

Khandu praises PM Modi for transforming national urban infrastructure

KHANDU INAUGURATES KEY PASIGHAT PROJECTS

Itanagar, Oct 07: Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu lauded Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision for urban development, stating that the nationwide Smart Cities Mission has fundamentally transformed urban infrastructure, civic governance, and public service delivery across India.

Addressing a public gathering during the dedication of key infrastructure projects under the Pasighat Smart City Mission, Khandu highlighted that 42 out of 43 sanctioned urban projects in Pasighat have been successfully completed. The Chief Minister inaugurated major developments, including the newly



transformed Siang riverfront, upgraded smart roads, modern waste management facilities, and civic entry gates aimed at boosting local tourism and economic opportunities.

Elaborating on the funding model, Khandu stated that out

of the total outlay for Pasighat, the Central Government provided ₹490 crore, while the State Government contributed ₹51.77 crore alongside additional convergence funding. He urged local administrators, municipal represen-

tatives, and state departments to adopt inter-departmental convergence to maximize infrastructure development, local employment, and youth entrepreneurship across sectors like tourism, horticulture, and trade. The Chief Minister appealed to citizens to take active public ownership of newly created urban assets, emphasizing that maintaining civic infrastructure is a collective responsibility of residents alongside state agencies. Khandu reiterated that the Smart Cities Mission stands as a testament to transformative governance, successfully bridging urban-rural development gaps across the North East.

NSCN-IM retracts comments on SC Jamir's political authority

Kohima, Oct 07: Two senior leaders of the National Socialist Council of Nagalim (NSCN-IM) formally retracted their controversial remarks questioning former Nagaland Chief Minister Dr. S.C. Jamir's right to express views on the long-standing Naga political issue.

The joint retraction was issued by NSCN-IM Deputy Ato Kilonser V.S. Atem and Steering Committee member R.H. Raising on October 6. Their response came directly within a 15-day deadline set by the Ao Senden, the apex tribal body of the Ao Naga tribe to which Jamir belongs. The tribal council had issued a firm ultimatum warning of "its own course of action" if the September 16 statements questioning Jamir's locus stan-



di were not unconditionally withdrawn.

The political controversy erupted following Dr. S.C. Jamir's meeting with RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat in New Delhi, where the veteran leader advocated for an expedited final settlement to the Naga political dialogue. During a subsequent consultation on September 16, NSCN-IM leaders questioned Jamir's standing to represent or speak on behalf of the Naga populace. Reacting strongly, the Ao Senden maintained that the Naga political movement is not the exclusive

domain of any single individual, group, or armed faction, emphasizing that every Naga citizen retains the constitutional and democratic right to voice opinions on peace talks. In their signed joint declaration, Atem and Raising stated, "If our comments on September 16, 2026, on S.C. Jamir have hurt the sentiment of the Ao Senden, it was never meant to do so and therefore, we do retract it forthright". Following the declaration, the Ao Senden accepted the retraction, de-escalating tribal and political tensions across the state. The peace process between the Central Government and NSCN-IM remains pending final resolution over persistent demands regarding a separate Naga flag, constitution, and territorial integration.

Manipur CM appeals for communal unity

Imphal, Oct 07: Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh made a passionate appeal to the 36 distinct communities residing in Manipur to unite for a common cause, urging collective action to bring lasting peace, safeguard territorial integrity, and contribute towards building a Viksit Manipur. Addressing a public event in Imphal, the Chief Minister emphasized that sustainable peace and economic rehabilitation cannot be achieved through isolated efforts restricted to individual regions or valleys. Stressing the imperative need to bridge the persistent trust deficit among diverse ethnic groups, he called for mutual understanding, practical dialogue, and cross-community outreach rather than reliance on public agitations, blockades, and bandhs that severely disrupt normal life and state administration. Highlighting the severe economic toll of ongoing ethnic unrest, Singh disclosed that the state suffered a staggering loss exceeding ₹1,200 crore in GST revenue during the 2023–2026 period. He noted that recurring bandhs and road blockades inflicted daily economic damages estimated between ₹20 crore and ₹25 crore, stalling state growth and public infrastructure projects. The Chief Minister reiterated that the state government is actively coordinating with central leadership, civil society organizations, and local community elders to resolve underlying grievances.

BJP-JD(S) delegation demands withdrawal of Form-7 FIRs

NDA ALLEGES POLITICAL STATE ABUSE

Bengaluru, Oct 07: A joint NDA delegation comprising senior Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Janata Dal (Secular) [JD(S)] leaders called on Karnataka Governor Thaaawarch- and Gehlot and Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) V. Anbukumar, demanding the immediate withdrawal of criminal cases registered against party workers over Form-7 voter deletion applications.

The delegation, led by Union Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy, Opposition Leader in the Legislative Council Chalavadi Narayanaswamy, and MP P.C. Mohan, submitted a

formal memorandum alleging that the ruling Congress state government is misusing state police machinery to intimidate Opposition workers. The dispute centers around the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, where BJP and JD(S) activists submitted Form-7 applications seeking the deletion of fraudulent or duplicate voters.

In response to complaints lodged by Congress leaders alleging unauthorized bulk deletions targeting specific communities, local police across several districts—including Mysuru, Belagavi, and Ben-

galuru—registered First Information Reports (FIRs) under Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) provisions for alleged cheating and forgery. Defending the filings, NDA leaders argued that Form-7 submission is a statutory democratic right under electoral law, subjecting applications to mandatory scrutiny by Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) prior to any deletion. The coalition accused Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar of illegally pressuring the CEO office and threatening ground-level activists.

The newly inaugurated facilities include modern academic-cum-administrative blocks, fully equipped science laboratories, smart digital classrooms, administrative offices, and dedicated hostel accommodations for students. The infrastructure drive forms part of the state government's ongoing scheme to transform

Pasang Dorjee Sona inaugurates school infrastructure projects in Seppa

Itanagar, Oct 07: Arunachal Pradesh Education and Tourism Minister Pasang Dorjee Sona inaugurated key school infrastructure development projects in Seppa, East Kameng district, reiterating the state government's commitment to upgrading government educational institutions into modern learning hubs.

The government higher secondary schools across all districts into model institutions equipped with state-of-the-art learning tools.



Addressing local administrators, teaching staff, and students during the inauguration ceremony, Minister Sona emphasized that physical

infrastructure upgrades must translate into tangible improvements in academic outcomes and classroom engagement. He noted that modern facilities, such as digital smart boards and specialized laboratories, are designed to narrow the urban-rural educational divide, ensuring students in

remote district headquarters like Seppa receive quality instruction on par with national standards.

"Upgrading our government schools is not just about erecting new buildings; it is about creating an inspiring environment where teachers can teach effectively and students can dream big," Sona stated. He urged school administrators, local Panchayati Raj representatives, and community members to take active ownership of the new assets and maintain school facilities for future batches. The Education Minister also reviewed ongoing educational programs and staff strength across East Kameng district.

Mithun Chakraborty appointed Bengal advisor

Kolkata, Oct 07: Veteran film icon and senior leader Mithun Chakraborty has been appointed as Advisor to the Information & Cultural Affairs Department, holding the status of Cabinet Minister.

The official order was issued by the state's Personnel Administration and Reforms Department on Wednesday evening, confirming that the appointment takes immediate effect. The decision aligns with earlier announcements made during the birth centenary celebrations of legendary actor Uttam Kumar, where state leadership outlined plans to utilize Chakraborty's extensive industry experience to rejuvenate the state's cultural infrastructure, film bodies, and creative economy. Under the revised framework, the Information & Cultural Affairs portfolio remains under the direct purview of Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari. In his capacity as Department Advisor, Chakraborty will guide policy formulation aimed at modernizing regional cinema infrastructure, promoting traditional Bengali performing arts, and facilitating state support for film productions. Sources noted that Chakraborty recently advocated for a 30% financial subsidy for film productions shot locally within West Bengal to attract prospective filmmakers and generate local creative employment.

Rajasthan Police warns against accessing child sexual abuse material

Jaipur, Oct 07: Rajasthan Police has issued a public advisory warning citizens against accessing, downloading, possessing, or sharing Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) across online platforms, emphasizing that engagement with illicit digital content attracts strict penal action under national cyber law frameworks.

The state cyber crime cell highlighted that law enforcement agencies continuously monitor online activity using automated tracking tools and international law enforcement reports. Officials warned that downloading, storing, or forwarding CSAM—even within private messaging apps, cloud storage, or social media groups—is a severe offense under the Information Tech-



nology (IT) Act and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act.

Senior police officers clarified that ignorance of law or unintentional group memberships does not exempt individuals from criminal liability. Authorities urged citizens to

report illicit online content directly to the National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal or nearby police stations, advising users to immediately leave social media groups where objectionable material is circulated rather than forwarding or saving it on personal devices.

BJP launches Seva Sankalp Saptah and Sewa Jyoti Yatra in Arunachal

Itanagar, Oct 07: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Arunachal Pradesh unit launched its state-wide Seva Sankalp Saptah (Service Resolve Week) alongside flagging off the symbolic Sewa Jyoti Yatra from the state party headquarters in Itanagar.

The event, led by Chief Minister Pema Khandu, State BJP President Biyuram Wahge, and senior party functionaries, marks Prime Minister Narendra Modi's completion of 25 years in public service as head of government. The week-long campaign is structured around community service drives, health check-up camps, blood donation initiatives, cleanliness campaigns under Swachh Bharat



Abhiyan, and tree plantation programs across all districts of the state.

Flagging off the Sewa Jyoti

Yatra, Chief Minister Khandu emphasized that the ceremonial flame symbolizes dedication to public welfare, social

upliftment, and grassroots development. The torch procession will traverse through multiple districts in Arunachal Pradesh, carrying messages of civic participation, rural healthcare access, and environmental preservation to remote tribal hamlets. Speaking on the occasion, party leaders highlighted that Prime Minister Modi's administrative journey—from serving as Chief Minister of Gujarat to leading the nation—has set a benchmark for transformative governance and citizen-centric policy execution. They urged party workers and local citizens to participate actively in voluntary service programs throughout the Seva Sankalp Saptah.

Assam Rifles soldier from Odisha dies on operational duty in Nagaland

Kohima, Oct 07: An Assam Rifles soldier hailing from Odisha's Rayagada district lost his life after sustaining a critical gunshot wound while performing operational duties in Nagaland.

The deceased soldier, identified as 30-year-old Rifleman V. Teja belonging to the 15th Battalion of the Assam Rifles, was hit by a bullet during security operations. Following the gunshot injury, fellow personnel rushed Teja to a military medical facility, where attending doctors declared him brought dead. The tragic incident occurred just two days prior to his 31st birthday, and sources close to the family noted that he was scheduled to get married in December.



Demonstrating supreme noble commitment even in grief, his organs were donated as per his expressed wishes.

Odisha Chief Minister Mo-

han Charan Majhi and Leader of Opposition Naveen Patnaik expressed deep condolences over the soldier's untimely demise. Chief Minister Majhi

paid tribute to the brave jawan in a social media message, emphasizing that his supreme sacrifice, unwavering courage, and dedication in service of the nation will forever remain etched in public memory.

State authorities and Assam Rifles representatives coordinated military protocols to transport the mortal remains of the fallen soldier back to his native village in Rayagada district with full state and military honors. Military and civil defense officials extended heartfelt sympathies to the bereaved family, while security forces in Nagaland initiated standard procedural reviews regarding the operational circumstances surrounding the fatal shooting.

Guwahati, Oct 07: Assam Police successfully dismantled an organized honey-trap and extortion syndicate, arresting five individuals, including two women, following a swift joint operation in upper Assam.

The arrests were made after a businessman lodged a formal complaint alleging that he had been lured to a residential apartment under false pretenses, where the gang held him hostage at knifepoint. According to police officials, female members of the racket established contact with unsuspecting individuals via social media platforms and phone calls, inviting victims to secluded locations. Once inside, other



male operatives barged into the room, captured compromising photographs and videos, and demanded large sums of money under threats of public exposure and false police complaints.

Acting on precise technical intelligence and mobile tracking data, law enforce-

ment teams raided a rented house where the syndicate operated. Officers arrested five key members on the spot and seized multiple smartphones, SIM cards, incriminating video recordings, sharp weapons, and cash extorted from victims. Preliminary investigations revealed that the syndicate had been operating across multiple urban centers in the state, targeting affluent traders, public servants, and local business owners over several months. Police officials stated that the accused face charges under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) covering criminal conspiracy, extortion, wrongful confinement, and assault.

Assam CID Takes Man Into Custody in Alleged Vehicle Loan Fraud Case

Dispur, Oct 07 : The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of Assam Police has arrested a Guwahati-based man in connection with an alleged vehicle loan fraud involving multiple branches of Canara Bank in and around the city, officials said. The accused has been identified as Ramen Saikia, also known as Jaan Saikia. He was taken into custody from his residence in Guwahati on October 6 following an investigation into allegations of fraudulent procurement of vehicle loans from several Canara Bank branches in the greater Guwahati area.

According to officials, the investigation centres on alleged irregularities in the process through which vehicle loans were obtained from the bank. The total amount involved in the case is estimated at around Rs 40 lakh. Investigators are examining the circumstances under which the loans were sanctioned and whether false or misleading information was allegedly used to secure the funds. The CID initiated its inquiry after receiving information about suspected financial ir-



regularities linked to vehicle loan transactions at different Canara Bank branches. The involvement of multiple branches has prompted investigators to examine the transactions collectively to determine whether they were part of a wider pattern rather than isolated incidents. Saikia's arrest followed the preliminary investigation conducted by the state police's specialised investigative wing.

Officials said the accused was apprehended at his Guwahati residence on October 6. Investigators are now questioning him as part of the ongoing probe into the alleged financial fraud. The case relates specifically to ve-

hicle loans, with investigators looking into the documentation and other procedures followed during the loan applications and subsequent disbursement of funds. Authorities are expected to examine the records associated with the loans, including the applications submitted, supporting documents and details of the vehicles linked to the financing arrangements.

The investigation may also question whether all the vehicles and loan-related transactions were genuine and whether the prescribed banking procedures were followed. Officials have not indicated that the allegations have been conclusively established, and

the investigation remains underway. Financial fraud cases involving bank loans can involve several stages, including the submission of applications, verification of documents, approval of credit and release of funds.

Investigators typically examine each stage to establish how an alleged irregularity occurred and identify all individuals who may have been involved. In the present case, the CID is examining transactions associated with multiple Canara Bank branches in the greater Guwahati region.

The alleged amount of Rs 40 lakh has brought the case under the focus of the state police's investigative authorities.

The arrest of Saikia represents a significant development in the probe, but investigators are yet to complete their examination of the alleged fraud. Authorities may question the accused about the Such examination can help authorities determine how the loan amounts were obtained and whether the funds were used for the stated purposes for which the vehicle loans were sanctioned.

Himanta Biswa Sarma Hands Rs 50 Lakh Cheque to Lovlina Borgohain

Guwahati, Oct 07 : Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Tuesday presented boxer Lovlina Borgohain with a cheque for Rs 50 lakh to honour her gold medal-winning performance at the Asian Games in Japan. Borgohain was felicitated at Lok Sewa Bhawan after returning to Assam following her victory in the women's 75kg boxing category.

The state government recognised her achievement as a significant milestone for Assam and Indian sport, with the cash award presented to acknowledge her performance on the international stage. Speaking on the occasion, Sarma praised Borgohain for her achievement and said her success was a matter of pride not only for Assam but for the entire country.

He also highlighted the potential of such accomplishments to encourage young athletes to pursue sport and aim for excellence at national and international competitions. The felicitation ceremony marked Borgohain's return to the state after her successful Asian Games campaign. The boxer had received a warm reception earlier at Lokapriya Gopinath Boral



doloi International Airport in Guwahati, where officials, political leaders, family members and supporters had gathered to welcome her. Among those present at the airport reception were Assam Sports and Youth Welfare Minister Biswajit Daimary and Assam BJP president Dilip Saikia. Borgohain's family members and supporters also joined the gathering as she returned after her gold medal-winning performance.

Her victory in the women's 75kg category generated celebrations in Assam, with political leaders and sports officials congratulating the boxer for her achievement. The latest recognition by the state government further highlighted the importance attached to her success and its significance for the state's sporting community. Sarma said Bor-

gohain's performance could serve as an inspiration for young people who are interested in taking up competitive sport.

Her achievement, he noted, demonstrated the potential of Indian athletes to compete successfully at major international events and bring recognition to their states and the country. Borgohain has emerged as one of Assam's prominent sporting figures, and her latest international success has added to the state's growing profile in Indian boxing. Her achievement was widely celebrated by supporters and sports enthusiasts following her gold medal performance. The felicitation at Lok Sewa Bhawan also provided an opportunity for the state leadership to recognise the contribution of athletes representing Assam at.

Conrad Says 'All's Well', Rallies NPP Legislators

Shillong , Oct 07: Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma on Tuesday dismissed speculation of a possible split within the National People's Party (NPP) and ruled out any immediate threat to the stability of the MDA-II government, asserting that the coalition remains "very, very stable". Sangma said the NPP's 33 legislators remained "absolutely intact" as the party held a meeting of its legislature group at his residence.

The meeting was attended by 31 of the party's 33 MLAs. Among those present were NPP national general secretary and Deputy Chief Minister Sniawbhalang Dhar and Meghalaya NPP president and Deputy Chief Minister Prestone Tynsong. Assembly Speaker Thomas A. Sangma and Gambagre MLA Mehtab Chandee Agitok Sangma were absent from the meeting. The BJP's strength in the 60-member Meghalaya Assembly to 10. The development had triggered speculation about a possible change in the balance of power within the ruling coalition.

NPP Legislators Convene Following Eight Former UDP MLAs Joining BJP



Imphal, Oct 07 : Two men have been arrested by authorities in Manipur in connection with a case under investigation, with officials identifying the accused as Maibam Arun, alias Uru Singh, and Wahengbam Bimol, also known as Mani and Luwang Meitei. Maibam Arun, 50, is a resident of Khurai Ningthoubung Leikai in Imphal East district.

