for your Diwali wardrobe, from embroidered styles to printed options that can be dressed up with festive accessories.

1. Amazon Brand – Myx Women’s Embroidered Kurta Suit Set with Dupatta: If you prefer a traditional outfit for Diwali, this Myx embroidered kurta suit set is worth considering. Its A-line silhouette and jacquard dupatta offer a dressed-up alternative to a simple printed kurta. The listing also mentions plus-size availability, giving shoppers more sizing options to explore.

Why consider it: A coordinated set makes festive dressing easier because the kurta and dupatta are designed to work together.

2. KLOSIA Women Embroidery Solid Anarkali Kurta and Pant Set with Dupatta: A solid Anarkali can look particularly elegant when the silhouette and embroidery do the work. This KLOSIA set combines an embroidered kurta with coordinated pants and a dupatta, making it a potential choice for those who prefer understated festive dressing over all-over prints or heavy embellishment. Why consider it: Solid colours are easy to accessorise, so you can change the mood of the outfit with gold jewellery, colourful earrings or statement footwear.

3. KLOSIA Embroidery Solid Anarkali Kurta and Pant Set with Dupatta: This solid Anarkali set from KLOSIA is all about understated elegance. Delicate embroidery adds detail to the flared silhouette

without making the outfit feel too heavy. The matching pants keep the look balanced, while the dupatta provides a graceful finishing touch. Why consider it: It is worth considering for intimate celebrations and festive dinners when you want an outfit that feels dressed up without being overly ornate.

4. EthnicJunction Cotton Silk Embroidered Anarkali with Palazzo and Digital Print Dupatta: This EthnicJunction set combines a cotton-silk Anarkali with an embroidered kurta, palazzo pants and a digitally printed dupatta. The contrast between embroidery and print gives the outfit a more contemporary feel while retaining the traditional appeal of an Anarkali silhouette. Why consider it: The printed dupatta adds visual interest, making this an option for shoppers who want more detail than a plain festive set.

5. GoSriKi Viscose Anarkali Kurta Set with Dupatta: If you prefer a softer, flowing silhouette, this GoSriKi viscose Anarkali is worth a look. The fabric’s drape can give the flared shape a fluid appearance, making it a potential option for long festive days and family gatherings where comfort matters alongside styling.

Why consider it: It offers a softer alternative to a structured, heavily embroidered festive outfit.

How to style it: Choose delicate drop earrings, comfortable juttis and a small handbag. If the kurta already has noticeable detailing, keep the rest of the jewellery simple.

6. Nermosa Printed Anarkali Kurta and Pant Set with Dupatta: Not every Diwali outfit needs elaborate embroidery. This Nermosa printed Anarkali offers a more relaxed approach to festive dressing, pairing a printed flared kurta with coordinated pants and a dupatta. It can work

particularly well for daytime pujas, office festivities and casual family celebrations. Why consider it: Printed Anarkalis are useful for occasions that call for festive dressing without the formality of heavily embellished occasionwear.

How to style it: Add oxidised or gold-toned earrings, flat sandals and a simple shoulder bag for daytime celebrations.

7. GoSriKi Rayon Viscose Printed Anarkali with Palazzo and Dupatta: This GoSriKi set pairs a printed Anarkali with palazzo-style bottoms for a relaxed silhouette that can still feel occasion-appropriate. Its printed design is worth considering if you want something festive for daytime plans but would rather avoid heavily embellished clothing.

Why consider it: The palazzo pairing gives the outfit a different feel from a conventional kurta-and-straight-pants set.

How to style it: Pair it with statement earrings, a metallic clutch and flat or low-heeled sandals for a festive lunch or puja.

8. KLOSIA Printed Anarkali Kurta and Pant Set with Dupatta: This printed KLOSIA Anarkali combines a flared silhouette with coordinated pants and a dupatta. It is a potential option for shoppers who want a complete ethnic outfit that can work across casual festive gatherings and everyday ethnic dressing, rather than a piece reserved for one special occasion.

Why consider it: A printed set can offer repeat-wear potential, especially if the colours and design work with accessories you already own.

How to style it: Finish the look with small jhumkas, embellished flats and a compact handbag.

9. GoSriKi Women’s Rayon Viscose Embroidered Anarkali Kurta with Pant and Dupatta: For shoppers

who prefer embroidery over an all-over print, this GoSriKi Anarkali set is another option to consider for Diwali. It combines a rayon-viscose kurta with matching pants and a dupatta, bringing together the flared silhouette and co-ordinated styling that make Anarkali sets a convenient choice for festive dressing.

Why consider it: The embroidered design offers an alternative to the printed options in this roundup and may suit family gatherings or festive dinners, depending on the colour and detailing shown in the listing.

How to style it: Pair it with traditional jhumkas, embellished juttis and a small clutch. Keep your accessories relatively simple if the embroidery is already

prominent.

10. Amazon Brand – Myx Women’s Kurta Pant Set with Embroidered Organza Dupatta: An embroidered organza dupatta can add a dressier finish to a coordinated kurta-and-pant set. This Myx option features an A-line fit and an embroidered organza dupatta, with plus-size availability mentioned in the product listing. It is worth considering if you want a coordinated ethnic outfit that relies on the dupatta to bring extra festive detail.

When evaluating the aesthetic appeal and overall versatility of this ensemble, one of the most compelling reasons to consider adding it to your wardrobe is the inclusion of a stunning organza dupatta, which

effortlessly introduces a distinct, highly sophisticated styling element and a refreshing textural contrast that sets it apart from the more conventional, predictable dupattas commonly featured in other standard coordinated ethnic sets; furthermore, to ensure that the garment perfectly aligns with your personal style expectations and specific occasion requirements, it is highly recommended that you take a close, careful look at the accompanying high-resolution product images and detailed fabric specifications to thoroughly understand the fine nuances of its finish, drape, and the precise level, intricacy, and craftsmanship of its overall embellishments.



John Cena and David Harbour join new comedy film



Los Angeles : The story revolves around a dad drowning under the pressures of work. One fine day, after making his way back home from a work trip, he finds out that his family has disappeared. Confusion strikes, as in their place of residence now stays a mysterious new person who has apparently bought the house and moved in.

The producers for this film are Nick Weidenfeld and Alexis Garcia, backed by Fifth Season as the

studio. The Family Disappears is a completely original script written by Brendan O'Hare responsible for writing some hits, including the animated TV special Egghand and The New Yorker Presents. The filmmaker who will be responsible for taking the helm as director is Jonathon Etzler, famously known for Bad Apples and One More Time. The multi-time Emmy winner, David Harbour, has got some exciting months ahead with multiple releases confirmed in the near future. The list includes highly anticipated movies such as Evil Genius, Violent Night 2, Little One, and many others.

He will also be a part of Avengers: Domsday, releasing this December, in which he will play the role of the Red Guardian, first seen in the movie Thunderbolts. Another exciting project will see him reunite with his on-screen adopted daughter from the hit show Stranger Things, Millie Bobby Brown, for a new spy series from the writer of Enola Holmes, Jack Thorne. John Cena, who was recently seen in Matchbox The Movie, just got his first-ever Emmy nomination as the executive producer for the Prime Video action-comedy film Heads of State. Two of his movies, including The Janson Directive and One Attempt Remaining, are currently in post-production.

The production for The Family Disappears is set to begin shooting on November 10 in Atlanta, Georgia.

Thiagarajan Kumararaja wraps shoot for 'Pocket Novel'

Chennai : Thiagarajan Kumararaja's Pocket Novel has completed filming, marking a significant step towards the filmmaker's return to the big screen. The director, best known for the cult favourites Aaranya Kaandam and Super Deluxe, is making his third feature film, bringing together Vijay Sethupathi and an ensemble cast that includes Raj B Shetty, Malavika Mohanan and Kishore. The film also marks Kumararaja's first feature directorial since Super Deluxe, which was released in 2019, following his work on the anthology series Modern Love: Chennai.

The completion of the shoot brings the film closer to its next phase of production, although the makers are yet to announce a release date. With a cast featuring performers from different film industries and Ilaiyaraaja composing the music, Pocket Novel has emerged as one of the projects to watch out for as Kumararaja returns to feature filmmaking. Pocket Novel was first announced in February 2026,

with Kumararaja and Vijay Sethupathi set to collaborate once again after their acclaimed 2019 film Super Deluxe. That film, which brought together multiple intersecting storylines and an eclectic ensemble, remains a defining entry in both their filmographies. Their reunion has consequently generated interest, particularly given Kumararaja's relatively selective approach to feature filmmaking.

The film's title was subsequently revealed, along with the announcement of Raj B Shetty, Malavika Mohanan and Kishore as members of the cast. The combination brings together actors with distinct screen identities and experience across Kannada, Malayalam and Tamil cinema. While details about their respective characters and the film's plot remain under wraps, the casting adds another layer of curiosity to the project. Ilaiyaraaja has been roped in to compose the music, reuniting with Kumararaja after Modern

Love: Chennai. The anthology series, which featured six stories set in the city, offered the filmmaker an opportunity to explore different shades of contemporary relationships. His collaboration with the veteran composer on Pocket Novel marks another meeting of two artists whose work has occupied distinctive places in Tamil cinema.

As with his previous feature films, Kumararaja has kept much of the narrative under wraps. The title offers little indication of the story, and the makers have yet to reveal a detailed synopsis. For now, the reunion with Sethupathi and the eclectic cast remain the most prominent talking points surrounding the film. Pocket Novel brings another filmmaker into the creative mix, with Andrew Louis, the creator of the crime thriller series Vadhandhi, credited with the story and screenplay. Known for his work in the crime and thriller space, Louis brings a different storytelling background to a project directed by a filmmaker whose

features have frequently explored unconventional narratives and morally complex characters. Whether the collaboration signals a shift in Kumararaja's approach remains to be seen.

The technical team includes cinematographer Nirav Shah, editor Sathyaraj Natarajan, art director V Shammugaraja and stunt choreographer Dhilip Subbarayan. Ezhilmathy, who is co-producing the film, also serves as its costume designer. Sathyaraj Natarajan has an additional responsibility as executive producer, making his involvement extend beyond the editing room. Kumararaja is producing Pocket Novel alongside SD Ezhilmathy under the Tyler Durden and Kino Fist banner. The production setup places the director in a key role both behind the camera and in overseeing the film's development. Since the release of Super Deluxe, Kumararaja has remained an intriguing presence in Tamil cinema, with audiences awaiting his next feature-length work.

Sonali Bendre replaces Nana Patekar on show

Mumbai : Veteran actor Nana Patekar was scheduled to shoot for the premiere episode of Sony Marathi's Kon Honar Crorepati, hosted by Madhuri Dixit. The appearance would have reunited the two actors decades after they shared screen space in the 1998 film Wajood. However, following Nana's demise at the age of 75 on October 8, the show's premiere plans changed, with Sonali Bendre stepping in as the celebrity guest for the opening episode. The new season of the Marathi quiz show is set to premiere on October 12 at 9 pm on Sony Marathi and SonyLIV.

Nana Patekar was supposed to shoot for the show on Thursday and was expected to feature among its first celebrity guests. However, following his demise, the makers revised their premiere plans, with Sonali Bendre stepping in to join Madhuri Dixit for the episode. After his sudden passing, Madhuri took to social media to pay an emotional tribute to him. She wrote, "A great artist, a powerful personality and an unforgettable voice... With Nana Patekar's passing, the film industry has lost a treasured and legendary actor. My heartfelt condolences to his family and loved ones. A heartfelt tribute." Meanwhile, the premiere of Kon Honar Crorepati will bring Madhuri Dixit and Sonali Bendre together on screen for the first time. The two actresses have not previously shared screen space in a film. Talking about the same, Madhuri shared in a statement, "Sonali and I have never done a film together. But it's never too late! Today, we're finally together on the sets of Kon Honar Crorepati. It's a celebration, and I'm glad that I am starting this new chapter with you. Sharing the screen with you feels like such a special occasion. It is a celebration for me." Sonali Bendre, who has long admired Madhuri Dixit, welcomed her new role as the host of Kon Honar Crorepati. She said that Madhuri was the perfect choice to lead the show, adding that she had always been a fan of the actress.

Ajay Devgn's 'Drishyam 3' hits Rs 260 crore domestic net

Mumbai : Drishyam The Conclusion is unstoppable at the box office. It has even surpassed the collection of Drishyam 2. In eight days of its release, the third instalment of the Hindi Drishyam crossed the Rs 250 crore mark at the domestic box office.

As per Sacnilk, Drishyam The Conclusion earned Rs. 14.50 crore net at the Indian box office on its second Friday. With this, the film's total domestic net collection has climbed to Rs. 260 crore, while its gross earnings in India stand at Rs. 312 crore. The film is also doing well overseas. It added Rs. 6 crore to its international earnings on Friday, taking its overseas gross collection to Rs. 95 crore. Its worldwide gross collection has now reached Rs. 407 crore.