The second accused, Wahengbam Bimol, 26, hails from Thangmeiband Lourung Pural Leikai in Imphal West. According to the details available, both men were apprehended from Haobam Marak Lourambam Leikai in Imphal West.

A Honda Activa scooter was also found with the two accused at the time of their arrest. The arrests were carried out as part of an ongoing investigation by the authorities. Officials identified the two individuals following their

apprehension and provided details of their respective ages, aliases and residential locations. The recovery of the Honda Activa scooter was also recorded during the operation.

Authorities are expected to examine the vehicle as part of the investigation and establish whether it has any relevance to the case. Arun and Bimol were taken into custody from the Haobam Marak area, following which the authorities proceeded with the necessary legal formalities. Their arrest marks a development in the ongoing investigation, while further details regarding the allegations against them are yet to be made available. The two accused come from different parts of the Imphal region. Arun is from Khurai Ningthoubung Leikai in Imphal East, while Bimol is from Thangmeiband Lourung Pural Leikai in Imphal West.

Their identification was made public following the arrests. Authorities are continuing to investigate the circumstances surrounding the case.

The Honda Activa recovered during the arrest may also be examined as investigators work to establish the sequence of events and determine whether any other individuals or materials are connected to the matter. At this stage, the available information does not provide further details about the specific allegations or charges against the two men. Investigators are expected to establish the full circumstances of the case through questioning, examination of available evidence and other investigative procedures.

Tripura MP Urges Strong Global Action Against Terrorism at UN

Agartala , Oct 07 : Lok Sabha MP Biplab Kumar Deb, presenting India's national statement at the Sixth Committee of the 81st United Nations General Assembly, called for firm, coordinated and decisive international action to combat terrorism.

Deb made the remarks while participating in a discussion on "Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism" at the UN General Assembly.

He reiterated India's commitment to a policy of zero tolerance towards terrorism and stressed the need for the global community to adopt a united approach to counter the threat.

Deb, who is also a former Chief Minister of Tripura and national general secretary of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), represented India during the measures aimed at addressing terrorism.

Seeking Foreign Intervention on FCRA 'Inappropriate' CM

Shillong , Oct 07: Lok Sabha MP and former Tripura Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb, delivering India's national statement at the Sixth Committee of the 81st United Nations General Assembly, called for firm, coordinated and decisive international action to combat terrorism. Deb, who also serves as a national general secretary of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), made the remarks during a discussion on "Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism".

He reiterated India's longstanding position of adopting a policy of zero tolerance towards terrorism and stressed the need for the international community to respond collectively to the threat. Speaking at the UN General Assembly's Sixth Committee, Deb highlighted the importance of strengthening global cooperation to address terrorism, which remains a major security challenge for countries across regions.

His statement focused on the need for coordinated international efforts rather than fragmented responses to terrorist activities. India has consistently maintained that terrorism poses a threat to international peace and security and equires a united global response. Against this backdrop, Deb's intervention reiterated New Delhi's call for countries to work

together to prevent terrorist organisations from exploiting gaps in international cooperation. During the discussion, Deb underlined India's commitment to a zero-tolerance approach to terrorism. The policy reflects India's position that terrorist acts must not be justified or permitted under any circumstances and that the international community should work towards preventing terrorist networks from operating across borders. The Sixth Committee of the UN General Assembly deals with legal matters and provides a platform for member states to discuss issues involving international law. Discussions on measures to eliminate international terrorism form part of the broader international effort to develop effective legal and institutional mechanisms to address the threat.

Deb's participation in the debate placed India's position before the committee at a time when international cooperation remains central to efforts against terrorism. He called for a response that is firm and coordinated, emphasising the importance of collective action by nations.

The Indian representative's remarks also reflected New Delhi's broader emphasis on strengthening multilateral mechanisms to deal with terrorism. India has reit before the international com-



munity. By reiterating the policy of zero tolerance, he emphasised that terrorism requires a clear and consistent response from all countries. The discussion also underlined the importance of maintaining international solidarity against terrorism. While individual countries may face different forms of terrorist threats, the cross-border nature of many terrorist networks means that no country can address the challenge entirely on its own. India's call for firm and coordinated action therefore focuses on strengthening collective efforts and ensuring that counter-terrorism mechanisms remain effective. Cooperation among governments, law enforcement agencies and international institutions can help identify threats, disrupt terrorist networks and prevent attacks.

Lawyers to Protest Today, Press for Attorney General's Removal

Shillong , Oct 07: The Meghalaya High Court Bar Association is set to organise a rally of lawyers on Wednesday to raise concerns over the continuation of Advocate General Amit Kumar in the post and press its demand for his removal. The rally will be held on October 7 and is scheduled to begin at 10.30 am from the premises of the Meghalaya High Court Bar Association.

The programme is expected to bring together members of the legal fraternity who have raised concerns regarding the Advocate General's continuation in office.

According to a statement issued by the association on Tuesday, the rally has been planned as an organised expression of the concerns and grievances of the members of the legal community. The association has invited members of the press and media to attend the programme and cover the proceedings. The Bar Association said media representatives would have an opportunity to report on the concerns, demands and statements made by participating lawyers during the rally. It also sought wider public attention to the issues being raised by members of the legal fraternity. The proposed demonstration is aimed at placing the lawyers' concerns before the relevant authorities and drawing attention to their demand concerning the Advocate General.

The association has maintained that the issues raised by its members require public discussion and consideration by the authorities concerned. The decision to hold the rally comes amid concerns within the legal fraternity over the continuation of Amit Kumar as Advocate General of Meghalaya. Through the proposed programme, members of the Bar Association intend to collectively voice their position and seek action on their demand for his removal from the post.

The association's appeal to the media is also aimed at ensuring that the proceedings and concerns raised during the rally receive wider coverage. It said the presence of journalists and media organisations would help bring the issues before the public and provide greater visibility to the demands of the participating lawyers.

NEHU Organises Five-Day Climate Festival to Engage Youth in Environmental Action



Shillong , Oct 07: A five-day travelling climate festival focusing on environmental awareness, climate science and the relationship between natural ecosystems and human communities began at the North-Eastern Hill University (NEHU) campus in Shillong on Monday. Titled Climate Festival of Life: Where the Rivers, Forests, Mountains, Coasts and Oceans Are! ", the festival is being organised by Azim Premji University, Bengaluru, in collaboration with NEHU's Department of Geography.

The programme will con-

tinue until October 9 at the university's Multi-Use Convention Hall. The festival has been designed to make discussions around climate science more engaging and accessible, particularly for young people.

It also seeks to highlight India's varied ecosystems and encourage participants to better understand the connections between environmental changes, natural landscapes and human livelihoods.

With a strong focus on youth participation, the festival brings together elements of science, art and culture to create an

interactive platform for learning about climate and environmental issues. Organisers are using a range of activities and exhibits to help participants explore how climate change affects ecosystems and communities. The festival also provides an opportunity for students and visitors to learn about research and local environmental concerns through displays and interactive activities. By combining scientific information with creative and cultural forms of expression, the organisers aim to make complex climate-related topics easier for wider audiences to understand.

The emphasis on India's ecosystems is another key feature of the event. Rivers, forests, mountains, coasts and oceans play important roles in supporting communities, biodiversity and livelihoods, while also facing increasing environmental pressures. The festival seeks to draw attention to these interconnected systems and the need to protect them.

HC Seeks Assam Govt Response on M K Yadava's Continuation

Dispur, Oct 07 : The Gauhati High Court has sought responses from the Assam government and other respondents in connection with a petition challenging the continuation of M K Yadava as Special Chief Secretary (Forest) in the state. The petition, filed by Amarjyoti Choudhury, has questioned the legality of Yadava's continuation in the post and sought judicial examination of the government's decision.

The matter relates to a notification issued by the Assam government on May 14, 2026, through which Yadava was allowed to continue functioning as Special Chief Secretary (Forest). The petitioner has challenged the government notification before the High Court, seeking scrutiny of the circumstances and legal basis under which Yadava was permitted to remain in the position. The plea has raised questions over the continuation of the senior official in the Forest department and has sought the court's consideration of the matter. Following the filing of the petition, the Gauhati High

Court sought responses from the Assam government as well as the other parties named as respondents in the case. The court's direction allows the respondents to place their position and explain the basis of the decision challenged by the petitioner. The petition centres on the May 14 notification, which permitted Yadava to continue serving as Special Chief Secretary (Forest). Choudhury has questioned the validity of the decision and approached the High Court seeking judicial intervention. The petitioner has asked the court to examine whether the government's decision to allow Yadava's continuation was legally sustainable. The plea places the notification under judicial scrutiny and seeks appropriate consideration of the issues raised concerning his continuation in the post. The matter has brought the administrative decision concerning a senior Forest department official before the High Court. The respondents will now have an opportunity to respond to the allegations and contentions raised in the petition.

Court Grants 20-Day Interim Bail to KSU Leader

Shillong , Oct 07: Khasi Students' Union (KSU) vice-president Pynkmenlang Sammiet was granted 20 days' interim bail by a local court on Wednesday on medical grounds, allowing him to seek further treatment and consult the doctors who have been attending to his health condition. Following the court's order, Sammiet was released from Shillong District Jail.

The interim relief will enable him to return to his treating doctors at Bethany Hospital and undergo the medical procedure advised for his condition. Speaking to reporters after walking out of jail, Sammiet said he had been experiencing health-related complications since July. He said he had earlier been admitted to Bethany Hospital, where he received treatment for his condition. According to Sammiet, he remained at the hospital for several days before being discharged. Reports led doctors to recommend that he undergo a required procedure within a period of six weeks.

Yogi revives the ‘80 vs 20’ campaign, linking Rajya Sabha seat math to assembly elections

New Delhi, Oct 07: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath revived his contentious “80 versus 20” pitch ahead of the upcoming assembly elections on Wednesday, citing the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) fielding eight candidates against the Samajwadi Party’s two for ten Rajya Sabha seats as proof that 80% of the electorate supports the ruling alliance, with only 20% supporting the opposition.”

The Rajya Sabha elections have foreshadowed the outcome of the upcoming assembly elections,” the chief minister stated, dismissing the SP’s main demographic structure of the PDA as a minority movement. “The battle has once again shaped up as an ‘80 vs. 20’ contest, with 80% belonging to the National Democratic Alliance and 20% to the PDA. The fate of the PDA will become clear,” Adityanath said at an event to mark Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s 25 years in public service



and as the head of government.

Yogi Adityanath and the ruling BJP had made the ‘80 versus 20’ pitch a key part of their campaign during the 2022 assembly elections, which is seen as a subtle reference to the estimated Muslim population in the state. According to the 2011 census, Muslims accounted for 19.26% of the UP’s population. In 2022, the BJP would insist that 80% of the state’s population backed progress, while 20% opposed it and took a negative approach. SP president Akhilesh Yadav

replied to the chief minister’s words, claiming that it confirmed atrocities against the PDA would continue throughout his tenure.

“The truth is that the balance has been upset owing to the failure in the 2024 elections, which is why such imbalanced statements are appearing.

Threatening the PDA in a 5-second confession will not allow the BJP to raise their heads and stare at the eyes for not only 5 decades or 5 centuries, but also 5 births,” Yadav said on X. “When the honourable person sees

‘PDA-only-PDA’ all the time, whether he is awake or asleep, then our advice is that why doesn’t he get ‘PDA’ written on 108 beads, make a rosary of it and chant ‘PDA’, as this will at least reduce some of his sins. The BJP is bankrupt at the level of achievement,” he added. Yogi Adityanath did not elaborate on the 80-20 remark at the ceremony on Wednesday, instead praising Prime Minister Modi for portraying India to the world as a strong and powerful country.” By instilling confidence in every citizen, he has succeeded in building a ‘New India’—an ‘Ek Bharat-Shreshtha Bharat’ One India,Great India,” he stated.” Today is a great day for every Indian as Narendra Modi completes 25 years of relentless public service. He rose from a tiny town in Gujarat to provide leadership for India. “An ordinary party worker secured a new identity for the country on the global stage,” the chief minister stated.

PM Modi’s new slogan to make India a developed nation by 2047



New Delhi, Oct 07: Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled a new motto -- “We Will Do It” -- on Wednesday to realize the ideal of making India a developed country by 2047, claiming that the goal will be met via creative policies and hard effort.Addressing the ‘Viksit Bharat Sankalp Sabha’ on the occasion of his 25th anniversary as Prime Minister, PM Modi stated that one of the country’s most serious concerns is the separation of society based on voting.”But does the absence of water in

a farmer’s field harm simply one caste? When there is no electricity, does darkness descend on only one community? The answer is no. If the problem belongs to everyone, the solution must be for everyone,” he said.

The prime minister said the dream of a developed India that people are seeing today will surely come true.

“There is no reason for India to stop. A hundred years ago, there were less than 40 crore of us; today, we are more than 140 crore. The 140 crore citizens together will

build a developed India by 2047, and we certainly will. We Will Do It,” he said.

“Viksit Bharat by 2047: We Will Do It. Top 3 Economy: We Will Do It. Self-reliant: We Will Do It. Global Manufacturing Hub: We Will Do It. Hosting the Olympics: We Will Do It. Step into space: We Will Do It.

This energy, this enthusiasm, this confidence is extraordinary,” he said. PM Modi praised Captain Smit Machchhar, an Indian pilot of flydubai, for successfully preventing his co-pilot from

crashing an Israel-bound flight despite being stabbed. He stated that the world is now talking about India’s pilot and will soon be discussing made-in-India aircraft.These objectives will be met via visionary policy and unrelenting hard work. “India may face challenges, but we also have 140 crore solutions,” he stated. PM Modi has been serving continuously as head of government -- first as chief minister of Gujarat for three terms and subsequently as prime minister of India after winning three Lok Sabha elections -- since October 7, 2001. PM Modi stated that he never expected to reach this milestone after taking office as Gujarat chief minister on October 7, 2001.I bow before the Indian people for putting their trust in me. “People are God to me, and hardworking BJP workers are my strength,” he stated. He also thanked all of his BJP and NDA colleagues, as well as everyone who values democracy.

A wild elephant climbs onto a moving car in Tamil Nadu, terrifying passengers

New Delhi, Oct 07: A wild elephant stepped aboard a moving automobile at Asanur, Tamil Nadu, close to the Karnataka border, terrifying the occupants.The event occurred on the Bengaluru-Dindigul National Highway, when an elephant approached a car while presumably looking for food. The van was traveling from Mysuru to Coimbatore when the animal suddenly climbed inside. The elephant stepped

on the automobile, causing damage to the side mirror. The passengers were shaken but escaped unharmed. Asanur lies along a forested stretch of the highway where encounters between vehicles and wild animals are not uncommon. The area is also close to the forests of Chamarajanagar and the Bandipur Tiger Reserve, where elephants frequently move through wildlife corridors. Wild elephants have been ob-

served to approach automobiles, especially those transporting food like vegetables or sugarcane.

Forest officials frequently warn travelers to stay in their vehicles, keep a safe distance, and never feed wild animals. Officials have also warned that stopping or feeding elephants may encourage them to approach vehicles more frequently, increasing the likelihood of hazardous confrontations.

CM seeks proof before taking action on illegal collection charges

Shillong, Oct 07: On Tuesday, Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma declined to launch an independent investigation or transfer SP Vivek Syiem amid claims of unlawful truck collecting, stating that the government would only act on “specific proof” and substantial evidence. The controversy erupted after the Khasi Students’ Union accused specific individuals of collecting money from vehicles following a sting operation at. The topic has also gained political traction, with posters, banners, and films circulating in Shillong attempting to link the charges to Deputy Chief Minister Prestone Tynsong. When asked whether the government would conduct an impartial investigation and act on the KSU’s demand for the SP’s transfer, Sangma stated that such acts would not be tolerated, but that allegations alone could not be used to justify action.“We are very firm and very clear on that,” he replied. “In situations like these, obviously we need to work on specific proofs and we cannot just simply go on allegations.” The Chief Minister’s statements came after questions arose over why police officers



reportedly involved in the collections were suspended but not charged with extortion. He said the government would first examine the facts and evidence before deciding on the appropriate course. “All the facts and figures have to be looked into, all the evidences have to be there and whenever such a situation comes up, we are taking action,” he stated.

He insisted that the government has acted whenever reliable information regarding such operations was brought to its attention and would do so again if evidence surfaced.

“We have taken action wherever we have encountered such situations, witnessed such events, or received such information. And

if the need arises in the future, we will certainly take action,” Sangma stated. The Chief Minister rejected any suggestion that the government might accept the charges at face value, emphasizing that judgments must follow facts. “One cannot simply jump to conclusions and assume that this is what is happening. “We have to work on evidence,” he stated. Sangma made it plain that the government’s position was unequivocal: illicit collection activities would not be permitted if developed. “We are very clear on our stand that these kinds of activities will not be allowed and if we find any such activity taking place, we will take appropriate action,” he stated.

The DMK has reversed its position on Rahul Gandhi’s protest march against Gyanesh Kumar in Delhi



New Delhi, Oct 07: On Tuesday, Rahul Gandhi was the target of an assault by his former ally, the MK Stalin-led DMK. A day later, on Wednesday, the criticism had transformed into support.As far as U-turns go, it was dizzying. “How can elections be fair if Gyanesh Kumar, a high-ranking official, is anti-democratic? He should certainly be dismissed. It is the citizens’ right to challenge the gov-

ernment’s wrongdoings, as Rahul Gandhi did yesterday. This government doesn’t want Rahul Gandhi to protest against Gyanesh Kumar,” DMK spokesperson TKS Elangovan said today, a day after the party criticised Rahul Gandhi, questioning his “silence” over the alleged voter deletions in Tamil Nadu. Yesterday, Rahul Gandhi, the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, headlined the

Opposition INDIA bloc’s protest and led a march from parliament to Election Commission’s office to demand the scrapping of special intensive revision of electoral rolls, and sacking of the Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar.