Reportedly made on a bud-



get of Rs. 110 crore, the Ajay Devgn-starrer has turned into a box office blockbuster. If the film maintains its current pace, it could cross Rs 300 crore in domestic net collections by the end of its second weekend. After protecting his family in Drishyam 2, Vijay Salgaonkar faces another challenge in Drishyam 3: The Conclusion. The film follows his efforts to keep the secrets

from his past hidden. The third film continues the story from Drishyam 2 and is expected to bring Vijay's journey to its final chapter. In the earlier films, he managed to stay one step ahead of the police. However, this time, his carefully planned moves face another test.

It is important to note that the Hindi film is not a direct remake of the upcoming Malayalam film Drishyam 3,

which stars Mohanlal. Both films will follow different storylines, with the Hindi version telling an original story centred on Vijay Salgaonkar. Drishyam 3: The Conclusion stars Ajay Devgn, Jaideep Ahlawat, Tabu, Shriya Saran, Rajat Kapoor, Prakash Raj, Ishita Dutta and Mrunal Jadhav. "Drishyam 3: The Conclusion is a gripping and fast-paced thriller that understands the appeal of its franchise. It keeps you invested and benefits from strong performances, particularly from Ajay Devgn, Jaideep Ahlawat, Prakash Raj and Kamlesh Sawant. However, the film's biggest strength is also its weakness. It is not a bad film but it sticks closely to the Drishyam formula, making it familiar. It is not a grand conclusion that the franchise deserved," a part of our review reads.

Actor Nani backs Nithiin's upcoming film 'Alias Rukmini'

Hyderabad : After the blockbuster success of Court – State Vs A Nobody, noted actor Nani's Unanimous Productions is gearing up to bring another family entertainer. Titled Alias Rukmini, the film stars Nithiin in the lead role and is directed by Dhandora fame Murali Kanth Devasoth. Produced by Deepthi Ganta, 'Alias Rukmini' is shaping up to be an exciting project with a distinctive narrative and a refreshing approach. The team has just one more shooting schedule left to complete.

With production progressing at a brisk pace and post-production activities advancing simultaneously, the makers have locked December 4 for the film's worldwide theatrical release. The release date poster presents Nithiin as a typical middle class man. Dressed in a checked shirt, formal trousers, and spectacles, he carries a shoulder bag



while standing amid a crowd at a court, with lawyers and cops in the background. His composed yet curious expression hints at a character navigating an unfamiliar situation. The silhouette of the female lead adds to the mystery. The protagonist- Krishna leads a quiet, ordinary life, navigating the complexities of a world where some truths are better left unspoken. But when love enters his life, an

unexpected secret threatens to turn everything he believes in upside down. A story of love and hidden truths, Alias Rukmini explores the thin line between what society accepts and what it chooses to question.

The project has generated considerable curiosity within industry circles, with its unusual concept and promising combination of talent adding to the anticipation.

Ronit Roy secures Andheri real estate deal

Mumbai : Actor Ronit Roy has been part of the entertainment industry for years, winning audiences over with his work in television, films and web series. Apart from his acting career, the actor has also invested in Mumbai real estate.

According to documents accessed by real estate data analytics firm CRE Matrix, Ronit has leased out his 950 sq ft office in Andheri West to hair and skincare company Kerawi Care (OPC) Private Limited for five years. The deal is expected to bring in nearly Rs 1.39 crore in total rent. The office is located on the fourth floor of Vastu Prestige, near City Mall in Andheri West. The leave-and-licence agreement was registered on June 12, 2026. The starting monthly rent is Rs 2.10 lakh, and the tenant has paid a security deposit of Rs 6.5 lakh. The monthly rent will go up by 5% every year. It will increase from Rs 2.10 lakh in the first year to Rs 2.20 lakh in the second year and Rs 2.31 lakh in the third. In the fourth year, the rent will rise to Rs 2.43 lakh per month, reaching Rs 2.55 lakh in the fifth year. Over the full 60-month agreement, the total rent will come to nearly Rs 1.39 crore. As per the agreement, the licensor will pay maintenance charges, including applicable rates, taxes, levies, assessments and non-occupancy charges.

Catherine Tresa boards Sundeep Kishan-starrer 'Karikaala'



Hyderabad : Sundeep Kishan is preparing to enter the world of fantasy with Karikaala, an upcoming socio-fantasy adventure that promises to take audiences into an unfamiliar cinematic landscape. The film, which was announced earlier, has now added another name to its cast, with the makers confirming that Catherine Tresa Alexander will play the female lead opposite Sundeep.

Produced by Mahidhar Reddy and Rajashekhar Ananbhimmoju under the Shining Pictures banner, the film is directed by Ugandhar Muni. Planned as a multilingual production, Karikaala is expected to release in Telugu, Tamil and Hindi. The makers have also revealed an ambitious theatrical strategy, with the story set to unfold

across two instalments in 2027. Catherine's casting announcement comes after the makers introduced Sundeep Kishan's character through a first-look poster that presented the actor in a striking warrior-like avatar. The image offered a glimpse of the film's fantastical setting, suggesting a character who will be navigating a world of adventure, danger and extraordinary encounters.

The team has also revealed that Karikaala takes inspiration from the fairy tales published in Chandamama magazine. A familiar name in Indian publishing, Chandamama introduced generations of readers to stories steeped in folklore, mythology and magical adventures. Drawing from this tradition gives the film an interesting starting

point, although the makers have yet to reveal how these influences will shape the narrative or the world inhabited by its characters. For Catherine Tresa Alexander, Karikaala adds another Telugu project to her filmography. The actor was last seen in Mana Shankara Vara Prasad Garu, the Chiranjeevi-starrer directed by Anil Ravipudi that enjoyed a successful run. She played an assistant to Chiranjeevi's character in the film, which brought her back to the forefront of a major commercial production.

Her association with Karikaala marks a new on-screen pairing with Sundeep Kishan. With the makers yet to reveal details about her role, audiences will have to wait for further announcements to understand how her character fits into the story. The casting news, however, gives the project another talking point as it begins building anticipation ahead of its theatrical release. Sricharan Pakala has been roped in as the film's music director. His contribution will be particularly important in shaping the soundscape of a fantasy adventure, where music can help establish the atmosphere and lend scale to the world on screen.