In a strongly worded post on X on Tuesday, DMK spokesperson Saravanan Annadurai questioned Gandhi’s stance on the deletions made through the SIR process in Tamil Nadu. Annadurai accused the Congress MP of “adopting inconsistent positions” on the electoral roll revision effort and questioned why developments in Tamil Nadu were not given the same attention as the larger agitation against the Election Commission.The DMK claims that millions of Tamil Nadu voters were

purged from the electoral records during the election body’s SIR exercise.The regional party did not even attend last week’s India bloc conference, which was intended to devise a strategy for launching a nationwide protest against Gyanesh Kumar. It had, however, stated that it supports the cause and aligns with the Opposition group on this matter. Gandhi and his party have not responded to the DMK leader’s allegations.

Following the 2026 state assembly elections, the decades-old DMK-Cong alliance disintegrated. The Congress severed connections with its old ally in order to back actor Vijay’s TVK in forming the government, resulting in a heated feud between the DMK and the Congress.

The Supreme Court is considering a petition to overturn the verdict on the poll panel appointment law

New Delhi, Oct 07: The Supreme Court decided on Wednesday to review a petition seeking reversal of its previous split decision on whether challenges to the 2023 statute governing the selection of the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and Election Commissioners (ECs) should be submitted to a bigger constitutional bench. On September 23, Justices Dipankar Datta and Satish Chandra Sharma disagreed on whether a series of petitions challenging the legality of a 2023 rule that excludes the Chief Justice of India (CJI) from the selection panel should be submitted to a bigger Constitution bench. Justice Datta declined the Centre’s request for such a reference, while Justice Sharma favoured placing the matter before a larger bench.

On Wednesday, the recall application was mentioned before a bench comprising the CJI and Justices Joymallya Bagchi and V Mohana by senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan. The plea has pointed out that the engagement of Justice Satish Chandra Sharma’s son as a lawyer with ECI was not disclosed during the five hearings in the matter. It has raised an apprehension of bias on part of Justice Sharma.

The plea has stated had the engagement of his son as standing counsel for the ECI been disclosed during the hearings, they would have requested Justice Sharma’s recusal from the case.“We will examine and take a call,” the CJI said.

The CJI also said that he had read that a curative petition has also been filed. Sankara-



narayanan answered in the affirmative, and said it has been filed by another party. Earlier, a curative plea was filed in the Supreme Court after media reports claimed that the son of Justice Satish Chandra Sharma, who served on the bench that rendered the split ruling, is the poll panel’s standing counsel before the Madhya Pradesh High Court. The case cited the grounds of “reasonable apprehension of bias and propriety” and stated that after the split

verdict was announced, the petitioner learned that Justice Sharma’s son was on the EC’s legal panel. It further said that a court cannot rule on a matter in which a judge’s family member represents one of the parties. The appeal further claimed that the matter is completely covered by the Supreme Court’s’reasonable likelihood of bias’ and’real danger test’, and that Justice Sharma’s presence on the bench invalidated the September 23 ruling.

CJI Surya Kant says SC will shortly decide on petition to recall CEC law ruling

New Delhi, Oct 07: Surya Kant, the Chief Justice of India (CJI), said on Wednesday that the Supreme Court will soon determine whether to list an application seeking to recall its order sending the challenge to the statute governing the appointment of the chief election commissioner and election commissioners to a Constitution bench.“We will examine and make a decision,” the CJI stated after senior attorney Gopal Sankaranarayanan and advocate Vishal Sinha noted the application for an urgent hearing. The application was brought

by Naman Sherstra, one of the petitioners who challenged the constitutionality of the CEC & ECs (Appointment, Conditions of Service, and Term of Office) Act of 2023. The application has sought recall of the order passed by a bench of Justices Dipankar Datta and Satish Chandra Sharma referring the challenge to the law to CJI for constituting a five-judge Constitution bench. This order came to be passed on September 23 following a split verdict by the judges on whether the matter should be heard by a five-judge bench. Sankara-

narayanan told CJI that on October 1, the matter was mentioned before Justice Datta, who refused to entertain it and asked him to approach CJI.

The court asked him whether any other matter had also been filed in this regard. Sankaranarayanan informed the court about a curative plea filed by one of the petitioners, which may be decided on its own merits. He pointed out that the present plea is an application seeking recall. The application seeks recall on the ground that Justice Sharma ought to have recused as

his son appears for the Election Commission of India (ECI) before the Madhya Pradesh high court. On September 23, a bench of Justices Dipankar Datta and Satish Chandra Sharma gave a split verdict on whether the 2023 law should be referred to a Constitution bench. While Justice Datta was of the view that the need does not arise as the challenge to the Act can be considered based on the settled principles laid down by earlier judgments, Justice Sharma held a different view. He said that substantial questions on the in-

terpretation of the Constitution arise in the matter and under Article 145(3), the same should be heard by a bench of at least five judges of the Supreme Court. The two judges passed a common order placing the matter before CJI for referring the petitions to a Constitution bench. The plea seeks recall only of Justice Sharma’s order and the common order passed by the bench referring the matter to a Constitution Bench. The application asserts unequivocally that the subject was heard by the bench of Justices Datta and

Sharma five times. On none of these times did Justice Sharma reveal this fact or seek recusal on this basis. Sherstra alleged that press stories arose two days after the September 23 ruling revealing Justice Sharma’s son’s engagement as ECI counsel.

It sought the order’s recall, adding, “The question is whether the established circumstances, viewed objectively, give rise to a reasonable apprehension concerning impartiality.” However, the application does not seek the recall of Justice Datta’s separate opinion.

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A five-story residential building collapsed in Delhi’s Seemapuri

New Delhi, Oct 07: A five-story residential building collapsed in Delhi’s Seemapuri neighborhood on Wednesday afternoon, sparking a rescue operation by the Delhi Fire Services (DFS).The building, which was built on a plot of around 25 square yards, collapsed and partially damaged two adjacent buildings.

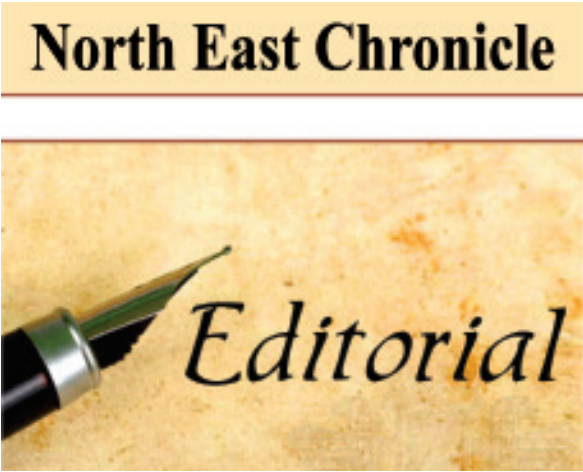
Seven injured people, including a three-year-old toddler, have been rescued from the impacted area, while many more remain trapped under the debris. The Delhi Fire Service (DFS) received a call regarding the building fall at 3:30 p.m. and dispatched four fire tenders to the scene.

A local resident Salim, who said the collapsed building was his house, told that his daughter and son-in-law had been trapped inside but were later rescued. He also said that at least 12 people could still be trapped under the debris.

A resident of a street adjacent to the spot said there was a shop on the ground floor, while families lived on the four floors above it. “Two-three people have been rescued by locals and police, multiple are still trapped,” said Kulsum Khatoon.

Pankaj Luthra, a Municipal Councilor from Jhilmil, reported that an old building, estimated to be 40-50 years old, fell.Four or five people have already been rescued from the debris.

The rescue operation involves the entire police force, the MCD, and the administration. We are doing everything we can to prevent any further incidents.”This comes a month after a boys’ PG in Delhi’s Satya Niketan fell on September 6 while repairs were being carried out. The tragedy resulted in seven deaths and several injuries. Since the Satya Niketan tragedy, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) has launched enforcement campaigns against unsafe buildings, unauthorized projects, and violations of the Delhi Master Plan (MPD) and building by-laws. According to the source, the city council conducted demolition operations in many areas on Tuesday, including Old Seemapuri.



Wildlife week sparks fresh conservation hope

Wildlife Week 2026 in India is celebrated from October 2 to October 8, with this year's theme focusing on 'Connecting Habitats, Thriving Wildlife,' which turns the nation's attention to India's extraordinary natural heritage. Assam has a special story to tell. It is written not only in its forests and wetlands but also in the flowing waters of the Brahmaputra and its tributaries, and its quiet protagonist is the Gangetic River dolphin, Platanista gangetica, locally known as Xihu. The Gangetic River dolphin, which is both the national aquatic animal and the state aquatic animal of Assam, is a Schedule-1 species under the Wildlife Protection Act of 1972 and is also considered "endangered" by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN). While dolphins once thrived in Assam, across the Brahmaputra and its tributaries like Kulsi and Subansiri, the species is currently struggling. The Brahmaputra, with its shifting channels, sandbars, wetlands and tributaries, provides vital habitat to the dolphin. The Kulsi has drawn particular attention from researchers because of its dolphins and the close bond between riverine communities and the water. In eastern Assam, the Dibru-Saikhowa region shows why conservation cannot be confined to isolated protected areas, as the Brahmaputra and Dibru systems support diverse aquatic and wetland wildlife along with the wider landscape around Dibrugarh, Tinsukia, Dhemaji, Lakhimpur, and Majuli. Last year, a report published by the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) confirmed that the Brahmaputra river system remains a major stronghold for the Gangetic River dolphins, harbouring 30% of the world's population.

The Wildlife Institute of India's first comprehensive survey (2021-23) estimated 6,324 Gangetic dolphins, within a range of 5,977 to 6,688. Uttar Pradesh holds 2,397 and Bihar 2,220, followed by West Bengal with 815 and Assam with 635. Assam thus shelters roughly one in ten of the country's dolphins: 584 in the Brahmaputra mainstream and 51 in its tributaries (jalshakti.dowr.gov.in). In the Northeast, the foundation of dolphin science was laid by Dr Abdul Wakid, whose early 2000s research and subsequent 2005 Aaranyak valley-wide survey estimated 250 dolphins in the Brahmaputra system (growing to 265 by 2008), paving the way for the 635 dolphins recorded in Assam today. Crucial contributions also came from Dr Wakid's collaborator, Dr Gill Braulik, who identified sand mining as the gravest hazard to dolphins on the Kulsi River and later led the landmark research establishing that the Ganges and Indus dolphins are completely separate species (<https://www.researchgate.net>). In December 2024, the Wild-

life Institute of India, with the Assam Forest Department and Aaranyak, tagged a Ganges River dolphin in Assam for the first time anywhere. It was a 32-kg sub-adult in the Kulsi, and the tag will show how dolphins use disturbed rivers. The 2011 survey by North Lakhimpur College accurately recorded 27 Gangetic River dolphins in the Subansiri River. Local conservationist Jugal Borah, who closely monitors the population, previously noted that the stable habitat had allowed numbers to rise above 40. Government and NGOs in action. The state of Assam declared the Xihu (Gangetic River dolphin) as its state aquatic animal on June 5, 2008. Aaranyak's Dolphin Conservation Network began in 2008, and its "Dolphin Yatra" research-cum-education boat was the first of its kind in India. An IUCN-supported project later strengthened community monitoring in 30 priority habitats. Nationally, Project Dolphin, launched on 15 August 2020, backs research, habitat protection and community participation, with Assam central to its survey and tagging. Is it working, and what lies ahead? The signs are encouraging. The mainstream population is stable, and villagers around the Kulsi now believe that harming a dolphin would hurt their families. Satellite tagging is planned to expand to other states, and the data will also help shape a long-term conservation action plan. Project Dolphin also envisages joint forest-fisheries protection and trained rescue responders. Unregulated fishing, accidental entanglement, declining fish stocks, pollution, vessel movement, sand extraction, bank modification and changes in river flow can all affect dolphins, which in the lean season are confined to deeper pools and channels. This is why fishing communities are at the centre of the story. In areas where livelihoods depend on the river, aligning conservation efforts with the security of those livelihoods is essential. Fishers can be partners, observers and guardians whose knowledge of seasons, fish movements, deep pools and sightings complements scientific surveys. Nets, responsible fishing, and prompt reporting of injured or entangled dolphins make a practical difference, especially in the Kulsi basin. The state government has initiated efforts to protect the Xihu through legal enforcement, habitat monitoring, and community engagement. The Assam Forest Department prosecutes illegal hunting and poaching by strictly enforcing the highest degree of statutory protection afforded under Schedule I of India's Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. Working alongside central entities like the Wildlife Institute of India (WII), the state conducts standardized population surveys and monitors river health.

Expanding apprenticeship programs holds the key to addressing India's unemployment challenges

The Periodic Labour Force Survey for 2025 reports an unemployment rate of 3.1% among people aged 15 years and above. The rate was 9.9% for those aged 15-29 years, 11.2% for graduates and 10% for people with postgraduate education or above. It also found that 5% of people aged 15-29 years had received formal vocational or technical training. The question to ask is: How can universities make the education-to-work journey seamless and more productive for students? A student may study economics in a district college while a nearby food-processing company looks for people who can manage data, accounts, or supply chains both in the same town and yet far apart. How to create a practical bridge between them? Under the National Education Policy 2020, higher education has gained greater flexibility, and the University Grants Commission's 2025 guidelines allow eligible institutions to offer an Apprenticeship Embedded Degree Programme (AEDP) in undergraduate disciplines. The immediate task is to turn this opportunity into dependable partnerships among colleges, universities and employers.

The UGC guidelines provide for curricu-

lum co-design, workplace training, academic credit, and assessment shared by the institution and industry. At least one full semester, or up to three semesters, in a three-year UG programme may include apprenticeship training. The resulting degree is treated at par with a regular undergraduate degree for employment and further study. The All India Survey on Higher Education 2023-24 indicates that there are 45 million students in higher education. Undergraduate students form 76.8% of total enrolment. Among reported undergraduate programmes, Arts accounts for 32.1%, Science for 13.5%, and Commerce for 12%. Students in these fields bring communication, analytical, social, scientific and commercial knowledge. An apprenticeship can help them apply that knowledge to real problems while preserving the breadth of their degree. What can influence employer participation to reach the scale India needs? A small or medium enterprise may have useful work and still need shared training support. A company may find that its production calendar does not fit a university semester. Managers may seek greater clarity about contracts, assessment, mentoring or safety duties. Firms may also con-

sider whether a person trained by them will later join another employer. Since businesses cannot sustain training efforts out of charity alone, their decision to partner with universities to train depends primarily on market dynamics, employee retention, and the return on the time invested. Economic theory helps explain AEDP's value to employers. Gary Becker's theory of human capital says that education and training improve productive knowledge and skills. Michael Spence's theory of job-market signalling adds another point. Employers often know little about a new graduate's practical ability. So verified workplace experience gives them a clearer signal. The three economics Nobel winners in 2010, Peter Diamond, Dale Mortensen, and Christopher Pissarides, address the question: Why are so many people unemployed at even as there are a large number of job openings? Finding the right match takes information, time and coordination. AEDP addresses all three by linking classroom learning, observed performance and employer contact.

The Economic Survey 2025-26 reports a movement towards manufacturing and services in the employment pattern. At the

same time, organised manufacturing employment grew by about 6% in 2023-24. A NITI Aayog study of services found that jobs tended to grow relatively strongly in computer and information services, health and financial services, with important roles for transport, trade and repair. This points to opportunities in digital services, health care, finance, logistics, retail and manufacturing. Still, a fast-growing sector at the national level may have little presence in a particular district. State governments have a practical connecting role. Depending on the state, the higher education, skill development, labour and employment, industries and MSME departments could work with higher education councils, skill missions, universities, district industries centres, sector skill councils and regional apprenticeship boards. Groups of MSMEs could share trainers, laboratories and assessment support instead of each firm creating a full system. Universities could appoint industry experts as professors of practice. When the degree meets the workplace in this way, young people gain more than a degree. They gain a clearer path from what they learn to what they can contribute.

Beijing commentators argue 'China plus one' strategy has faltered, leaving India behind

Terms and phrases such as "China Plus One", "decoupling", "de-risking", and "alternative supply chains", which were once ubiquitous, are now heard less often. Chinese commentators are arguing that the strategy has not worked and may in fact be failing. Last month, Western media outlets reported that companies that had moved their factories to Vietnam and India to avoid United States' tariffs are quietly moving their orders back to China. One Chinese commentator described this as shattering a long-held illusion. Another commentator argued that the evidence is already visible on the ground. A Dandong metal-casting factory lost an American order to India, but after the Indian supplier recorded a defect rate of more than 50 per cent and delays of three months, the order returned to China. A Hangzhou outdoor-furniture maker moved 30 per cent of its production to Vietnam in 2024, only to shut the factory this year and ship its production lines back to China.

Moving a factory overseas is easier than recreating the industrial ecosystem around it. Final assembly can shift to India or Vietnam, but the suppliers, skilled workers, equipment makers, logistics networks, and technical expertise that support production take much lon-

ger to build, a commentary read. A recurring argument in Chinese discussions of China Plus One is that China's manufacturing strength lies in the completeness of its industrial chain. It is the only country with all 41 major industrial categories, allowing manufacturers to source almost everything domestically, from basic components to sophisticated machinery. The "one-hour industrial circle" of the Pearl River Delta exemplifies this. As one Guangdong industrial-robot maker put it: "If I'm missing a core component, I make one call and a supplier can deliver it within an hour, often with an engineer to solve the problem on the spot." Dense transport networks, digital supply chains, and a large pool of engineers and skilled workers underpin this ecosystem. Jin Canrong, professor at the School of International Studies, Renmin University of China, claims that in PPP terms, China's manufacturing sector already accounts for 50 per cent of the world's total. China Plus One is also changing the way China participates in global production. Lu Jiangyong, professor of Organisation and Strategic Management at Guanghua School of Management, Peking University, describes it as a structural adjustment and a double-edged sword. China may

lose some foreign investment and manufacturing links, but its industrial base allows it to remain deeply integrated into global production. Many multinationals are moving final assembly overseas while retaining R&D, key components, and sales in China, while Chinese companies are adding production capacity abroad. In Lu's view, China is now shifting from the 'world factory' towards a 'world supply centre'. Much of the Chinese discussion of China Plus One centres on India, which is seen as one of the main beneficiaries of efforts to shift production and investments away from China. A vlog lamented that India had tried to copy China's manufacturing playbook but fallen short, and asked whether China Plus One was now backfiring. Another asked whether the strategy was bankrupt and argued that India simply could not follow this path.

According to an analysis published on Sohu, India saw the US-China trade war as an opportunity to challenge China's manufacturing dominance, with its Make in India push aligning with China Plus One. It made some progress, particularly in toys, but the gap remains wide: India's toy exports to the US were just \$100 million last year, compared with \$11 billion from China and \$3 billion from

Vietnam. Indian manufacturers also remain dependent on China for key components, technology, and other inputs. Higher US tariffs have further exposed these vulnerabilities, with manufacturers losing orders and facing unsold goods and rising costs. Chinese commentary acknowledges India's advantages, particularly its enormous labour force, but questions whether these are enough to overcome the structural weaknesses of its economy. Rao Jinshan and Mao Yaxin, members of the South Asia Research Group and doctoral candidates at Xiamen University, argue that India's material base has not kept pace. They point to the failure of the planned system to deliver comprehensive industrialisation, leaving inefficient state-owned enterprises alongside powerful and unwieldy conglomerates. India's dependence on China is another recurring theme. One commentator noted that for every one rupee of goods India sells to China, it buys seven rupees' worth from China. On the surface, Indian exports to China are increasing, but the flow of money remains heavily weighted in the other direction.

There is, however, another side to the China Plus One story: Chinese companies going abroad. Chinese discussions distinguish this from

foreign companies seeking to reduce their dependence on China. For Chinese companies, overseas expansion means adding capacity while keeping China as the industrial core. They retain R&D, core technologies, key components, and much of their higher-value manufacturing at home, while adding factories and operations in Southeast Asia, Mexico, the Middle East, and elsewhere. Overseas facilities handle assembly, processing, distribution, and local sales, helping companies diversify risks, avoid trade barriers, and enter new markets without dismantling their China-based supply chains. The distinction is central to the Chinese view of China Plus One. Foreign companies may struggle to reproduce China's industrial ecosystem elsewhere, while Chinese companies can expand abroad without giving up the networks, technology, and capabilities they have built at home. This distinction also shapes Chinese perception of India's role in the China Plus One strategy. There is a widespread belief on Chinese online platforms that India may make some progress by attracting production and investment away from China, but that catching up with China's manufacturing base remains a distant prospect.

Simplifying business compliance should be the cornerstone of future GST reforms

Nine years, three months and six days ago, India saw the launch of its biggest indirect-tax reform the goods and services tax (GST). About nine and a half months prior to that launch, the GST Council, a constitutional body, was set up with the power to make all key decisions on GST rates and slabs. That was on 12 September 2016. Between the formation of that constitutional body and the launch of the new tax system, the GST Council met 18 times. Such a high frequency of Council meetings was understandable, given that a major taxation reform was being rolled out, requiring massive preparatory work through consultation. Also, since India adopted a dual GST model (with both the Union and state governments levying the tax on the same products and services), a permanent joint platform like the GST Council became necessary. In most other countries with GST (including even the few that have adopted the dual GST model), this function is performed by their respective legislative bodies, which

undertake tax rate reviews annually as part of the budget process.

In India, the frequency of GST Council meetings, however, has slowed considerably since the launch of the new tax system. Only 38 meetings took place between 1 July 2017, and 3-4 September 2025 fewer than five meetings per year on average. Significantly, the number of meetings in a year has gradually declined as the GST system has stabilised from eight meetings each in 2017-18 and 2018-19 to five meetings in 2019-20, and settling down to three-four meetings a year in the following five years. In 2025-26, only one GST Council meeting took place, even though its first meeting in September 2016 had suggested it should meet at least once a quarter. On Thursday (8 October), the 57th meeting of the GST Council is scheduled to take place in New Delhi. The significance of Thursday's meeting lies not just in the fact that it is being held after a gap of more than a year, but also in the nature of the decisions taken at

the previous meeting on 3-4 September 2025. Expectations for a meeting held after over a year have therefore risen. The last GST Council meeting undertook the most comprehensive review of the tax system's rate structure. It changed the rates of over 450 goods and services across a wide range of areas, including agriculture, food, tobacco, fertilisers, coal, renewable energy, textiles, health, education, consumer electronics, paper, transportation, sports goods, toys, leather, wood, defence, footwear, construction, handicrafts, machinery, job work, local delivery, and insurance. Unlike the previous two rounds of rate reviews in November 2017 and December 2018, when rates were only brought down for 94 and 17 categories, respectively, and without changing the slab structure, the GST Council undertook a far more comprehensive exercise in September 2025. This led to a reduction in rates for about 380 goods and 24 services, and an increase in rates for about 40 goods and 10 services. More importantly, almost all goods

and services, barring a dozen-odd items attracting a 40 per cent rate, were placed under only two slabs 5 per cent and 18 per cent. This reduced a multi-tiered tax structure to a three-slab tax system.

What happens at the GST Council meeting on 8 October, however, will be different. Tomorrow's meeting is not about rates as any further rationalisation has been taken off the table for the time being, making such reviews an annual exercise. Instead, the meeting will be largely about processes. Therefore, the outcomes from this meeting may not be as exciting as those from the 2025 meetings. But their significance in real terms for the economy and the ease of tax collection will be huge. Consider the following. As many as 14 sectors are likely to benefit from changes in procedures for assessing and collecting GST, making the process simpler and easier, and facilitating easier refunds and claims for input-tax credit. These are: Agriculture, MSMEs (micro, small and medium enterprises), exporting

firms, ecommerce, logistics, infrastructure, automobiles, financial companies, hospitality & tourism firms, health care & pharmaceuticals, real estate & construction, shipping & ports, telecommunications, and manufacturing.

In addition, there are other proposals for reforming the registration process, steps to ensure faster refunds, removal of obstacles to claiming input-tax credit, improving the attractiveness of exports, reducing litigation and providing certainty, decriminalising tax-evasion cases without undermining the process of prosecuting offenders, enabling compliance for digital and technology companies, and introducing a level playing field for companies. The guiding principle behind these changes is to remove inconsistencies and ambiguities that remained unaddressed in last year's meeting. A couple of examples will indicate how important the proposed changes will be for improving the ease of doing business for ordinary business entities and transporters. A vehicle carrying goods can

now be stopped only where there is specific information to act on, ruling out random checks on highways. The decision to stop the vehicle must be authorised beforehand by senior officials. And the vehicle can be stopped only by the state where the goods transportation began. States through which the goods pass and the states where they are supposed to be delivered will not have the power to intervene. For speedier goods movement and for freeing transporters from harassment, this move can be a game changer. Similarly, MSMEs with an aggregate annual turnover of up to Rs 5 crore supplying goods and services exclusively to unregistered persons can furnish only one return in a year (compared to several returns by others) and pay tax quarterly. An estimated 1.7 million such tax-paying small entities will benefit from this simplification. The ecommerce platform economy and its small suppliers will benefit as they will not be required to register separately in each state where they deliver their goods and services.

World Bank Raises India’s GDP Growth Forecast to 7.1% for FY2026-27

New Delhi: The World Bank has once again expressed confidence in the Indian economy. Amid the West Asia crisis and global uncertainties, the World Bank has raised its forecast for India’s economic growth to 7.1% for the financial year 2026-27, following similar positive revisions by Moody’s and S&P.

In its latest India Development Update released on Tuesday, the World Bank raised its forecast for India’s gross domestic product (GDP) growth for the current financial year 2026-27 to 7.1%. This is 0.5 percentage points higher than the 6.6% projection made in April. The upward revision



has been attributed to stronger-than-expected growth in the first quarter, covering April to June.

The World Bank said in its report, “We have raised our

GDP growth forecast for the current financial year 2026-27 from 6.6% in April to 7.1% as growth has been stronger than expected despite trade and geopolitical

uncertainties.”

According to the World Bank report, rural consumption initially outpaced urban demand. This was supported by stronger agricultural

performance, rural income support, food subsidies and lower inflation. Urban consumption strengthened during the remainder of the year following income-tax relief and reductions in the Goods and Services Tax (GST). As a result, industrial activity has also performed better than expected despite global headwinds since April.

It may be recalled that India’s real GDP growth was 7.8% in the first quarter of FY2026-27 (April-June). According to the latest World Bank assessment, India’s economy grew by 7.6% in FY2025-26, compared with 7.1% in FY2024-25.

Share Market Closes in Green Sensex Jumps 685 Points



New Delhi: The Indian stock market closed higher in the green on Tuesday, the second trading day of the week. Both benchmark indices recorded gains. The Sensex jumped 685 points to close at 73,068, while the Nifty also gained 220 points. The Sensex of the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) closed at 73,067.81, up 685.34 points, or 0.95 per cent. Meanwhile, the Nifty of the National Stock Exchange (NSE) rose 220.35 points, or 0.98 per cent, to close at 22,776.10. Investors received some relief as selling pressure eased. The uptrend was broad-

based across the market. Shares of Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) and Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL) surged around three per cent. The Indian rupee weakened by eight paise against the US dollar to close at 96.43. However, market challenges persist, prompting investors to remain cautious. It may be recalled that in the previous trading session, the BSE Sensex had closed 472.77 points, or 0.66 per cent, higher at 72,382.47 points. The NSE Nifty had also gained 133.80 points, or 0.60 per cent, to close at 22,555.75 points.

RBI Governor to Announce Monetary Policy Committee Decisions

Mumbai: Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Sanjay Malhotra will announce the decisions of the three-day bi-monthly Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting at 10 a.m. on October 7. A press conference will follow at 12 p.m. Economic experts expect the RBI to raise its policy repo rate by up to 0.25 percentage point. The MPC, headed by RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra, began its three-day review meeting in Mumbai on Monday to assess economic conditions and decide on key policy rates. The Reserve Bank has announced that the Monetary Policy Statement and the post-policy

press conference on October 7 will be live-streamed. The Monetary Policy Statement will be broadcast at 10 a.m., followed by the post-policy press conference at 12 p.m. Economists and banking officials believe the RBI could raise the repo rate by 0.25 percentage point in its October monetary policy review amid inflationary pressures arising from a renewed escalation in the ongoing crisis in West Asia. Earlier, brokerage firm Nomura had projected two successive 0.25-percentage-point hikes in the policy repo rate during the October-December monetary policy review meetings.

Government in Talks with Airlines, Oil Companies Over High Aviation Fuel Prices: Civil Aviation Minister

Mumbai: Shares of capital-market companies gained in early trade on Tuesday amid a buzz that India’s markets regulator is likely to stop using closing auctions to calculate derivatives settlement prices for at least a year, in a partial reversal of the mechanism introduced in August for key stocks and derivative contracts, according to a Reuters report citing sources with direct knowledge of the matter. If the change goes ahead, derivatives

settlement prices would be based on the volume-weighted average price of the final 30 minutes of regular trading instead of a closing auction.

The review follows concerns over sharp swings in derivatives prices on expiry days after SEBI introduced the closing auction session, or CAS, for stocks linked to futures and options contracts. Shares of BSE Ltd surged nearly 3.55 per cent to Rs 3,292.30 on Tuesday, with its market capitalisation close

to Rs 1.35 lakh crore. Angel One Ltd jumped close to 3.5 per cent to Rs 293.65 in early trade.

Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd also added more than 3.1 per cent to Rs 1,038.95 at the opening. Billionbrains Garage Ventures Ltd, the parent company of Groww, was up 2.25 per cent at Rs 191.25, with its market capitalisation close to Rs 1.2 lakh crore. Shares of the recently listed National Stock Exchange of India Ltd (NSE Ltd) gained more

than 2.11 per cent to Rs 1,760 in early trade, with its market capitalisation close to Rs 4.35 lakh crore. Nuvama Wealth Management was up 1.85 per cent to Rs 1,855. Under CAS, a short auction at the end of the trading day helps determine a stock’s closing price. Airlines are facing headwinds due to the rising prices of Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF), which accounts for around 40 per cent of a carrier’s operational costs

Sebi tells SAT that Jane Street has enough data to respond to market manipulation charges

Mumbai: The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) has told the Securities Appellate Tribunal (SAT) that Jane Street has already been provided sufficient material to respond to allegations that it manipulated the Bank Nifty index, according to a Business Standard report.

At a hearing on Tuesday, Sebi argued that the trading firm should explain the manner, strategy and rationale behind its trades rather than seek additional documents from the regulator. Sebi’s counsel told the tribunal that if Jane Street can demonstrate that its trading did not amount to market manipulation, the regulator’s interim order could “probably be vacated”. The regulator said it had shared not only the material cited in its interim order but also more than 10 GB of data with the firm. Sebi argued that the dispute was increasingly shifting from Jane Street’s trading behaviour to the process followed by



the regulator during its investigation.

According to Sebi, the burden was on Jane Street to explain its “mode, manner and reasons” for executing the trades and the strategies it employed.

The regulator also maintained that the matter was still at the investigation stage and that it was not required to provide every document in its possession at this point. It argued that only documents referred

to and relied upon in the interim order needed to be provided at this stage. Sebi further told SAT that Jane Street’s demand for additional information was delaying the completion of the investigation. The case relates to Sebi’s July 3 interim order, in which the regulator accused US-based trading firm Jane Street and its group entities of manipulating the Bank Nifty index through a two-part trading strategy. Sebi alleged that

the entities made unlawful gains of around ₹4,843 crore through the alleged manipulation.

The regulator had temporarily barred the entities from trading in India. The restriction was lifted on July 18 after Jane Street deposited the alleged gains in an escrow account. Jane Street has denied Sebi’s allegations, maintaining that its trading activity represented conventional index arbitrage rather than market manipulation. A day before Sebi’s submissions, lawyers representing Jane Street told SAT that movements in some Bank Nifty stocks had been contrary to the firm’s trading positions, arguing that this undermined Sebi’s manipulation allegations. Jane Street has also sought access to additional documents, including Sebi’s Integrated Surveillance Department report and correspondence between the regulator and NSE, as it challenges the findings in the interim order.

TCS dividend 2026 record date, dividend history, Q2 results

Mumbai: Tata group’s flagship Tata Consultancy Services Ltd (TCS), whose shares are down 35.25 per cent in 2026 so far, will consider a proposal to declare second interim dividend for FY27 on Thursday, October 8, along with its September quarter results. TCS dividend record date

TCS has fixed Wednesday, October 14, as the record date if the second interim dividend is declared. The dividend will be paid to the equity shareholders whose names appear in the register of members of the IT firm or in the records of the depositories as beneficial owners of the shares as on that day. History suggests TCS has declared incrementally higher dividends post Q2 results. In the second quarter last year, TCS declared an interim dividend of Rs 11 per share for FY26. It announced a dividend of Rs 10 per share in October 2024, Rs 9 per share in October 2023, Rs 8 per share in October 2022

and Rs 7 per share in October 2021. The IT major declared an interim dividend of Rs 12 per share for the ongoing financial year post June quarter results.

It declared Rs 110 per share in dividends for FY26, with a dividend yield of 4.66 per

cent, amounting to 28,583 crore. This included Rs 11 per share dividend each in the first three quarters, a special dividend of Rs 46 per share in the December quarter (Q3) and a final dividend of Rs 31 per share. The IT major announced Rs 34,734 crore worth dividends in FY25, translating to Rs 126 per share dividend, as per corporate database AceEquity. The dividend yield stood at 3.5 per cent. The IT giant declared Rs 16,290 crore dividend in FY24, Rs 33,306 crore dividends in FY23 and Rs 7,686 crore dividends in FY22. “We forecast a 100 bps yoy margin decline YoY and stable QoQ margins. The YoY decline reflects wage revisions, the impact of acquisitions, and ongoing pricing pressure. EBIT margins typically expand in the quarter following annual wage hikes, supporting sequential stability. We expect TCV of \$10-11 billion, growth of 5 per cent YoY, thanks to the Porsche mega-deal,” Kotak said. Anand Rathi expects TCS’ Q2 to be better than Q1 basis uptick in Ju and /Aug months, but September is likely affected by rate hikes & Middle East weakness, particularly in Manufacturing and Retail.

Sensex, Nifty close higher ahead of RBI monetary policy

Mumbai: Indian equities ended higher for the second straight session on Tuesday on positive global cues.

Sensex gained 685 pts to 73,067 and Nifty rose 220 pts to 22,776. Market cap of BSE-listed firms rose to Rs 473.61 lakh crore a day ahead of the RBI monetary policy decision on Wednesday. Stocks such as Trent, Kotak Mahindra Bank, HUL, Reliance, IndiGo, Eternal and Asian Paints shares were the top Sensex gainers today, rising up to 13%. Tech Mahindra, Titan, Bajaj Finance and ITC were the top Sensex losers, falling up to 2.3%. Capital goods, banking, pharma stocks led the gains with the BSE Capital goods index rising 1333 pts to 75,749, pharma index gaining 552 pts and BSE bankex ending 330 pts higher at 62,118. Sunny Agrawal, Deputy Vice President - Fundamental Research at SBI Securities said, “Market gained for the 2nd consecutive session as global cues remained supportive. Stocks reporting their 2QFY27 business updates were in focus with Honasa Consumer, Meesho, Trent, Dabur closing higher by 8%, 6%, 12% and 3% respectively in today’s session following strong updates. US Futures are trading 0.5% higher currently. The US 10-year yield at 5.27% has also come off slightly from the morning highs, lending strength to the Indian market.” Ajit Mishra, SVP – research, Religare Broking said, “Markets extended their recovery on the weekly expiry day, with the benchmarks gaining nearly a percent as easing crude prices and encouraging Q2 business updates supported the sentiment.