Karikaala brings together

Sundeep Kishan and Ugandhar Muni, who previously attracted attention with Shambhala. The fantasy thriller, starring Aadi Saikumar, emerged as a much-needed commercial success for the actor after a prolonged period without a major hit. The film also helped put Muni's work in the genre under the spotlight. With Karikaala, the director appears ready to explore the possibilities of a larger fantasy setting. While the makers have not disclosed much about the plot, the Chandamama connection and Sundeep's warrior avatar indicate an emphasis on imaginative storytelling. Whether the film leans more towards folklore, action or supernatural adventure remains to be seen.

For Sundeep, the project arrives at a time when he continues to balance work across Telugu and Tamil cinema. His latest release was Sigma, the Tamil film directed by Jason Sanjay in his directorial debut. Jason is the son of actor and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Vijay. However, Sigma did not meet expectations, particularly in the Telugu market, making his upcoming projects important additions to his filmography.

Isha Malviya makes Bollywood debut in 'Tum Mere Ho' trailer

Mumbai : The trailer of Tum Mere Ho is out, giving audiences a glimpse into a love story filled with romance, heartbreak and action. The film marks Gurmeet Choudhary's first project as a producer under his home production banner, Deb Guru Films, in collaboration with Reva Creative House. It also marks Isha Malviya's Bollywood debut.

The trailer introduces viewers to the film's story through a mix of romantic moments, action sequences and emotional scenes. Gurmeet plays a character with different shades, balancing romance and intense moments throughout the narrative. Gurmeet, known for his performances across television and films, brings an emotional side to his character while also featuring in action sequences. The film explores the relationship between the lead characters as they navigate love and heartbreak.

Isha Malviya makes her big-screen debut with the film. She brings a fresh presence to the story, and her chemistry with Gurmeet is one of the key aspects of the trailer. The film gives her an opportunity to explore a role that involves ro-



mance and emotional conflict. Speaking about the film and his first experience as a producer, Gurmeet Choudhary said, "Tum Mere Ho is extremely special to me because it marks my first journey as a producer and also gave me the opportunity to tell a story that I truly believe in. As an actor, I wanted to explore a character with different shades of romance, emotion and action, and as a producer, I wanted to create a world that feels larger than life while still being emotionally relatable. I'm really excited for audiences to finally see the trailer and experience the world we have created."

Isha Malviya also spoke about her experience working on the film. She said, "Being a part of Tum Mere

Ho has been an incredibly special experience for me. There is so much emotion, love and intensity in the story, and I'm grateful to have gotten the opportunity like this for my debut. Working with Gurmeet has been wonderful, and I hope audiences connect with the characters and their journey as much as we did while making the film." Director Ashish Panda said, "We wanted to create a film that offers a larger-than-life experience while keeping emotions at its heart. The story blends romance, heartbreak and action, and both Gurmeet and Isha have put a lot of effort into their characters. The trailer offers a glimpse into the world we have created, with more waiting for audiences in the film."

Abhijeet Dipke of the CJP will speak with Delhi Police, who may detain him at the airport



New Delhi, Oct 10: In advance of today’s massive demonstration against Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar in the center of Delhi, more than 400 individuals were arrested overnight, hundreds of trains were cancelled, and several metro stations were closed. In order to uphold law and order, the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) has rallied followers to join it at Jantar Mantar, and the Center has dispatched more than 20,000 police and Central Armed Police Forces soldiers. With the chaos and police action of July 20 - during the paper leak protests that led to the resignation of Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan - still fresh in the minds of both sides, this demonstration may play out differently. The police have not granted permission for the protest, and several steps have been taken by authorities to maintain law and order. Additionally, YouTuber Dhruv Rathee has been taken into custody from his home in Gurugram. Over 250 trains from other states and local trains that were supposed to arrive at New Delhi and Hazrat Nizamuddin stations between 4 am and 2 pm on Saturday have been cancelled, and entry and exit gates at 45 Delhi Metro stations, including Rajiv Chowk, New Delhi, Central Secretariat, Patel Chowk, and Kashmere Gate, will remain closed. Internet services were also suspended within a radius of 4 km from the Janpath-Kartavya Path crossing for 24 hours, beginning at 10 pm on Friday. Despite the restrictions, volunteers and supporters will carry out their plan to demonstrate at Jantar Man-

tar, according to CJP founder Abhijeet Dipke. You claim that protests will cause inconvenience, on the one hand. However, you have stopped roads, railroads, and the Metro. He questioned, “Will this not cause inconvenience?” The two major goals of the police’s security strategy are to uphold law and order and make sure that the way the police handled the demonstration did not lead to more criticism. The directives, according to officials, are straightforward: Keep demonstrators out of the New Delhi district and expeditiously remove them from locations that are off-limits. The Delhi Police has identified a radius of approximately 1.5 kilometres as a highly sensitive zone. The area covers key locations, including Jantar Mantar, Janpath, the Election Commission’s office and Delhi Police headquarters. “More than 6,500 personnel will be deployed within this stretch, turning the area into a heavily guarded zone,” said an official. Surveillance is also being stepped up. More than 300 CCTV cameras, equipped with audio recording capabilities, have been installed at sensitive locations across the New Delhi district to help monitor developments. Security arrangements at Jantar Mantar have been strengthened, with at least seven layers of barricades along the road leading to the protest site. Some of the final layers have been welded together to make them more difficult to breach. Sensitive areas now have loudspeakers with recorded messages alerting people that the planned rally has not been approved.

The notices ask people to refrain from gathering for the demonstration, shouting slogans, causing damage to public property, or attacking police officers. Additionally, resident welfare associations (RWAs), community centers, and mosques have been urged to disseminate the information that the demonstration is not permitted. Individuals who are going to New Delhi to take part in the protest have been advised that they may be arrested and subject to legal action. Additionally, lodges and hotels in Central Delhi and New Delhi have been inspected by the police. Hotel operators are being instructed to deter visitors from taking part and Airbnb hosts and property owners have also been advised against renting out their premises to people planning to join the demonstration. They have been asked to alert the police if they suspect that someone staying at their property intends to participate in the protest. Documenting how the protest was handled is another of the Delhi Police’s top priorities, given accusations of wrongdoing and overuse of force during recent protests. Videos of alleged police misconduct, including allegations of assault and molestation involving a female protester, went viral on social media after the protests at the beginning of the month. The force’s behaviour has come under question due to these accusations. Senior officers, including those with the rank of additional commissioner of police and above, as well as other workers on duty, have been equipped with body cameras to guarantee that incidents are captured from several perspectives. In order to capture the demonstration and the police response in real time, hundreds of photographers and videographers have also been hired. Officials anticipate that the video will help determine the chronology of events, refute any false statements with substantiated proof, and support investigations in the case that an incident takes place. In an open letter, the Delhi Police reminded the public that police officers are individuals with families waiting for them at home. The message emphasises that wearing a uniform does not diminish a person’s humanity and urges for humility and moderation on all fronts.