Technically, the 22,800-22,850 zone is likely to act as the immediate hurdle, followed by the broader resistance around 23,000-23,200 while 22,600-22,400 remains the key near-term support. With the broader market structure remaining cautious amid elevated global macro risks, volatility is likely to stay high, favouring a selective, stock-specific approach as opportunities emerge.”

Global market signals turned relatively favourable as Brent crude prices eased below the \$100-per-barrel mark, supported by stable oil prices and an increase in crude exports from West Asia. The decline in energy prices offers some relief on the inflation front and provided a supportive backdrop for equities. Domestic investors, meanwhile, will be focused on the Reserve Bank of India’s Monetary Policy Committee meeting scheduled for tomorrow. Beyond the policy decision, the RBI’s commentary will be closely watched for clues on the central bank’s assessment of growth, inflation and the broader economic outlook. The policy meeting comes against a challenging global backdrop, with continuing geopolitical tensions in West Asia adding uncertainty to commodity markets. At the same time, the US Federal Reserve’s rate hike has raised concerns over tighter global financial conditions, potentially influencing capital flows, currency movements and investor sentiment in emerging markets such as India. Sensex climbed 472.77 points or 0.66 per cent to close at 72,382.47, while the NSE Nifty 50 index rose 133.80 points or 0.60 per cent to end at 22,555.75.

GST Council likely to consider reforms for officers’ committees

Mumbai: Nine years after the goods and services tax was launched in 2017, the GST Council is expected to consider reforms in the officers’ committees that prepare proposals with the fitment committee likely to be wound up.

According to sources, the various committees and sectoral groups may now be consolidated into a three-tier structure comprising the Secretariat, the implementation committee, and a single standing committee of officers. The implementation committee would remain the deciding body at the top and take up matters referred to it by the Secretariat. It would send important issues to the Secretary, the Union Finance Minister or the GST Council and would also continue to handle technology-related grievances, source said. Meanwhile, the new standing committee will do the technical work, examine proposals to amend laws, rules, notifications, and forms, and prepare proposals for the GST Council.

The composition of the new standing committee would ensure that every state would also have a voice whether or not it is a part



of it. Membership would be drawn based on each state’s relative size in the system and will rotate every two years. Further, no state would hold a permanent seat, and the agenda would be shared with every state, whether or not it is part of the committee.

The proposed structure would rationalise the current three-ti-

er structure of the GST Council, which consists of the Secretariat, an implementation committee, eight standing committees and 18 sectoral groups. While the institutional reforms come in the backdrop of GST now becoming a more stable tax system without the initial teething pains, trade and industry is also likely to benefit

from the simpler structure. “Representations will travel a shorter and more visible route and will not be sent to several committees whose remits overlap,” noted the source. Under the proposed structure, a representation would go to the standing committee, which would examine and prepare it for a decision by the GST Council.

EU negotiators head to China hoping to curb cheap imports of hybrid electric cars

UK: EU trade negotiators are heading to China for two days of crunch talks aimed at sealing a breakthrough deal tackling Beijing’s record £1bn-a-day trade surplus by curbing its exports of cheap hybrid electric cars into Europe.

Trade commissioner Maroš Šefčovič and his team fly out on Wednesday and will be negotiating up to the wire in talks scheduled to start the following day and continue late into Friday.

Sources say they hope to achieve “tangible, meaningful and measurable” results before the meeting of EU leaders in Brussels on Thursday next week, where China is high on the agenda.

The main focus is on what has been described as a “proof of concept” pilot agreement involving one sector, which is expected to be cars, which could be scaled up for other sectors in the coming months.

Diplomatic efforts to avert a full-scale trade war started at the end of June, albeit with little hope that China could curb exports to the EU given its historic ability to pivot quickly any time trade barriers are put in its path. For example, after the EU imposed tariffs on Chinese electric vehicles in October 2024 there was a boom in exports of hybrid cars, which were not subject to tariffs.

Last month, the EU asked China to voluntarily restrict hybrid exports to address soaring sales, warning that if they did not restrict them, safeguards – which could include quotas – could be enacted.

It is not known what China’s response was. But sources say the mood in talks has changed as EU member states have hardened demands for protection against Chinese imports that threaten their own industries.

On Monday, Germany’s chancellor, Friedrich Merz, agreed a “historic U-turn” on its policy on China by siding with the French president, Emmanuel Macron, in authorising effective permission for EU leaders to approve a new instrument to allow them to defend trade by cutting access to the single mar-



ket at short notice. In a joint paper with Emmanuel Macron, the two countries spoke of “a massive industrial shock ... affecting sectors at the heart of the European industrial model and of systemic relevance [pharmaceuticals, aerospace, automotive, machine

tools, chemicals, etc.]”.

The paper called for the use of all existing trade defence tools, but also for a new diversification instrument and “possible additional” new measures to allow the bloc to react when “third countries seek to undermine the restoration of a level playing field”.

Andrew Small, a former EU adviser on China, said Šefčovič’s talks will test the resolve of both Beijing and Brussels and will “determine whether China is willing to put sufficiently serious offers on the table”.

Small, who is the Asia director at the European Council on Foreign Relations in Berlin, warned: “China’s most effective tactic may be to draw Europe into a ‘process trap’ offering just enough to delay action, without addressing the forces driving European deindustrialisation.”

Sources say the Franco-German proposals for a new instrument, dubbed a “kill switch”, were born out of frustration, particularly in Paris, that a so-

called “trade bazooka” available to Brussels, officially known as the anti-coercion instrument, has never been used.

Paris pushed for the use of the ACI following Trump’s threat of tariffs last year but it never gained traction from others as it could take up to a year to implement.

Handlesblatt, the Germany business newspaper, described Monday’s change in policy as “nothing less than an economic turning point”, with chief political reporter Martin Greive concluding in a hard-hitting column that Merz was “putting an end to years of naiveté towards Beijing”.

“Merz has recognised in recent months that Germany is the epicentre of the China shock 2.0; that there might not be much left of German industry if Germany continues to stand by and watch as China gains enormous export advantages through trillions in subsidies, the unilateral siphoning off of knowhow, and a – to put it mildly – questionable monetary policy,” he wrote.

Women behind the lens: ‘I felt suspended between hope and giving up’

This self-portrait is part of my project So I See Me, which I began in 2020 during the Covid-19 pandemic and continue to this day. The title reflects the central idea: using the camera to look at myself. But it also carries a subtle echo of my name, Sosina.

When the pandemic started, I was in my final year of an engineering degree at the University of Gondar in Ethiopia. I was excited to graduate and begin the next chapter of my life, then everything suddenly came to a halt.

Thinking the travel restrictions would only last for a short time, I decided to stay with my uncle in Bahir Dar in the north rather than travel back to my home town, Asosa, more than 450 miles to the west. I ended up stuck there for eight months.

As the months passed, I began wondering whether I would ever graduate, when the pandemic would end and what would happen to my future. While I was at university I had become passionate about photography. I started with my phone, mostly shooting everyday life around Gondar.

But with travel restricted and very little around me to photograph, I turned the camera towards myself. Making self-portraits became a way to process feelings of anxiety and frustration about the future.

Around the seventh month of the pandemic, I took this photograph



leaning against a dry branch. It was the rainy season and most of the trees were full of leaves, so I was drawn to the dry, bare branches and the way they looked against the sky. I wasn’t consciously thinking

moment. Somehow, the branches reflected how I felt at the time: uncertain and stuck while everything around me seemed to be moving. The photograph captured the feeling of being suspended between hope for the future and being almost ready to give up.

When lockdown eased, I returned to university, graduated and moved to the capital, Addis Ababa, but finding work was difficult. I spent another six months without a job, and continued taking self-portraits while trying to figure out what direction to take. Eventually, I decided to leave engineering behind and pursue photography full time.

I took thousands of photographs during that period, but in the end I selected and published about 153 self-portraits. Most of them reflected what I was feeling at the time, although some were inspired by books, music, nature or simply an idea I wanted to explore.

Although these photographs come from my own experiences, the uncertainty of not knowing what comes next is something many young people are living through as they try to find their place in the world and build a future.

I was not planning to make a long-term project when I started during lockdown; I was simply using photography, with whatever tools I had, to make sense of where I was. Somehow, I am still doing the same thing today.

Saudi-backed forces recapture key areas around strait from Houthis in Yemen



Yemen: Forces of the Saudi-led coalition fighting in Yemen have recaptured several key areas around Bab al-Mandab strait from Iran-backed Houthi rebels, Yemeni officials said on Monday.

The officials said forces allied with the internationally recognized government have retaken the crucial town of Dhubab just north of the strait. They also captured the towns of Bab and Hadeid, said the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to reporters. Witnesses said they saw government tanks and forces entering the towns.

The government push came as part of a major offensive launched early Monday under an air cover by a Saudi military coalition, aiming to retake all territory held by the Houthis.

However, the offensive came just after the rebels said they had captured more territory in the south-western part of Yemen, taking the key town of Turbah in a blow to the Saudi-backed forces as they advanced toward the strategic provincial capital of Taiz, Yemen’s third-largest city.

The Saudi-led coalition spokesperson, Maj Gen Turki al-Malki, said 100 fighter jets were providing support to the forces of Yemen’s internationally recognized government fighting against the Houthis. He said the coalition had secured “air protection” of the strategic Bab al-Mandab strait and destroyed hundreds of Houthi targets as part of the ongoing campaign. Marco Rubio told reporters that it was expected that the Saudi-backed government in Yemen would hit back at the rebels to reclaim territory.

Asked if the Saudi-led coalition coordinated the action with the United States, the US secretary of state said that Saudi Arabia and the US had a defense agreement but would not offer more details.

He said the Yemeni government was ousted from some of its territory by a Houthi campaign and the Saudis had come under attack, and “they have a right to defend themselves”.

The new push sets an ambitious goal for the embattled government, which recently lost swathes of the country’s Red Sea coastline and areas around the Bab al-Mandab strait – a chokepoint for international shipping – after a lightning offensive by the Iran-backed Houthis.

Yemen’s internationally recognised government has struggled to roll back the surge, even with the military support of Saudi Arabia. The Houthis have increasingly targeted Saudi Arabia in recent weeks, and on Sunday said they had attacked oil infrastructure in the capital again.

The statement came just hours after the Houthis cut a vital supply route linking the besieged city of Taiz with the government’s interim capital, Aden, according to four security sources.

The Houthi advance followed days of heavy fighting in and around the city.

“We were informed that the Houthis had taken control of the al-Safiya area, where they cut the main road and took control of the police station,” a police source in the area said.

Three sources with the Yemeni military also confirmed Houthi control over the area and the supply route, with

traffic along the road halted and the group now surrounding Taiz city. Fighting in the area was ongoing, they added.

Sources from both sides told AFP on Sunday that fighting in and around the western province of Taiz had killed more than 70 people over the past day.

Sources from the internationally recognised government reported that 34 government troops were killed – 20 on the edge of Taiz province in neighbouring Lahj – while Houthi military sources said 39 of their fighters were killed in fighting across Taiz and in border areas with Lahj.

taiz city itself remains under the control of government forces but has long been besieged from the north, east and west by Houthi fighters and remains one of the main fronts in Yemen’s long-running civil war.

A Houthi military spokesperson, Yahya Saree, said on Sunday the group launched ballistic missiles and drones at the Saudi energy company Aramco’s sites in Riyadh and in the Khurais area in the east, causing large fires.

The attacks were in response to what the Houthis claimed were 50 Saudi-led air and missile strikes in Yemen in the past 12 hours.

There was no immediate confirmation from Saudi Arabia.

Saudi oil exports were already under pressure due to Iran’s blockade of the strait of Hormuz in the Gulf.

The Houthi’s Al-Masirah TV channel reported Saudi strikes on Sunday in the northern governorates of al-Jawf and Saada, saying at least two people had been wounded.

India’s supreme court demands answers over changes to voter roll

New Delhi: India’s supreme court has demanded accountability from the government and the election body over a controversial exercise that has led to the deletion of tens of millions of voters from the electoral roll and prompted mass protests. Demonstrations have erupted across the country in recent days as opposition parties, student groups and the youth-led Cockroach movement have demanded the resignation of Gyanesh Kumar, the head of the Election Commission of India (ECI). They have accused Kumar of overseeing a direct attack on India’s democracy through an exercise to verify and “purify” the electoral roll in states across the country, which so far has led

to 130 million names being removed. In Delhi, hundreds of people were detained as they tried to protest over the weekend. On Monday, the supreme court issued notices to Narendra Modi’s government, the ECI and Kumar to demand answers over concerns raised about the voter list revision, saying it expected all “to respond in a clear, transparent manner”. The ECI has claimed the exercise is simply cleaning electoral rolls of duplicate, dead and ineligible names, as well as removing “illegal infiltrators”. However, large numbers of people in Delhi and states such as Bihar and West Bengal say they have been wrongly stripped of their vote and have struggled to get it back. There are

accusations that revision of the electoral rolls particularly targets minorities such as Muslims, who are traditionally not voters of Modi’s ruling Bharatiya Janata party (BJP).

The opposition alliance, led by the Congress party, have accused the ECI of being hand in glove with the government over alleged vote “chori” or cheating. Kumar was chosen to head the ECI by a panel headed by Modi.

While the exercise, known as the special intensive revision (SIR), began last year, widespread outrage only recently erupted after a report in the Indian Express newspaper revealed multiple irregularities in the process, which were flagged in more

than a dozen internal objections. The two petitions taken up by the supreme court on Monday alleged that the credibility of the ECI was now in question and called for an independent inquiry into the decisions taken by Kumar in how the SIR process was conducted.

“Deletions of voters have been made in the largest democracy,” said Menaka Guruswamy, a lawyer acting for one of the petitioners. “We have grown up with free and fair elections, that is not the case now.”

Another advocate told the supreme court judges that if action was not taken to ensure that India’s electoral rolls remained fair, “this country will burn”. Another hearing in the cases will be held next week.

The controversies over the ECI have once again driven India’s young people on to the streets in protest, amid rising frustration at the Modi government.

The Cockroach Janta party (CJP), which led massive unrest over the summer that forced the resignation of Modi’s education minister, have once again mobilised and called for the resignation of Kumar. Thousands of CJP supporters took to the streets of Mumbai last Friday in protest and another demonstration was held on Saturday in Delhi. In Delhi, police have been criticised for their heavy-handed approach to stopping any student groups protesting in the heart of the capital.

Try these seven long-lasting, smudge-proof options



Among all cosmetic products available, kajal stands out as the singular item that substantially enhances my overall appearance by instantly defining the eyes, adding depth, and elevating even the simplest daily look with minimal effort. Nevertheless, when this cherished beauty staple becomes compromised by unexpected rainfall, high humidity, or everyday perspiration, incorporating smudge-resistant and waterproof kajal formulations into one’s cosmetic collection transitions from a mere preference to an absolute essential. These specialized formulas offer considerable utility due to their inherent capacity to withstand moisture exposure, resist oily eyelids, and minimize the likelihood of unsightly smudging or kajal displacement beneath the ocular region. Traditional kajal pencils often bleed or fade within hours, leaving dark smudges that ruin a polished finish, whereas advanced long-wear variants utilize film-forming polymers and volatile silicones that lock pigment in place for all-day reliabil-

ity. By investing in these high-performance, smudge-proof options, beauty enthusiasts can confidently navigate monsoon weather, intense workouts, and long workdays without constantly checking mirrors for raccoon eyes. Ultimately, transitioning to sweat-proof and waterproof kajal guarantees that your signature eye makeup remains crisp, intense, and impeccably fresh from morning until night, regardless of environmental challenges.

However, not every kajal labelled waterproof or long-lasting performs in the same way, as formulation chemistry, wax ratios, and volatile ingredients drastically alter how these eye products behave on different skin types. Some cosmetics feature exceptionally creamy formulas enriched with nourishing oils that glide effortlessly across the delicate waterlines without tugging, making them wonderfully easy to apply, but they may need a precious minute or two to set completely and avoid transferring onto the upper lid. On the other hand,

others boast a firmer texture with specialized polymers and offer vastly superior staying power, remaining immovable even on oily eyelids throughout a grueling day, though they might require a steadier hand during application. The finish can also vary dramatically from product to product, ranging from a deep, velvety matte black that absorbs light for dramatic intensity to a slightly glossy sheen or an intensely pigmented satin look that catches the light in a striking manner. Ultimately, your ideal choice depends heavily on whether you prefer a razor-sharp, precisely defined graphic line for a bold statement, a softly smoked-out and sultry look for an evening out, or a reliable everyday kajal that can be swiped on quickly during a rushed morning commute without ever sacrificing longevity.

How to pick the right kajal
Before purchasing a new kajal, it is wise to look far beyond just the shade name, as evaluating underlying formulation factors can make a remarkably noticeable difference to how comfortable, gentle, and long-lasting the product feels on your sensitive eye area throughout the day. First, you should carefully check the finish to align with your aesthetic goals and lifestyle needs, keeping in mind that classic matte kajals give a sophisticated, intensely defined, and timeless look suitable for professional settings, while metallic and shimmer finishes work brilliantly well for festive celebrations and glamorous party makeup where a bit of reflective sparkle is desired. Beyond the finish, scrutinize the ingredient list for skin-loving additions like soothing botanicals, vitamin E, or almond oil if you have sensitive eyes prone to irritation, ensuring the product prevents dryness along the waterline. Additionally, consider the mechanism of the packaging—whether you prefer a retractable twist-up pencil that eliminates the hassle of sharpening or a traditional wooden pencil that can be whittled down to a razor-sharp point for ultra-precise detailing. By weigh-

ing these critical elements of comfort, texture, and finish before making a purchase, you ensure that your chosen kajal not only performs flawlessly against moisture and oil but also feels like an absolute dream to wear from morning until night.

Look for pigmentation: A highly pigmented kajal should give good colour payoff without repeated application.

Consider your eye area: If your eyelids tend to get oily or your eyes water frequently, look for waterproof and smudge-resistant formulas.

Choose the right texture: Creamy kajals glide more easily, while firmer pencils can offer greater precision.

Think about the shade: Black creates maximum definition, brown looks softer and coloured kajals can add an easy pop of colour.