Shreyas Iyer identifies one “factor” that explains why India was unable to defend 249 against the West Indies



Jharkhand: In the first Twenty20 International of the five-match series, Shreyas Iyer nearly single-handedly led India to victory against the West Indies with a score of 102*. Iyer received another 102* on Friday as West Indies skipper Shai Hope chased down India’s 250-run mark in the second Twenty20 International by scoring the second-fastest T20I century by a West Indies hitter. Iyer refused to place the blame on any of his teammates following the shocking outcome. Rather, he cited the characteristics of the pitch

and the dew effect in Ranchi. Iyer acknowledged the calibre of the opposition’s batting and the significance of a decisive partnership after a ton-up Shai Hope-led West Indies chased down India’s impressive 249 for five with nine balls remaining. It’s hard to put a figure on it because of the dew factor. With nearly two overs remaining, even 249 was chased down. On this wicket, the margin of error was quite small. After the game, Iyer remarked, “It was going into the stands if you just missed it by a mark.” Hope, who remained

unbeaten on 102 off just 45 balls, was well supported by Sherfane Rutherford, who smashed 84 in 37 deliveries. Iyer praised the West Indies batters for their performance while also expressing satisfaction with the contributions of India’s top-order batters Sanju Samson and Abhishek Sharma. “They batted amazingly, kudos to them. Both were phenomenal in their departments. This is what we look forward to from Sanju and Abhishek and also Mayank. The momentum shifted towards them after that partnership,” he added. Opener Samson made a fine 84, while Mayank picked up three top-order wickets. West Indies captain Hope, who was named Player of the Match, admitted that the chase had looked challenging after his side slipped to five for two. “The pursuit was going to be difficult. It was always going to be difficult to get five for two. We began to believe when Rovman and I formed a partnership,” Hope re-

marked. Hope emphasised the need of forming alliances and taking measured chances when pursuing a difficult goal. I really think that we must bat in partnerships. “It was about taking calculated risks because I thought we were going well,” he remarked. The West Indies skipper also praised Roston Chase for his bowling effort on a batting-friendly surface. “Amazing from Chase to bowl like that on a pitch like this,” Hope commented. Hope acknowledged that serendipity had contributed to his accomplishment, but he also attributed his consistency to preparation and mental preparedness. My SS bats are rather excellent. It went well today, and you’ll need some good fortune. It’s a difficult one. “You are happy when you are scoring runs,” he remarked. I believe that my preparation and mental readiness are likely contributing to my success. He said, “I never want to get too high (about success).”

Following her defeat in Bengal, Mamata Banerjee has a mission to Delhi

New Delhi, Oct 10: Mamata Banerjee was part of the ten-person group led by Rahul Gandhi that met with President Droupadi Murmu on Friday night to discuss the alleged electoral fraud. Banerjee, a 15-year former chief minister, a seven-term member of parliament, and a three-time union minister, is a prominent female figure in the opposition. However, there is a growing perception that her political concentration is progressively moving from Kolkata to the nation’s capital as she spends more and more time in Delhi. After

the debacle in the 2026 West Bengal Assembly elections, Mamata Banerjee’s political gaze is no longer confined to the state. Delhi has now become an important part of her political strategy. So, what exactly is Mamata Banerjee’s Delhi mission? Most political analysts are saying that the future of the Trinamool Congress is uncertain. The TMC was created and built by Mamata Banerjee, and now stands divided. If Mamata herself has no political future, what happens to the original party? There is also another reality. Mamata’s

political strength and glory are not what they once were, and even age is no longer entirely on her side at 71. It appears that she is attempting to establish a fresh friendship with Rahul Gandhi and the Congress leadership. Additionally, the broader political landscape in India is evolving as the 2029 Lok Sabha elections draw nearer. At the center, there is a well-known political pattern: anti-incumbency sentiment gradually starts to surface when a government has held power for a considerable amount of time. If not a rule of nature, it is

practically a law of politics. Therefore, as 2029 approaches, the Opposition is trying to identify issues that can be turned into a national political movement against the BJP-led government at the Centre. The Election Commission and the Special Intensive Revision, or SIR, of electoral registers are two examples of such issues. Rahul Gandhi has pointedly been trying to mobilise people around what he describes as the issue of “vote chori”, and the campaign has continued to expand beyond Parliament into public demonstrations.

Due to the CJP protest, Delhi Metro closes 45 stations

New Delhi, Oct 10: Due to the Cockroach Janata Party’s (CJP) protest demanding the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar, the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) has restricted admission and exit at 45 metro stations in the nation’s capital today. The DMRC has been asked to take precautionary action by Delhi police due to the possibility of “unruly mob movement toward sensitive locations.” The DMRC had previously halted operations at 57 metro stations; however, this was later changed to 45.

The shutdown affects many metro stations in Central Delhi, including Hauz Khas, Kashmere Gate, Maujpur-Babarpur, and Rithala. The following metro stations’ entry and exit will be closed from 9:00 PM on October 9, 2026, until 6:00 PM on October 10, 2026, due to security concerns. The security authorities will also assess the situation and provide any required updates. The DMRC stated in a post on X that interchange facilities will continue to be accessible at all relevant metro stations, with the exception of New Delhi Metro station. Apart from the Delhi Metro, the Namo Bharat Metro stations at Sarai Kale Khan and New Ashok Nagar will also remain closed till 10 PM on October 10. In response to claims of intentional modifications in Form 6 and anomalies in the Special Intensive Revision (SIR), the CJP staged its second protest at Jantar Mantar, demanding the resignation of CEC Gyanesh Kumar.

The Premier League returns, with Liverpool vs. Manchester City taking center stage



Buenos Aires: This weekend marks the Premier League’s return from the international break, with Sunday’s match between Liverpool and Manchester City at Anfield taking center stage amid ongoing uncertainty surrounding City’s financial rules issue. City led the rankings before the break after winning their first five league games, but an appeal against an independent commission’s conclusions over purported violations of the Premier League’s financial rules is still pending. The club has denied any wrongdoing, and the possibility of punishment raises questions about its survival. City could also face a hostile reception at Anfield, where the

two clubs have contested several fiercely fought encounters during their recent title battles.

Erling Haaland faces a fitness assessment after being substituted early while on international duty, while Antoine Semenyo and Nico O’Reilly are also doubts. Phil Foden is suspended. Arsenal will open Saturday’s action at home against Leeds United, seeking to bounce back from a 3-0 defeat to Brighton before the break. Manager Mikel Arteta, who signed a new contract during the international window, faces defensive concerns, with William Saliba sidelined and Cristhian Mosquera’s availability uncertain. Forward

Kai Havertz is also a doubt. Aston Villa host unbeaten Brentford, while winless Fulham travel to Ipswich Town looking to improve their defensive record. Chelsea, coached by Xabi Alonso, host Bournemouth seeking greater defensive consistency.

Cole Palmer could return after withdrawing from England’s squad, while Joao Pedro is doubtful with a knee injury. Bournemouth are expected to be without midfielder Alex Scott, who was injured on international duty. Brighton travel to Sunderland on a high after a 3-0 win over Arsenal before the break. Sunderland will be without striker Brian Brobbey and defender Dan Ballard. Manchester United host Tottenham Hotspur on Saturday, with both clubs looking to improve on disappointing starts to the season. United have five points from five matches, while Tottenham sit bottom of the standings with two. Crystal Palace host Nottingham Forest on Sunday, with Forest manager Oliver Glasner returning to face his former club. On Sunday, Hull City will visit Everton, and both teams will be dangerous from set pieces. On Monday, Coventry City will host Newcastle United to wrap off the round of games. After winning their first game of the season before the break, Coventry is looking for their first home points of the year.

Amid the CJP protest, Delhi police install spike strips in addition to barricades

New Delhi, Oct 10: Delhi has become a fortress as a result of the Cockroach Janta Party’s (CJP) call for protests in Jantar Mantar, with troops stationed across the city, central Delhi, and at any points where demonstrators are expected to congregate. In addition to barriers, the police have placed spike strips in the Mohan Estate industrial hub region in southeast

Delhi. posted a photo from the scene showing police officers closely monitoring the Mohan Cooperative Estate area and using spike strips to keep cars from leaving the forbidden area while they inspect vehicles before permitting them to go. The CJP called a mega protest at Jantar Mantar, its second such agitation, on October 10 seeking resignation of Chief

Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar for alleged irregularities in Special Intensive Revision (SIR) and Form 6 modifications. The police have detained Dhruv Rathee, Abhijeet Dipke, Saunav Das and Ashutosh Ranka directly from the plane when they landed at Delhi airport. Besides then, other leaders of CJP and over 500 protesters have been detained

by police across the city. In response to the demonstrations, the Center has sent out more than 20,000 police and Central Armed Police Force members to uphold peace and order in the nation’s capital. The Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) barred admission and exit at 45 metro stations after the police requested that the DMRC take precautionary action.

As India fails to defend 249 against the West Indies, Sunil Gavaskar poses a difficult question. In the second T20I

Ranchi: A T20 encounter with more than 500 runs scored is not something that happens very often. With nine balls remaining, the West Indies defeated India and reached a record goal of 250. India posted 249/5 in 20 overs thanks in large part to Sanju Samson. However, however was only half the tale; while his side easily pursued the mark, Shai Hope recorded the second-fastest T20I century by a West Indies batsman. This leads to the more crucial query: Do bowlers have a role in such a situation? The dew did play a part in Ranchi, as West Indies batted second, but India great Sunil Gavaskar believes the Indian bowlers could have done more. “After a few calm overs, I predicted that India would score between 235 and 240. India scored nine more runs. Therefore, it is obvious that the batters are not to fault. They didn’t fail, in my opinion. It’s obvious that the bowlers didn’t bowl correctly. Sunil Gavaskar stated on Star

Sports, “It would be interesting if one were to ask the bowling coach what he expected from these bowlers and whether they did it or not.” Participating in the same discussion panel, Varun Aaron stated that once the West Indies were reduced to two wickets in the opening over, India ought to have continued with speed. Axar Patel, who was introduced by India in the fourth over, gave up 16 runs. It was completely needless to give Axar Patel the fourth over during the Powerplay since Shai Hope and Rovman Powell, two middle-order hitters, are extremely unsteady with the new ball. “You ought to have bowled four overs quickly,” Aaron remarked. India captain Shreyas Iyer said it was difficult to determine a par score, with the dew factor playing a significant role after the hosts’ imposing total of 249/5 was chased down by West Indies in the second T20I at the JSCA International Stadium Complex on Friday.



riying. There may have been several deaths if the roof had collapsed when kids were playing nearby.

Fortunately, no loss of life was reported. The impact was so severe that the damaged vehicles had to be removed from beneath the fallen roofing sheets. The sudden burst of violent winds, which reportedly lasted around 15 minutes, also caused dam-

age across Ulikkal, Iritty and other parts of Kannur’s hilly region. The damage to the building and vehicles is estimated to run into several lakh rupees.

The incident has raised serious concerns about the vulnerability of school infrastructure to sudden extreme weather events, particularly in areas where young children gather and play.

Shai Hope smashes record-breaking T20I century against India in Ranchi

Hope's record ton powers series-levelling win

New Delhi: Shai Hope produced a sensational century to power West Indies to a record-breaking run-chase against India in the second T20I in Ranchi. Chasing a daunting target of 250 after India posted 249 for five, the West Indies captain struck an unbeaten 102 off just 45 balls, hitting six fours and seven sixes, to guide his team to a six-wicket victory with nine balls to spare. The win levelled the five-match series at 1-1. Hope's contribution was even more significant given West Indies' disastrous start. Mayank Yadav struck twice in the opening over, dismissing Kamil Pooran and Shimron Hetmyer to leave the visitors reeling. Mayank later removed Rovman Powell for 24, but Hope remained composed, combining intelligent strike rotation with aggressive strokeplay to



keep the chase alive. The turning point came when Hope joined forces with Sherfane Rutherford. The duo added 120 runs for the fourth wicket, with Rutherford smashing 84 off 37 deliveries, including seven fours and seven sixes. Their partnership transformed the contest and put India's bowling attack under immense pressure. Even after Kuldeep Yadav dismissed

Rutherford, Hope continued to dictate terms, finding valuable support from Romario Shepherd in the closing stages. With the target within reach, Hope finished the job in style, bringing up his century with a six off Axar Patel. The remarkable run-chase saw West Indies and Hope rewrite several records, underlining the sheer dominance of their batting display. - Shai Hope struck

the joint-fastest century in T20Is against India. Earlier this year, Jacob Bethell had also scored a 45-ball hundred in the T20 World Cup semi-final at the Wankhede Stadium. Shai Hope smashed the second-fastest century by a West Indies batter in T20Is. The record belongs to Johnson Charles, who struck a 39-ball hundred against South Africa in Centurion in 2023. Shai Hope became the third West Indies batter to score multiple centuries in men's T20Is, joining Chris Gayle and Evin Lewis on the list. West Indies recorded their highest successful run-chase in T20I history, surpassing their previous best of 236 for six against South Africa in Johannesburg in 2015. West Indies also recorded the second-highest successful run-chase in men's T20I history.