Check the wear claim: If you need your makeup to last through a workday or event, look for long-wear formulas.

Waterline use matters: If you plan to apply kajal directly to the waterline, prioritise a formula that feels comfortable there and follow the product’s usage instructions.

Look for convenient features: Built-in sharpeners, twist-up mechanisms and smudge-friendly formulas can make application easier.

Consider removal: A waterproof kajal may stay put better, but it should still be removed gently and thoroughly at the end of the day.

- 7 smudge-proof kajals for you:
1. RENEE Midnight XXL Kajal | Brown Kohl Pencil with Built-in Sharpener: If you want the intensity of a black kajal but prefer something softer for everyday makeup, the RENEE Midnight XXL Kajal in Brown is worth considering. It has a creamy, smooth-glide formula and delivers rich brown pigmentation in a single stroke. The waterproof and smudge-proof formula is designed for long wear of up to 24 hours, while the built-in sharpener makes it convenient for creating precise lines. The brown shade can also be used to cre-

ate softer smoky-eye looks.

2. Plum Naturstudio All-Day-Wear Kajal | Water & Smudge-Proof: Plum NaturStudio All-Day-Wear Kajal is a good option for those who prefer a classic black kohl look with long-lasting wear. Its pencil format makes it easy to use along the lash line or waterline, while the intense black colour can help define the eyes without needing multiple layers. It works well for everyday makeup as well as more dramatic eye looks. If you like a traditional kajal finish but want better staying power, this is one to consider.
3. IRIS COSMETCS Kajal Kohl Pencil Intense Black Waterproof: The IRIS Cosmetics Back To Black Waterproof Kohl Kajal is designed for those who like deeply defined eyes. Its waterproof formula makes it particularly useful for humid weather, long workdays and occasions when you do not want to keep touching up your eye makeup. The classic black shade can be used on the waterline or along the lash line, depending on the intensity you want. It is a practical pick if bold black kajal is your everyday makeup essential.
4. L’Oréal Paris Kajal, Waterproof Eyeliner, 14 Hours of Smudge-Proof Wear: For a more defined eye look, L’Oréal Paris’ waterproof eye pencil range offers formulas designed for long-lasting definition. A black kajal or gel-pencil finish can instantly make the eyes look more defined, whether you prefer a thin line or a more intense kohl effect. It is particularly suited to people looking for a product that can transition from a simple daytime look to more dramatic evening makeup.
5. FAE Beauty Eye-Deal Jewel Toned Metallic Purple Kajal: Want to move beyond black kajal? FAE Beauty Eye-Deal in a jewel-toned metallic purple shade adds colour and shine while keeping application easy. The Eye-Deal range uses an intense gel formula designed for long wear, making it suitable for creating colourful eye looks without reaching for a full

eyeshadow palette. Wear the purple shade along the lash line for a subtle pop, or layer it for a more noticeable festive or party look.

6. Recode Black Kohl Kajal Pencil last upto 14 hours: Recode Black Kohl Kajal is a straightforward option for anyone who loves intensely defined eyes. A classic black kohl can be used along the waterline, upper lash line or lower lash line, depending on the look you want to create. It is particularly useful for everyday Indian makeup, where kajal is often used as a quick way to add definition without applying a complete eye look. Pair it with mascara for an easy, polished finish.
7. LoveChild Masaba Colored Kajal: If your daily makeup routine could use a little more vibrancy and creative flair, LoveChild by Masaba Coloured Kajal serves as a wonderfully playful alternative to traditional black kohl, instantly injecting personality and modern charm into your look. Coloured kajals provide an effortless, beginner-friendly way to experiment with bold eye makeup trends without requiring you to spend hours mastering complicated eyeshadow blending techniques, cutting creases, or managing heavy powder fallout. You can easily use the pigmented pencil along the upper lash line or waterline for a subtle, unexpected wash of rich colour that brightens the eyes, or alternatively, you can pair it creatively with neutral, earthy eyeshadows when you want the colourful kajal to take center stage and become the undeniable focus of your overall aesthetic.

Furthermore, these vibrant shades allow you to effortlessly match your eye makeup to your outfit, your mood, or seasonal trends, ranging from deep jewel tones to playful pastels that make your iris color pop. By incorporating a versatile coloured kajal into your collection, you unlock endless creative possibilities that elevate a simple daytime look into something uniquely artistic with just a few quick swipes.

Does a silk pillowcase live up to the hype

According to Dr. Swetha, while a high-quality silk pillowcase may offer notable cosmetic benefits for daily hair maintenance and styling longevity, it should primarily be considered a helpful complementary approach rather than a standalone therapeutic solution for clinical hair loss, severe thinning, or chronic scalp conditions. Dr. Swetha elaborated further by explaining that silk possesses an inherently smoother surface texture and microscopic weave that generates significantly reduced friction compared to standard cotton materials, which often snag and rough up the hair cuticle during the night. This gentle surface potentially results in diminished mechanical stress, less frizz, and reduced breakage on fragile strands while you toss and turn in your sleep. However, because silk cannot alter internal hormonal imbalances, genetic predispositions, or underlying dermatological disorders like alopecia and seborrheic dermatitis, relying on a pillowcase alone will not reverse medical hair loss. Instead, patients should view it as a supportive accessory that protects the hair shaft externally, working best in tandem with targeted

medical treatments, a balanced diet, and proper scalp care prescribed by a dermatologist for comprehensive hair health. This reduced-friction benefit can be particularly helpful and transformative for individuals blessed or burdened with dry, frizzy, tightly coiled, curly, or chemically treated hair, where repeated overnight friction against rough fabrics can severely contribute to stubborn tangling, escalating frizz, and premature structural breakage. Because textured and chemically processed strands are inherently more porous and fragile due to compromised cuticles, minimizing nightly mechanical abrasion helps maintain the integrity of the hair shaft and prevents moisture depletion while you sleep. Furthermore, transitioning to a frictionless sleep surface may also significantly help preserve intricate hairstyles, blowouts, and curl definitions for days longer, drastically cutting down morning styling time and reducing the frustrating amount of hair that becomes tangled, matted, or torn out by harsh cotton fibers overnight. By creating a smooth gliding environment for your tresses, silk pillowcases protect your investment in salon

treatments and deep conditioning routines, ensuring your hair wakes up looking polished, manageable, and noticeably healthier with every single night of rest.

A silk pillowcase does not absorb or strip the essential natural oils from your hair the way traditional cotton fabrics voraciously do, which actively helps protect dry, curly, or structurally damaged strands by maintaining their vital moisture balance and lipid barrier throughout the night. Unlike cotton, which acts like a microscopic sponge that draws out hydration and causes roughness, silk’s smooth, protein-based fibers allow hair strands to glide effortlessly across the surface without friction or moisture depletion. So, if you have spent precious time and effort professionally styling, blowing out, or defining your hair, you can use a silk pillowcase with complete peace of mind, knowing that the luxurious silk fabric creates minimal mechanical disruption, prevents friction-induced frizz, and safeguards your hairstyle from becoming mashed, matted, or distorted. This gentle preservation ensures that your delicate curls or polished waves main-

tain their pristine shape, bounce, and sheen, allowing you to wake up with salon-fresh hair that requires virtually no touch-ups and remains resilient against daily wear and tear.

Apart from hair care, silk has low absorbency, which means your night creams and serums stay on your face instead of soaking into the pillow. You are able to glide your face smoothly on a silk pillowcase, reducing temporary sleep lines that can turn into wrinkles. Additionally, natural silk fibres help dissipate heat that keeps your head cooler through the night.

What you should know before buying a silk pillowcase?

“However, the evidence should not be overstated. A silk pillowcase does not prevent genetic hair loss, reverse thinning, stimulate new hair growth, or treat scalp conditions,” said Dr Swetha. For someone experiencing significant hair fall, breakage, or scalp symptoms, identifying the underlying cause is much more important than changing the pillowcase. If someone enjoys using silk, it is a reasonable low-risk addition to a hair-care routine, but it should complement rather than replace evidence-based hair and scalp care.

Why Upgrading Your Kitchen’s Cookware Is Ideal During Diwali



The festival of Diwali possesses a peculiar capacity for revealing household items that have discreetly accumulated the need for renewal. The cushions appear worn and fatigued, the lighting fixtures require replacement, and invariably, somewhere within the kitchen, there exists a cooking vessel that has evidently surpassed its optimal condition. While home décor tends to get most of the attention in the weeks before Diwali, the kitchen is arguably where the festival gets the most use. From preparing sweets and snacks to making elaborate family meals and cooking for guests, festive season is when cookware moves from everyday background equipment to something you notice every day. That makes a cookware upgrade particularly timely around Diwali. And you don’t necessarily need to replace everything at once. A well-designed three-piece set containing the basics, usually a tawa, frying pan and kadai, can cover a surprising amount of everyday cooking. There is also a cultural reason cookware tends to find its way onto Diwali shopping lists. Dhanteras, which marks the beginning of the Diwali period, has traditionally been associated with buying items

for prosperity and the household, including kitchenware. Amazon’s own Dhanteras guide notes kitchenware among the useful purchases associated with the occasion. What Makes a Cookware Set Worth Buying?
The number of pieces in a box isn’t necessarily the most useful way to judge a cookware set. A set with three genuinely useful pieces can be more practical than a larger collection containing several pans you rarely use. For an Indian kitchen, the combination of a tawa, frying pan and kadai is particularly versatile: the tawa handles rotis, dosas and pancakes; the frying pan works for smaller quantities and quick sautéing; and the kadai covers curries, stir-fries and deeper cooking. Material matters too. Non-stick cookware is convenient for everyday cooking and cleaning, while hard-anodised aluminium and stainless steel appeal to people looking for different levels of durability and cooking performance. And if your kitchen has an induction cooktop, check compatibility before buying. Not every cookware set works across both gas and induction. Non-Stick, Hard-Anodised or Stainless Steel?
There isn’t one material that works for every kitchen.

Non-stick is useful when you want easy food release and relatively straightforward cleaning. It can be particularly convenient for breakfast foods, shallow frying and everyday cooking where you don’t want ingredients sticking to the surface. Hard-anodised cookware is a good middle ground for people who prefer a tougher cooking surface. Hawkins’ Futura range, for example, uses hard-anodised aluminium and is designed for use across different heat levels. Its three-piece gift set combines a tawa, frying pan and kadai.
Buy Hawkins
Stainless steel is another option if longevity and a non-reactive cooking surface are priorities. Hawkins’ triply stainless-steel cookware, for example, uses a food-grade stainless-steel cooking surface with an aluminium core for heat distribution. Buy Hawkins
The right choice therefore depends less on what is considered the “best” material and more on how you actually cook. A Three-Piece Set Can Be Enough for a Kitchen Refresh. If you’re buying cookware because the festive season has made you realise that your existing pans need replacing, start with the pieces you reach for most often. A tawa is useful almost every day in an Indian kitchen. A frying pan covers everything from eggs and vegetables to shallow frying. A kadai is the workhorse for curries, sabzis and larger quantities. This is why three-piece sets from established brands can make sense: you get the core cookware without accumulating unnecessary pieces. And with the Amazon Great Indian Festival beginning on October 8, this is also a good time to shortlist what you actually need rather than shopping reactively once the sale is live.

Tips to Reduce Blackheads and Whiteheads

Blackheads and whiteheads can be safely and effectively managed or removed at home by incorporating gentle, non-abrasive practices into your routine, such as utilizing mild facial steams to help soften hardened sebum and loosen debris trapped within congested pores, followed by the careful application of targeted chemical exfoliants like salicylic acid. Salicylic acid is a renowned beta-hydroxy acid (BHA) that is oil-soluble, allowing it to penetrate deeply into the pore lining to dissolve dead skin cells, clear away excess oil, and break down the stubborn plugs responsible for both open comedones (blackheads) and closed comedones (whiteheads) without causing micro-tears like physical scrubs often do. However, achieving clear skin safely requires consistency, patience, and moderation, as over-exfoliating or aggressively squeezing blemishes can lead to severe skin irritation, inflammation, permanent scarring, or broken capillaries. Therefore, pairing these gentle exfoliating treatments with a soothing, hydrating moisturizer and daily broad-spectrum sunscreen ensures your skin barrier remains healthy, balanced, and fully protected while working toward a visibly smoother and clearer complexion.

To maintain a clear and healthy complexion from the comfort of your home, establishing a consistent daily skincare routine is paramount, beginning with



the foundational step to cleanse every day using proper techniques and targeted ingredients. To effectively remove accumulated dead skin cells, environmental pollutants, makeup residue, and trapped sebum that routinely clog your pores, you should diligently wash your face twice a day—once in the morning and once before bed—utilizing a mild, non-stripping cleanser or a specialized face wash that actively contains salicylic acid. Salicylic acid works wonders in a daily wash because its oil-soluble properties allow it to dive deep into pore linings, dissolving stubborn impurities and preventing new micro-comedones from forming, all without disrupting your skin’s vital moisture barrier when

used correctly. However, while keeping your skin clean is essential, it is equally important to avoid harsh scrubbing or over-washing, as excessive cleansing can trigger a rebound effect where the skin overcompensates by producing even more oil. Following up your gentle cleanser with a lightweight, non-comedogenic moisturizer and daily sun protection ensures that your skin remains balanced, nourished, and fully defended against daily stressors while you work toward achieving a smoother, clearer, and radiant complexion. Steam your face: To soften the junk in your pores, place your face over a bowl of hot water and cover your head with a towel for five to ten minutes.

Use clay masks: To remove impurities from deep within the pores and absorb extra oil, apply a clay or charcoal mask once a week. What Not to Do: Do not squeeze or pop: Avoid squeezing or popping blackheads and whiteheads because doing so forces bacteria deeper into the skin, resulting in severe inflammation, dark blotches, and permanent scarring.

Steer clear of harsh do-it-yourself scrubs: Steer clear of abrasive materials like baking soda, lemon juice, or sharp physical scrubbing that irritate and tear the skin barrier. Leave obstinate bumps alone: Since closed whiteheads don’t have an opening and need to be treated by a professional, never attempt to push them out at home.

ENTERTAINMENT

Kriti Sanon retells the hilarious backstory of her viral Raksha Bandhan Ad criticism



Mumbai : Kriti Sanon has been in the news lately for a bit due to a controversy that revolved around her recent Raksha Bandhan advertisement. The controversy highlighted the attire she wore, deeming it disrespectful to the festival. In light of it, she spoke about how shocked she was to see the outburst of reactions targeting her outfit. Kriti Sanon was part of an appearance with Kareena Kapoor Khan where they openly discussed the events that had transpired. Kriti began by saying, “My choli became a 6-people panel discussion.” She further told Kareena,

“I couldn’t believe... when my choli had become like a 6-people panel discussion on prime-time news.” To this, Kareena responded, “I know.”What was supposedly meant to be a wholesome ad featuring Kriti Sanon tying a Rakhi on her brother’s wrist for the occasion of Raksha Bandhan quickly became the talking point for targeting her Indo-Western-styled outfit. Kriti later took to her social media to express her feelings about the same. She said, “When will we stop telling women what to wear? Ethnic fashion has evolved over the years, yet a woman’s respect

for her culture is still measured by her clothes. Culture and traditions are in her heart, not in her neckline!” She further spoke on what the true intent behind the festival was, saying, “The essence of festivals is not in the clothes you wear. It is in the emotions and meaning you hold for the traditions. Raksha Bandhan is a bond of protection. My sister and I tie Rakhi to each other. We know we can protect each other no less than a brother would have. We pray for each other’s health, happiness & long life. And for us, this prayer and promise extends to our dogs too! After all, they are family!” In support of her, even the founder of the jewellery brand shared her say. “I have been following the conversations around our Raksha Bandhan campaign with Kriti and particularly the perception that we did not stand by the campaign or the message behind it. I want to be clear.

Mumbai : The new official poster for Ramayana has finally been unveiled with this one focusing primarily on the King of Ayodhya and father to Lord Rama, King Dashrath. This role is being played by Arun Govil, presenting his first look from the two-part epic. What further makes his presence more special for the fans on a deeper level is the fact that he once played the avatar of Lord Rama for the 1987 classic Ramayan television series. Setting a standard for Lord Ramas depiction with his calm demeanour, poised stature and soothing smile, makes watching him take on the role of the father establishes a powerful connection between the actor, the fans, and the epic in itself. Revered by fans all around, his casting helps add a deep-rooted layer to the film’s ensemble. The newly released poster

comes along with a powerful caption with a punch of nostalgia, reading, “He once brought Ram to life for a generation. Now, he returns to the world of Ramayana as the King of Ayodhya. Arun Govil as King Dashrath.” The poster shows Arun Govil in the new avatar seated on the throne, exuding his kingly presence. Ramayana is soon to release in theatres under the direction of Nitesh Tiwari and the production of Namit Malhotra. The lead actors for this epic include some top talents from the industry including Ranbir Kapoor as Lord Rama, Sai Pallavi as Sita, Ravie Dubey as Lakshman, Sunny Deol as Hanuman, and Rocking Star Yash as Ravana. Ramayana is one of the most anticipated movies this year, with its release scheduled around the festival of Diwali. The collaborations on



this project further extend to the 8-time Oscar-winning DNEG for the VFX, along with veteran music composer A.R. Rahman teaming

up with the legendary Hans Zimmer to orchestrate the score. Ramayana Part 1 will release in Hindi, Tamil,

Telugu, Kannada, and Malayalam across India on November 5th, 2026, with the sequel targeting a Diwali release in 2027.