Arctic Open: PV Sindhu Bows Out After Quarterfinal Thriller Against Intanon

Vantaa: Two-time Olympic medallist P V Sindhu fought hard before going down in three games against top seed and world No. 5 Ratchanok Intanon of Indonesia in the quarterfinals of the USD 500,000 Arctic Open Super 500 tournament here on Friday. Intanon beat Sindhu, seeded sixth, 21-11 19-21 21-18. The match lasted one hour and two minutes. With this win, Intanon leads Sindhu 10-4 in head-to-head record. Earlier, Sindhu saw off Japan's Riko Gunji to advance to the quarterfinals of women's singles competition. Sindhu, the 31-year-old from Hyderabad, who won the Japan Open Super 750 title in July, notched up a 21-15 21-15 win over Gunji in the second round. Later in the day, the men's doubles pair of Krishna Prasad Garaga and Pruthvi Krishnamurthi Roy will be up against Denmark's Christian Faust Kjaer and Rasmus Kjaer. Two-time Olympic medallist P V Sindhu lost in three games to world No. 5 Ratchanok Intanon in the Arctic Open Super 500 quarterfinals, with scores 21-11, 19-21, 21-18. The match lasted 62 minutes, extending Intanon's lead over Sindhu to 10-4. Sindhu had earlier defeated Japan's Riko Gunji to reach the quarters. Sindhu, 31, recently won the Japan Open Super 750. Meanwhile, Indian men's doubles pair Krishna Prasad Garaga and Pruthvi Krishnamurthi



Roy face Denmark's Christian and Rasmus Kjaer later. Two-time Olympic medallist P V Sindhu saw her campaign end at the Arctic Open Super 500 tournament in Vantaa, Finland, following a hard-fought three-game defeat to top seed and world No. 5 Ratchanok Intanon of Thailand. In a captivating quarterfinal encounter that lasted an hour and two minutes, sixth-seeded Sindhu went down 21-11, 19-21, 21-18. The opening game saw Intanon establish early control, surging ahead 5-1. Although Sindhu narrowed the margin to 11-8 at the mid-game interval, the Thai shuttler pulled away after the break by winning 10 of the next 13 points to claim the first game 21-11. Refusing

to back down, the 31-year-old Indian star staged a spirited fightback in the second game. After holding the lead at the interval and building a 17-14 advantage, Sindhu weathered a five-point surge from Intanon before reeling off four consecutive points to clinch the game 21-19 and force a decider. The final game remained tightly contested, with both former world champions trading rallies to sit locked at 17-17. However, Intanon broke the deadlock by grabbing three successive points to earn match points, converting her second opportunity to seal the victory 21-18. With this win, Intanon extended her dominant head-to-head advantage over Sindhu to 10-4.

Asian Games winner Dhiraj calls for day and night archery tests



Hyderabad : World No. 4 recurve archer Dhiraj Bommadevara has called for a mix of daytime and night matches in the Archery Premier League (APL), saying exposure to different shooting conditions could help Indian archers prepare better for major international competitions. The Asian Games gold medallist, who became the first Indian man to win an individual World Cup Final gold, has featured in both seasons of the league. Both editions have been held entirely under lights, but Dhiraj believes introducing daytime con-

tests alongside evening matches would give archers a more varied competitive experience. "It is good that we are getting opportunities to shoot both in the morning and at night. That helps us prepare for different situations," Dhiraj, who represents Mighty Marathas in the APL, told PTI. "We never know whether a competition will take place in the morning or at night. We need to prepare for every possibility." International competitions, including the Olympics and World Cups, can feature matches at different times of the day.

Dhiraj said archers must be ready to adapt rather than rely on a fixed schedule. "I cannot say definitively whether it makes a difference or not. But it is good that we are getting opportunities to shoot both in the morning and at night," he said. The APL's move from Delhi to Hyderabad has brought another variable into play: wind. Dhiraj said the conditions in Hyderabad have been markedly different, forcing archers to pay greater attention to communication and tactical coordination between recurve and compound shooters.

South Africa's pacers turn up heat as Steve Smith avoids Sandpaper jeers

Durban: Eight years after sandpaper became an unlikely symbol of Australian cricket's darkest hour, South Africa found a few ways to remind Steve Smith and his teammates of the scandal that rocked their 2018 tour. A supermarket took sandpaper off its shelves. The broadcasters promised to keep a close eye on proceedings. But when Smith walked out to bat in Durban, the anticipated hostility from the stands was conspicuous by its absence. Instead, it was South Africa's fast bowlers who made Australia uncomfortable on the opening day of the first Test on Friday, reducing the visitors to 124 for six before a late fightback took them to 187 for 6 when bad light ended play prematurely. Ahead of Australia's first Test tour of South Africa since the ball-tampering scandal, supermarket chain Pick n Pay Hypermarket announced that sandpaper would be unavailable in its stores until October 31. Broadcaster SuperSport, meanwhile, took

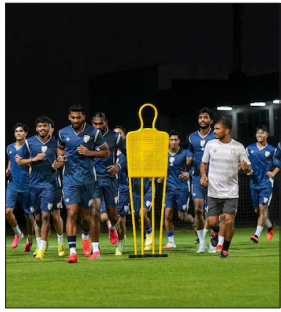


a pointed dig at the visitors with a social media post declaring: "Our cameras will be sharp." The references were impossible to miss. During the third Test of Australia's 2018 tour, television cameras caught Cameron Bancroft using sandpaper on the ball at Newlands in Cape Town. Smith, then captain, and vice-captain David Warner were also implicated in the scandal, which led to lengthy suspensions and a reckoning over Australian cricket's culture. Smith returned to South Africa for the first time since that episode, but the reception was far less dramatic than the build-up might have

suggested. Graham Hudson, 28, the son of former South African Test cricketer Andrew Hudson, was among the spectators at Kingsmead. He felt the past should no longer define the players involved. "It was a long time ago. The punishment has been done. It is in the past now," he told foxsports.com.au. "It was blasted in the media, I think, a bit too much, and at the end of the day we want good cricket, we want competition, we want the best players to be playing and I feel like that is what we have got." There was no noticeable heckling as Smith made his way to the crease. He responded by