Hollywood legend and Oscar winner Eva Marie saint passes away at 102



Agency : Hollywood has lost one of the last glittering pillars of its golden era. Eva Marie Saint, the radiant, fiercely talented star who captured hearts and critical acclaim over a career that stretched across nine decades, has passed away at the age of 102. Her repre-

sentative confirmed she died peacefully of natural causes at her Los Angeles home, surrounded by loved ones. Saint did not just enter Hollywood, she took it by storm. Making an unforgettable feature film debut opposite Marlon Brando in Elia Kazan’s 1954 classic On the Water-

front, she delivered a turn of astonishing, fragile vulnerability as Edie Doyle. The performance swept the industry, earning her an Academy Award for Best Supporting Actress. Heavily pregnant at the time of the March 1955 ceremony, Saint walked up to the stage and famously beamed to the room: “I may have the baby right here!” She gave birth just two days later. That was the magic of Eva Marie Saint, radiant poise wrapped in genuine grit. Her genius caught the eye of master filmmaker Alfred Hitchcock, who boldly cast her against type as the seductive, cool-headed undercover agent Eve Kendall in North by Northwest (1959). Hitchcock meticulously curated every detail

of her look, styling her as the quintessential Hitchcock blonde opposite Cary Grant. Reflecting on his transformative direction, Saint once shared, “He worked with me from the outside in. My hair, my makeup, my shoes, my jewellery, my purse, my gloves, everything. And just from creating that exterior for me, he gave me the sense of a spy lady.” Beyond the glitz of silver-screen thrillers, Saint was a true actor’s actor, earning a Primetime Emmy and working right into the 2000s with films like Superman Returns. With her passing, an entire chapter of Hollywood royalty draws its curtain, leaving behind performances that will inspire cinephiles forever.

Shagun Sharma explains her decision to turn down Bigg Boss wild card offer



Mumbai : Shagun Sharma, who rose to fame with Khatron Ke Khiladi season 15, was asked if she is planning to make a wild card entry into Bigg Boss 20. She stated to a leading tabloid, “Mentally, I am not ready for a show jo 3-4 ma-

hine chalta hai.” She said she currently considers herself to be in a “vulnerable state” and believes that getting locked up in the house could affect her. She added that she would take up the challenge and enter the show at a later stage whenever she

feels ready and confident. Salman Khan is hosting the show, which premiered on September 6. Love Gill, Mahhi Vij, Amrapali Dubey, Arishfa Khan, and Qazi Touqeer, among others, are the contestants of Bigg Boss 20.

Madhuri surprises big b with dance

Mumbai : Bollywood superstar Madhuri Dixit recently gave Amitabh Bachchan an unexpected trip down memory lane when she played a throwback clip of the megastar recreating her iconic ‘Ek Do Teen’ dance moves on Kaun Banega Crorepati 18. The moment left Big B visibly embarrassed, with the veteran actor laughing at his own performance. During their light-hearted conversation on the show, Amitabh recalled the time he had attempted the popular dance step. “Ek baar humse badi gustakhi ho gayi thi. Ek film thi, humne woh... 1, 2, 3 aise peeche hat ke kiya tha,” he said. Madhuri, clearly curious to see the moment herself, immediately suggested that the clip should be played. The show’s team then surprised Amitabh by bringing up the old footage. The clip featured Amitabh performing a comic version of the ‘Ek Do Teen’ step in his 1989 film Toofan. Dressed in a woman’s avatar, the actor is seen rolling his waist and attempting the signature moves made famous by Madhuri in the original song. The actress will be soon seen hosting the Marathi version of Kaun Banega Crorepati, titled as Kon Honaar Crorepati.

'The Traitors Telugu': complete list of 20 contestants revealed

Mumbai : Teja Sajja makes his debut as a reality show host with Prime Video’s much-awaited series, The Traitors Telugu. The show will be hosted by actor Teja Sajja and is set to stream on October 15. The series will bring together 20 celebrities from different walks of life, including Chinmayee Sripada, Harsha Vardhan, Pragathi Mahavadi, Shreedevi Chowdary, Nikhil Vijayendra Simha, Vidyu Raman, Vishnu Oi,

Shravya Varma, Dr Meghanath Reddy, Mouneesha Chowdary, Sweekar Agasthi, Ashika Padukone, Varsha D’Souza, Pranav aka Abhinavakavi, SS Vardhan, Rahat Achanta, Gaurav Sunil, Sai Ronak, Puppala Dhanunjaya, and Phalguni Bangera. Prime Video shared the trailer on its Instagram handle on Tuesday. While sharing the trailer, the streaming website wrote, “Buckle up, the stage is set for the ULTIMATE BETRAYAL.” The Traitors



Telugu follows close on the heels of the success of The Traitors Hindi Season 2, which became the number

one non-English title worldwide on Prime Video in its launch week. “Hosting The Traitors Telugu has been a completely new experience for me, and I was genuinely excited to take on something so different from anything I’ve done before. What makes it even more special is that I get to be part of the first Telugu edition of a format that has become a global sensation,” said Teja Sajja, as quoted in a press note shared by Prime

Video. “For Telugu entertainment, I think this is a big moment because we are not just bringing a popular international format to our audience, but also giving it a personality and flavour of our own. And honestly, as a host, this game is as unpredictable for me as it is for the contestants. You can walk into a room thinking you know exactly who you can trust and, a few minutes later, everything flips. That

is what makes The Traitors Telugu so much fun - the lies, the mind games, the unexpected alliances, and those moments of constant second-guessing. I’ve had a great time with the show, and I’m really looking forward to seeing audiences get invested in the contestants and play along as the game unfolds,” added Teja Sajja. The 10-episode gripping series will drop new episodes every Thursday after its premiere.

Mirzapur stars Divyenndu, Abhishek Banerjee announced for empire drama



Mumbai : Divyenndu and Abhishek Banerjee, who became fan favourites as Munna Tripathi and Compounder in Mirzapur, are set to reunite on screen for an upcoming series. Filmfare has learnt that the actors will headline a new series from Endemol, which is

an empire drama. It will be an Amazon MX Player original. The pairing is particularly interesting given the recall value the two actors have from Mirzapur. While Divyenndu’s Munna and Abhishek’s Compounder shared a memorable dynamic in the popular crime

drama, their upcoming project will see them step into an entirely new world. The yet-untitled series is centred around an empire, with the story expected to explore the world of power, ambition and the dynamics that come with building and protecting one.

Details about the plot and the actors’ characters are currently being kept under wraps. The series is being produced by Endemol and will stream on Amazon MX Player. Further details about the title, characters and release are expected to be announced soon. Meanwhile, Divyenndu has had a busy 2026, returning as Munna Bhaiya in Mirzapur: The Movie, which released in September. He also made his Telugu debut with Ram Charan and Janhvi Kapoor’s Peddi. He was also seen in the Netflix series Glory, alongside Pulkrit Samrat earlier this year. Abhishek Banerjee, meanwhile, made his Tamil web series debut with Legacy, starring alongside R Madhavan, and was also part of Lust Stories 3 and the Netflix film Toaster, produced by Rajkumar Rao.

Balakrishna resumes dada shoot, promises a mass action spectacle

Agency : As is known, Nandamuri Balakrishna was injured in July this year while shooting a difficult action sequence for Dada, his 111th film, at Kakinada Port in Andhra Pradesh. Reports said he slipped, prompting the crew to briefly halt production. Doctors found a torn left quadriceps tendon and damage to the surrounding tissue. He underwent successful surgery on July 23, which the hospital said was completed without complications. The roughly three-hour procedure reattached the torn tendon to the kneecap and repaired the supporting tissues around the knee. His recovery following the knee surgery has been swift, with the actor now resuming filming. Addressing his vitality in his mid-60s, the Bhagavanth Kesari actor has previously stated that mental focus outweighs physical metrics alone. He remarked that “our mind holds far more strength than we realise”, believing that if one trains the mind alongside the body, one can achieve any physical requirement for a role. Balakrishna is currently in Mysore for Dada, helmed by his Veera



Simha Reddy director Gopichand Malineni. The current production schedule is focused on crucial dialogue sequences featuring the Akhanda actor. Positioned as a high-budget commercial action drama, the project aims to present Balakrishna in a commanding role, as suggested by the promotional tagline, ‘The King of Chaos’. The moniker underscores the film’s expansive narrative scale and stylised

characterisation. With production moving at a steady pace despite the extended break caused by Balakrishna’s injury, the team intends to complete key sequences during this schedule. Dada is slated for a theatrical release on December 24. Balakrishna, known for his relentless screen energy, high stamina and physical discipline, is expected to be seen in one of his most violent roles in Dada.

Vivek Bhagat, a Delhi police officer, is accused of harassing a woman protester

New Delhi, Oct 07: Allegations of harassing female demonstrators during the current agitation against Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar have put a Delhi Police officer in the public eye. A female journalist has accused ACP Vivek Bhagat of sexual harassment and misbehavior during the demonstration. The Crime Branch is looking into the charges, but the police probe has also turned up another case involving a purportedly AI-generated phony film that authorities claim was meant to damage his reputation. Following an altercation with a mob at a CJP demonstration in the Jantar Mantar and Connaught Place neighborhoods, Vivek Bhagat first came to the attention of the public. A crowd allegedly encircled and attacked ACP Vivek Bhagat during the June 2026 protest. He was seriously hurt. He was saved from the throng by DCP Vineet Kumar. Vivek Bhagat suffered several bruises and damaged teeth as a result of the attack. After that, he took a few weeks off to receive medical care. Following his recuperation, he took up his responsibilities as the Connaught Place Circle's ACP, managing demonstrations and upholding law



and order. Vivek Bhagat's name has made headlines again. On October 2, a protest was held outside the Sansad Marg police station demanding the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar. Tensions escalated between the police and protesters during the demonstration. During the protest, some women identifying themselves as journalists alleged sexual misconduct by police personnel. A complaint was filed against ACP Vivek Bhagat. One woman alleged that she questioned ACP Vivek Bhagat about the presence of female police personnel at the site and claimed that she was subsequently treated inappropriately and pushed backwards. In all, three women lodged complaints against three police officers. Following the complaints, the CJP staged a protest outside the San-

sad Marg police station, demanding the registration of an FIR. The investigation was subsequently handed over to the Delhi Police Crime Branch. During the police inquiry, a different case surfaced amid the uproar involving Vivek Bhagat. The police claim that Nuh, Haryana resident Nadeem Ahmed used artificial intelligence to produce an offensive and fraudulent video of Vivek Bhagat. According to police, the film was made with the goal of damaging Vivek Bhagat's reputation and went viral on social media. In relation to the matter, Nadeem Ahmed has been placed under custody. The police are currently interrogating Ahmed. The investigation is not limited to the creation of the video; investigators are also trying to determine whether there was a larger conspiracy behind its alleged

creation and circulation. Vivek Bhagat studied Civil Engineering at the Delhi College of Engineering. He cleared the UPSC examination in 2017 with an All-India Rank of 967 and subsequently joined DANIPS as part of the 2018 batch. He has since handled various responsibilities within the Delhi Police and has been serving as ACP of the Connaught Place sub-division. According to his service record, Vivek Bhagat led the Delhi Police contingent during the 2022 Republic Day Parade. He has received a Commendation Disc and a Commendation Roll from the Delhi Police Commissioner. Additionally, the Government of India's Defense Secretary has honored him with a Commendation Roll. In essence, he has been honored for his efforts throughout his police career at both the departmental and governmental levels. Vivek Bhagat and his colleagues looked into a number of significant crime cases when he was the ACP of Alipur and Bawana. Several murder instances connected to gang conflicts were among them. His squad dealt with matters pertaining to the Neeraj Bawana gang and the feud between the Jitender Gogi and Tillu Tajpuriya gangs.

IIS athletes win 19 medals at the 2026 Asian Games, from preparation to the podium

Aichi-Nagoya: At the 2026 Asian Games, athletes sponsored by the Inspire Institute of Sport (IIS) performed admirably and won 19 medals (2 Gold, 6 Silver, and 11 Bronze) in boxing, wrestling, squash, archery, and athletics. IIS-supported athletes were featured prominently in a variety of categories during their performances, including both individual and team podium finishes. From established athletes delivering on the continental stage to younger athletes making their mark in their Asian Games campaigns, IIS-supported athletes produced a series of notable performances throughout the Games.

Their results reflected months and years of preparation, with athletes supported through individualised performance plans, coaching, sports science, nutrition, recovery and medical support to help them manage the demands of competition and perform when it mattered most. Leading the medal tally were Prachi Choudhary and Vithya Ramraj, who won gold as part of the women's 4x400m relay team, while Jyothi Surekha clinched gold in the women's team archery event. Silver medals came through Vishal TK, Vithya Ramraj and Manu Saji in the 4x400m relay, Gulveer Singh in the 10,000m and 1500m, Nitesh Siwach in wrestling, Antim Panghal in wrestling and Anahat Singh in women's singles squash.

The bronze medal tally included Prachi Choudhary in the women's 400m, Parul Chaudhary in the 3000m and 5000m, Vithya Ramraj in the 400m hurdles, Rohit Yadav in javelin throw, Gulveer Singh in the 5000m, the men's 4x400m relay team featuring Rajesh, Manu, Jay and Vishal TK, Kapil Pokhariya in boxing, Sunil Kumar in wrestling, and Anahat Singh and Veer Chotrani in team



squash. Speaking on the performances, Manisha Malhotra, President, Inspire Institute of Sport, said: "Nineteen medals at the Asian Games is a strong result, and we are proud of every athlete who made it happen. But we see it as a marker on a much bigger journey. The standard we hold ourselves to is the Olympic podium, and the next two years are about closing the gap between winning in Asia and winning in the world. Our aim for LA 2028 is clear: more IIS athletes qualifying, and more of them arriving in Los Angeles as genuine medal contenders. To get there, we will keep strengthening everything around the athlete, from coaching and sports science to strength and conditioning, nutrition, recovery and medical support. Japan showed us what is possible, and it also showed us how much work is left.

The real measure of this will be how many of these athletes carry this momentum all the way to Los Angeles, ready to compete for India." Gary Hall, High-Performance Director, Inspire Institute of Sport, added: "The Asian Games gave us a clear measure of where our athletes stand today. Winning 19 medals across five disciplines is significant, but what matters to us now is

what these results tell us about the work ahead. LA 2028 is the target, and every competition between now and then has to move us closer to it. For each athlete, we will compare their Asian Games performance against the level needed to compete for Olympic medals and build the next two years around closing that gap. That means using a thorough debriefing procedure to identify strengths and weaknesses and implement remedial measures to enhance performance using the appropriate tactical, technical, physical, psychological, and recuperation techniques. We'll also take a hard look at the athletes who nearly finished on the podium and determine what prevented them from doing so. Our goal is for athletes to come to Los Angeles capable of winning gold, not only as competitors." IIS-supported athletes showed the depth of India's athletic ability and the benefits of a consistent high-performance strategy with podium finishes in athletics, wrestling, squash, boxing, and archery. As they continue to participate at the top levels of international sport, their accomplishments at the Asian Games provide them further impetus and signify another significant chapter in their development.

Tennis Premier League Reveals Marquee Stars, Including Former World No. 1 Rohan Bopanna



Hyderabad: 2023 Australian and former world No. 1 Rohan Bopanna in advance of the player auction on October 12 in Mumbai, Rinky Hijikata, the champion of the Open men's doubles, was announced on Tuesday as the star player of each side in the Tennis Premier League (TPL). The Gurgaon Grand Slamers will be represented by Bopanna. "The league grows stronger each year, and I adore the team spirit and enthusiasm the structure fosters. The battle will be fierce this year, with a fantastic blend of young Indian talent and seasoned professionals, according to Bopanna. The top-ranked singles player in the league will be Roman Burruchaga of Argen-

tina, who is rated 60th in the globe and plays for the Kolkata Thunder Blades. Hijikata, who will play for the Rajasthan Rangers, has previously experienced Grand Slam triumph. Additionally, he made it to the Wimbledon men's doubles final in 2025 and attained a career-high doubles ranking of world No. 23. Being a member of the Rajasthan Rangers and making my Kia TPL debut this season excites me much. I'm excited to feel the buzz in Hyderabad because of the league's thrilling 25-point structure. Frenchman Terence Atmane, nicknamed "The Magician", will headline the Mumbai Royals. The Lucknow Blazers will be represented by Cze-

Ahul, Priyanka Gandhi's "Sting" Moment During the Court Case Against PepsiCo



New Delhi, Oct 07: Even in October, Delhi's afternoon light may be harsh. Rahul Gandhi and his sister Priyanka Gandhi Vadra took a break beneath a massive banyan tree after an exciting morning of marching, leaping over barriers, and fighting with the police. Protests require vigor. Rahul Gandhi also took a large sip from a plastic bottle filled with bright pink liquid after eating a bun from Delhi's famous Khan Chacha. The internet quickly recognized it as Sting, a PepsiCo beverage promoted as a "energy drink." Priyanka was much more careful than Rahul, who seemed to

enjoy the sugar high. Rahul was seen handing the bottle to Priyanka. She looked at it suspiciously, sniffed it reluctantly and appeared to ask a supporter curiously what it was. She eventually also took a sip. Priyanka, it appeared, tried to dodge Rahul's "Sting Operation", but could not. The unexpected prop at the Leader of the Opposition's protest was, at the same time, at the centre of a court battle taking place a few kilometres away. Just as the Gandhis were getting their dose of "Sting" at the protest, PepsiCo was getting its own dose of courtroom drama over the phrase "en-

ergy drink". Sometimes, politics writes the punchline itself. In Delhi's latest political theatre, Rahul and Priyanka brought the Sting. The court brought the interim relief. And PepsiCo brought the legal sting. In its legal struggle against limitations placed on the use of the "energy drink" name by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), PepsiCo was given temporary relief by the Delhi High Court on Tuesday. While new items cannot be produced using the challenged description while the litigation is pending, existing inventories bearing the label may still be sold. PepsiCo had petitioned the High Court to overturn orders from the FSSAI, which had requested that the corporation take the word "energy drink" off its product labels. Additionally, food safety authorities nationwide were told by the food regulator to confiscate goods with the contested designation. Top government officials, however, reiterated that the court will now resolve the case and stated that the FSSAI was forced to take the ac-

Seven Bidders Want to Host the Olympics in 2036, Including India and Qatar

Aichi-Nagoya: Another endorsement has been given to India's Olympic aspirations. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) announced on Tuesday that India and Qatar intend to host the 2036 Olympics. There are seven bids in the contest, including the two nations. In a hosting race that the IOC hopes to determine in 2029 by a disputed vote of its more than 100 members, India and Qatar have long been viewed as preferred possibilities. According to the IOC, South Africa, South Korea, Germany, Hungary, and Turkey are also considering hosting in the future, with 2040 and possibly 2044 editions in mind. "But wherever the Games take place, one thing must never change: Athletes have to be at the heart of everything we do," said IOC President Kirsty Coventry, a two-time Olympic swimming gold medalist. The IOC set an October 31 deadline for other national Olympic bodies to join the 2036 contest. It also published a 30-page document on Tuesday to guide bidders. The focus of India's bid strategy is Ahmedabad, which will host the multi-sport Commonwealth Games in 2030 and is home to the Narendra Modi venue, the biggest cricket venue in the world. Qatar has hosted world championships in most top-tier Olympic sports, including the 2022 FIFA World Cup. Its bid could yet expand beyond Doha, with some events potentially being staged in neighbouring Gulf countries. A Qatar-hosted Olympics would likely require the Summer Games to move from the July-August slot it has occupied at every edition from Athens 2004 through Brisbane 2032. A South Korean bid would be anchored in Seoul, which hosted the 1988 Summer Olympics, and spread across the country. German Olympic officials last month picked Munich, which previously hosted the Games in 1972.

"We Will Do It" PM Modi's New Phrase to Turn India Into a Developed Nation by 2047

New Delhi, Oct 07: On Wednesday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled a new motto, "We Will Do It," for achieving the objective of turning India into a developed nation by 2047. He said that this would be accomplished via hard effort and imaginative ideas. Speaking to the "Viksit Bharat Sankalp Sabha" on his 25th anniversary as head of state, Prime Minister Modi added that the divide of society based on voting is one of the nation's greatest problems. But does the issue simply impact one caste when a farmer's crop is devoid of water? Does darkness simply affect one community when there is no electricity? No, is the response. "If everyone is affected by the problem, then everyone must benefit from the solution," he stated. According to the prime minister, people's current vision of a developed India will undoubtedly materialize. "There is no reason for India to stop. A hundred years ago, there were less than 40 crore of us; today, we are more than



140 crore. The 140 crore citizens together will build a developed India by 2047, and we certainly will. We Will Do It," he said. "Viksit Bharat by 2047: We Will Do It. Top 3 Economy: We Will Do It. Self-reliant: We Will Do It. Global Manufacturing Hub: We Will Do It. Hosting the Olympics: We Will Do It. Step into space: We Will Do It. This energy, this enthusiasm, this confidence is extraordinary," he said. Referring to Captain Smit Machchhar, an Indian pilot with flydubai who foiled an attempt by his

co-pilot to crash an Israel-bound flight despite being stabbed, PM Modi said the world is talking about India's pilot today and a day will come when the world will talk about made-in-India aircraft. "Visionary policies and unwavering hard effort will help attain these goals. 'India may face difficulties, but we also have 140 crore solutions,' he declared. Since October 7, 2001, Prime Minister Modi has remained in office continuously. He originally held the position of chief minister of Gujarat for three terms before winning three Lok Sabha elections to become prime minister of India. When PM Modi took the oath of office as chief minister of Gujarat on October 7, 2001, he declared he had no idea that this moment would occur. I give thanks to the Indian people for their faith in me. "People are God to me; diligent BJP workers are my strength," he declared. Additionally, he thanked all of his BJP and NDA colleagues as well as everyone who really respects democracy.

Harry Kane adds to England's record as Spain rallies to defeat Croatia

London: Harry Kane maintained his hot form as England defeated the Czech Republic 3-0 to maintain second place, while Spain battled back against Croatia to win 2-1 in Split on Tuesday and maintain their perfect record in Nations League Group A3. Spain's lengthy winning streak was maintained with the Split victory, which also guaranteed them a spot in the top two of the four-team group and a trip to the quarterfinals. With a victory at home, England remained three points behind Spain. If they don't lose their next home match against Croatia by eight or more goals, they will move on to the final four. Croatia lost to England 7-0 in their last encounter at Rijeka, on the Dalmatian coast. There

were 6,000 youngsters under the age of 14 in that audience due to a ban caused by ongoing fan racism. Croatia performed more brilliantly in a very different environment and seized the lead after 17 minutes. Igor Matanovic attempted a low drive, but Unai Simon only managed to send the ball into the air while diving to save it. Kane's old Tottenham teammate Ivan Perisic nodded the ball home. While Spain dominated first-half possession, Croatia created the most dangerous chances and Matanovic could have doubled the lead. Spain's pressure told after 61 minutes, Dani Olmo collected a poor clearance and rolled the ball to Mikel Merino who had space to pick his spot. Perisic had earned a yellow card for

an excited lunge soon after scoring. That turned into costly sending off when he was booked again after 79 minutes for a push on Marc Cucurella. With a minute of normal time left, Merino found space in the box to turn and drive home the winner. With the victory, Spain's winning streak now stands at 42 games. The European and World Champions' only setback during that run was a penalty shootout defeat to Portugal following a tie in the previous Nations League final. Kane missed a penalty that would have saved a tie in England's home opener against Spain, but they have since won three games. Their seasoned striker scored twice in Croatia and once on the road against the Czechs.

Ashwin makes bold claim on Bumrah and Bhuvneshwar for 2027 World Cup

New Delhi: Former spinner R Ashwin made the bold claim that he can see Jasprit Bumrah and Bhuvneshwar Kumar bowling in tandem for India during next year's World Cup. Bhuvneshwar made his way back into the Indian T20I side for the New Zealand tour. Bhuvneshwar's India career had been on hold since the T20 World Cup semi-final against England in Adelaide in November 2022. Nearly four years later, the 36-year-old has forced his way back into the national reckoning with a string of impressive performances in the IPL. The seamer's consistency for Royal Challengers Bengaluru over the past two seasons has played a major part in his comeback.



Bhuvneshwar has claimed 45 wickets across the 2025 and 2026 IPL campaigns, contributing to RCB's title triumphs during that period. His 2026 season stood out in particular. The veteran pacer finished with 28 wickets, while maintaining an economy rate of 7.95, underlining the impact he continues to have with the ball. Speaking

on his YouTube channel, Ashwin said that Bhuvneshwar could have been an all-format asset for India like Bumrah had he worked harder and avoided injuries. "I am very excited and happy for Bhuvneshwar Kumar because he is a very unassuming guy. And yes, I am once again putting my neck on the line to say this: if he

had worked a little harder, if the timing had been right and if he had avoided those injuries, with the skill set he possesses, he could have been a king for India across all formats." "Do you want swing? He has swing. If you want it to move one way, he can do that. If you want it to move both ways, he can do that too.

And then he has decent pace." "Yes, when he played a couple of games in Australia, he was also finding it a little difficult. But he had some fitness issues. With the bat, he could contribute really well. He has very, very good hands and is a good catcher." "I feel he could have given Indian cricket even more across formats," said Ashwin.

Lionel Messi's emotional Argentina farewell features fireworks, tears, and one last goal

Buenos Aires: Lionel Messi's final appearance for Argentina was never going to be just another football match. The Estadio Monumental in Buenos Aires was transformed into a celebration of the country's greatest modern football icon as Argentina took on Benin, with supporters filling the stadium in light blue and white to watch Messi represent the national team for one final time. Even Angel Di Maria, who announced his retirement from international football after the previous edition of the Copa America, was among the big-name stars present alongside the Argentina side, albeit not in a playing capacity. There were famous faces in the stands too, with legendary French striker David

Trezeguet spotted with his daughter, watching Messi go through his warm-up routine ahead of the game. The tribute began before the football did. A huge No. 10 jersey carrying the word "Gracias" was displayed inside the Monumental, a simple message that captured the mood of a stadium that had come together to say goodbye.

The stands were flooded with Argentina's colours, with supporters wearing the national team shirt and waiting to see the man who has given them some of the most memorable moments in their football history. Then Messi walked onto the pitch. Fireworks erupted around the Monumental as Messi's sons, Thiago, Mateo and Ciro, accompanied him while the national anthems



were played. As Argentina's anthem reached its crescendo, Messi was visibly moved to tears. Lionel Scaloni, too, struggled to hide his emotions, while Nicolas Otamendi stood alongside his captain with the weight of the occasion evident. Before the coin toss, the Benin captain presented Messi with a special memento, appearing

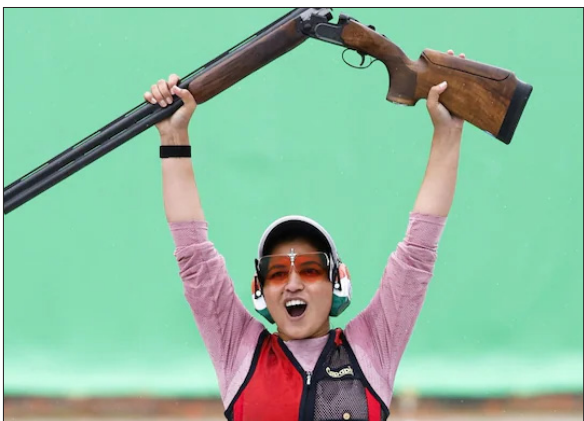
to be an Amazonian-style sculpture, along with a letter. Then, finally, came the football. Messi's first touch of the ball was met with a short but loud burst of applause. The No. 10 received possession and immediately returned it to the defender, helping Argentina recycle the ball as the hosts looked to establish control.

BCCI invites applications for selector post



New Delhi: The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has invited applications for one position on its Men's Selection Committee, formally beginning the process to find Ajit Agarkar's replacement after his tenure as chairman of selectors came to an end. The BCCI issued the advertisement on Tuesday, two days after Agarkar's tenure ended on October 4. Agarkar, who took over as chairman of the senior men's selection committee in July 2023, did not seek an extension, according to reports. The BCCI itself has not issued a separate statement on Agarkar's departure, but the board has now advertised one position on the five-member selection committee. Former India left-arm spinner Pragyan Ojha is currently serving as the interim head of the committee. The other members are Shiv Sunder Das, RP Singh and Ajay Ratna. Ojha, who played 24 Tests for India, is in line to become the next chief selector. According to the BCCI constitution, the chairman of the selection committee is determined by Test experience. If the incoming selector has played more Tests than the other members of the committee, he will become the chief selector. If not, Ojha, who has played the most Tests among the current members, will be elevated to the position. The new appointment is expected to come from the West Zone, which was the zone represented by Agarkar. The BCCI said the new member will be responsible for selecting the senior national men's team for Tests, ODIs, T20Is and any other format. The selector will also be involved in identifying talent and developing the bench strength of the national team. The board has set October 14 as the deadline for applications, with eligible candidates required to submit their applications by 5pm IST. After the applications are screened and shortlisted, the candidates will be called for personal interviews. Applicants must have played at least seven Tests, or 30 first-class matches, or 10 ODIs and 20 first-class matches.

Neeru Dhanda overcomes shotgun fear to win Asian Games shooting gold



New Delhi: Long before she found her mark, Neeru Dhanda was drawn to guns. When other girls her age wanted dolls, she says, she was drawn to toy tractors and toy guns. There was a wooden tractor, a bigger iron one and a toy gun that fired pellets. Those, she remembers, were the things

she chose. Years later, when a real gun finally found its way into her hands, the reaction was rather different. The gun belonged to her cousin Lakshay Sheoran's father, Somveer, and was an old Indian double-barrel shotgun of the sort families once kept for shooting pigeons in the fields. One day, they

took Neeru to a farmhouse and decided to see if she could handle it. A tin sheet became the target. Two or three shots were fired. The sound frightened her. She was still young. The gun was heavy in her hands, the crack of the 7.5mm pellets unfamiliar and startling. She panicked and threw it away. "I got scared," she recalled in an interview with India-Today.in.

It is an unlikely beginning for the woman who, years later, stood in pouring rain at the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games, calmly breaking 28 of 30 targets to win a historic gold medal. In Aichi-Nagoya, Neeru ended India's 48-year wait for an individual trap gold. Earlier that day, she had won a women's team silver with Aashima Ahla-

wat and Manisha Keer. The following day, she returned to the range and won another gold with Kynan Chenai in the mixed team event. Three medals. Two golds.

A silver. But the numbers only tell the end of the story. For much of her journey, Neeru was not chasing Asian Games records. She was trying to find a way to build a better life for her family. Neeru grew up in Sangatpura, a village in Haryana's Jind district, in a family that could not afford the luxuries associated with a sport as expensive as shotgun shooting. Her father is a farmer. The family owns a modest amount of farmland, while her mother, Sudesh Devi, has supplemented their income by selling buffalo milk.

Anirudh Thapa's historic goal fails to save India from Uruguay's rout



Kolkata: Khalid Jamil knew what could happen if India switched off against Uruguay. His warning before kick-off was clear, but India could not keep the visitors at bay for long and ended up losing 6-1 at Salt Lake Stadium on Tuesday. Anirudh Thapa gave the home crowd a moment to celebrate with a goal that put his name in the history books, but Uruguay soon took control of the game again. For India, it was a disappointing end to an international window that had offered a chance to test themselves against three different opponents. They began with a 1-1 draw against Panama in Bengaluru, but the two matches in

Kolkata proved far tougher. Brazil beat them 4-0 on October 3, and Uruguay followed that with a five-goal victory, exposing many of the same problems that had surfaced in the previous game. India vs Uruguay, FIFA Friendly: Highlights India conceded 10 goals in their two matches in Kolkata and scored just once, through Thapa against Uruguay. The midfielder's equaliser briefly brought India back into the contest after Darwin Nunez had opened the scoring from the penalty spot. For a while, the hosts had something to build on, but they struggled to contain Uruguay once the visitors regained their lead. The defeat

also brought an international window of mixed results into sharper focus. The draw against Panama was a positive start, but India found it difficult to cope with the pace and quality of Brazil and Uruguay. Against both sides, defensive lapses proved expensive, and India were unable to find a sustained response once they fell behind.

The result was not the only concern on the night. Large sections of Salt Lake Stadium remained empty, despite efforts to attract supporters through reduced ticket prices and complimentary passes. The announced attendance was 37,307, but the gaps across the stands were hard to miss, particularly after the much bigger turnout for Brazil three days earlier. Jamil had spoken about the importance of concentration after India's defeat to Brazil. He knew Uruguay would punish mistakes, and he had urged his players to avoid conceding early and remain alert throughout the match.

Harmanpreet Kaur and Smriti Mandhana clashed over captaincy, report claims

New Delhi: It was a no-brainer that Smriti Mandhana would receive the honour of captaining the Indian women's cricket team after Harmanpreet Kaur's resignation from the position. But is it a case of the elevation coming too late in the day for the 30-year-old left-hander, who is the country's best batter right now by quite a distance? The call from Harmanpreet, who led India for the first time in 2016, to step down from captaincy across formats was taken following a review meeting with the BCCI. The 37-year-old from Moga ended her path-breaking leadership tenure on a high, having just captained India to a second consecutive Asian Games gold in Japan. Mandhana was the obvious choice to take over the mantle from Harmanpreet. Having made her debut way back in 2013, the elegant opener has risen to be among the leading batters in the game, tallying more than



10,000 runs across formats. Mandhana was always head and shoulders above the rest when it came to skill and now she has further elevated her craft by adding power to her all-round game. It was no secret that she had run out of patience with the selectors, who chose to maintain the status quo on captaincy even after India ended their ICC trophy drought with the ODI World Cup win at home last year. In a recent

interview, she expressed her readiness to lead India and after the Asian Games gold, she went on to say that India should be aiming to win bigger tournaments. In between the 50-over high, India had made premature exits from back-to-back T20 World Cups, raising questions over the leadership starting with the shortest format. But the selectors did not bell the cat. But at the review meeting in Guwahati, which was chaired

by BCCI Secretary Devajit Saikia, it was made clear to Harmanpreet that a change of guard was inevitable. She eventually decided to take matters in her own hands. The captaincy had also become a thorny issue between Harmanpreet and Mandhana, who used to get along pretty well. "They were not seeing eye to eye for a while now and that led to an obvious unease in the dressing room," said a team source.

Ronaldo reveals full story behind Portugal fallout and training camp exit

New Delhi: Cristiano Ronaldo has broken his silence on his latest fallout with the Portugal national team, offering a detailed explanation of the events that led to his departure from the training camp and the breakdown in his relationship with the coach. In a lengthy first-person statement, Ronaldo said the dispute centred on a plan agreed with the coach over his involvement with Portugal, which he claimed was later changed. He said the situation ultimately became

a question of trust after what he described as repeated broken promises. Ronaldo also accepted responsibility for some of his actions, apologising for leaving the camp and for failing to acknowledge supporters after Portugal's match in Norway. At the same time, he insisted that he had never attempted to interfere with the coach's technical decisions and maintained that he had always accepted decisions made by national team managers. According

to Ronaldo, the roots of the disagreement go back to the period after the 2026 World Cup. He said the Portuguese Football Federation president asked him to reconsider his decision to leave the national team and told him the federation wanted him to continue. Ronaldo was subsequently asked for his opinion on the appointment of the current coach. Ronaldo said he supported the eventual appointment and was pleased when the coach was unveiled. The two later



met in person, where Ronaldo said they discussed his role in the national team and

agreed on a plan to manage his playing time. The arrangement, according to

Ronaldo, was based largely on fitness considerations. A subsequent proposal for Ronaldo to remain in Portugal rather than travel with the squad to Norway and Denmark, however, was immediately rejected by the captain. Ronaldo said he felt staying behind would send the wrong message while he remained captain of the team. The situation escalated during the trip to Norway. Ronaldo said he initially believed he would not play because the match was outside

the recovery plan that had been agreed with the coach. He was then approached before the game and asked whether he could play 30 minutes. He agreed despite the change to his original plan. Ronaldo warned up during the second half but was ultimately not brought onto the pitch. That, he said, became a major turning point. The Portugal captain claimed the coach had not kept his word and that the episode contributed to the loss of two.