taking the attack to South Africa's bowlers, striking two sixes off spinner Keshav Maharaj before falling for 25 shortly after lunch, edging Marco Jansen to gully. The home side's quicks, however, ensured Australia had little time to settle. Wiaan Mulder trapped Marnus Labuschagne lbw for 37 off 58 balls with the final delivery before lunch, ending a 60-run partnership with Smith. Jansen then removed Smith, while Anrich Nortje made an immediate impact on his return to first-class cricket after almost four years away from the format. The 32-year-old struck twice in three balls after tea, having Alex Carey caught at second slip before Beau Webster edged behind. Australia were suddenly 124 for six. Earlier, Travis Head had fallen for nine, caught behind off Mulder, before Nic Maddinson's remarkable Test comeback ended in a 33-ball duck. The 34-year-old, returning after treatment for testicular cancer, was bowled by Jansen.

Can a longer ISL close India's gap against global teams?



Kolkata: "You can train how much you want, but at the end of the day, it is about the matches. The more games you play, I think that will help the players." Akash Mishra's words ring true even three days after India's friendly window against Panama, Brazil and Uruguay came to an end. The games against Brazil and Uruguay exposed just how unforgiving the highest level can be, while also underlining the India defender's point about the need for more matches. India drew 1-1 with Panama, lost 4-0 to Brazil and then went down 6-1 to Uruguay, conceding 11 goals across the two matches against the South American heavyweights. The results themselves were hardly a surprise. Brazil and Uruguay arrived with players accustomed to a speed, technical quality and competitive pressure that Indian footballers simply do not encounter often enough. What was more revealing was how the games changed. India could stay in the contest for periods, frustrate Brazil for much of the opening half-hour and even level against Uruguay through Anirudh Thapa, but once the opposition found another gear, the margin for error reduced significantly. If the results were unforgiving, the decision to host this block of three matches was not controversy-free either.

Bangladesh replace Pakistan, face India in Asian Champions Trophy

Hyderabad : Asian Games champions India will open their campaign against Bangladesh in the Asian Champions Trophy 2026 in Jalandhar on October 27, with the tournament set to be held across two venues in Punjab until November 5. The Olympian Surjit Singh Hockey Stadium in Jalandhar will host all league-stage matches from October 27 to November 2, before the action shifts to the Olympian Balbir Singh Senior International Hockey Stadium in Mohali for the knockout stage. The semi-finals will be played

on November 4, while the bronze-medal match and the final are scheduled for November 5. The tournament will feature six teams: defending champions and reigning Asian Games gold medallists India, Malaysia, Japan, South Korea, China and Bangladesh. India, five-time winners of the competition, will enter the tournament as the top-ranked side after successfully defending their Asian Games title in Japan. The opening ceremony will take place on October 27, shortly before India face Bangladesh in their opening match. The



six teams will compete in a single round-robin league phase, with each side playing five matches. The top

four teams will qualify for the semi-finals. After their opener against Bangladesh, India will face China on October 29, Japan on October 30, Malaysia on November 1 and South Korea on November 2. All five of India's league matches are scheduled to begin at 7 PM IST. October 28, October 31 and November 3 have been designated as rest days. India are the most successful team in the history of the Asian Champions Trophy, having won the title in 2011, 2016, 2018 (jointly with Pakistan), 2023 and 2024. The hosts will look

to extend their dominance in front of home supporters in Punjab. "The announcement of the match schedule adds to the excitement for the Hero Asian Champions Trophy Punjab 2026. We are delighted to welcome the teams from across Asia to Punjab and look forward to witnessing some high-quality hockey," Hockey India president Dilip Tirkey said. Hockey India secretary general Bhola Nath Singh added: "With the schedule now announced, the countdown to the Hero Asian Champions Trophy Punjab 2026 has truly begun." The

Asian Champions Trophy 2026 will be held in Punjab, India, from October 27 to November 5, featuring six top Asian teams including defending champions India. League matches will take place in Jalandhar, with knockouts in Mohali. India, five-time winners and reigning Asian Games gold medallists, open against Bangladesh and aim to extend their dominance. The tournament includes a round-robin league, semi-finals, and medal matches, promising high-quality hockey and regional excitement under home support.

Shai Hope's record T20I chase brings IPL return back into focus

Ranchi : West Indies all-rounder Roston Chase believes Shai Hope remains an underrated cricketer, arguing that the captain's ability to shut out criticism and deliver under pressure deserves greater recognition. Hope's unbeaten 102 against India in Ranchi has brought his T20 credentials back into focus ahead of the IPL mini-auction in December. Speaking after West Indies' six-wicket win in the second T20I on Friday, Chase praised Hope's professionalism and his ability to remain focused despite questions

over his approach in the shortest format. "I think people underrate Shai Hope a lot. He is a guy who can block out a lot of noise and focus on what he has to do. I think that is his special skill because, when everything seems to be going wrong, he is still out there giving his best and performing for the team. I think that is his hallmark," Chase said. "He is a great player. He probably doesn't have the same record in red-ball cricket, but people also play down his statistics and record, especially in T20 cricket. Everyone knows he is

great in 50-over cricket, but even then, people sometimes don't give him enough credit. They always say he either bats too slowly or bats for himself," he added. Hope's innings came in a chase of 250, with West Indies recovering after losing three wickets for 58 runs. He and Sherfane Rutherford added 120 for the fourth wicket, with Rutherford smashing 84 off 37 balls. Hope finished unbeaten on 102 off 45, hitting nine sixes as West Indies completed their highest successful chase in men's T20Is and the highest suc-



cessful chase against India in the format. The victory also levelled

the five-match series 1-1. Hope has faced criticism over his scoring rate, particularly after making 32 off 33 balls against India at the T20 World Cup. Chase, however, pointed to the work Hope has put into becoming a more powerful hitter, focusing on strength and range-hitting to improve his ability to clear the boundary. "Firstly, he has done a lot of gym work to make himself stronger and more powerful, particularly when it comes to hitting the ball over the ropes and striking it better. 'I think he also practises

a lot of range-hitting to get into those strong positions and get his body accustomed to hitting the ball from those positions. I think that has worked for him over the past couple of years, during which he has been working on it tremendously," Chase said. Hope's recent form has extended across formats. He scored 278 runs in three innings during the ODI series against India, including a century in Guwahati and an unbeaten 162 in West Indies' successful chase of 352 in the final ODI.