

Nagaland targets 18,000 youth registrations for Viksit Bharat Dialogue

Kohima, Sept 11: The Nagaland government has set a target of enrolling 18,000 young participants for the upcoming Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue (VBLYD) 2027, urging youth aged 15 to 29 to actively register on the MY Bharat digital portal and shape national policy ahead of India’s centenary of independence.

Addressing a press conference at Hotel Japfü in Kohima on Thursday, State Director of MY Bharat Nagaland Alphonce Toppo and Director of Youth Resources and Sports Kethosituo Sekhose outlined the state’s preparation for the nationwide program organized by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. The initiative aims to mobilize youth across six core thematic areas: the Viksit Bharat Challenge, Youth Parliament, Hack for Social Cause, Youth Entrepreneurs Challenge, Design for Bharat, and the Cultural Track. Under the regional framework for the North East Frontier Region (Purvodaya), Nagaland’s campaign will



center on “Act East, Cultural Leadership & Enhancing Connectivity.”

Official figures presented by youth coordinators showed that 1,958 youth from Nagaland have registered through National Service Scheme (NSS) units. Sekhose noted that while previous editions saw modest participation, the state aims to significantly scale up its representation by qualifying 36 participants across 12

three-member teams through the multi-stage competition. The selection process begins with a nationwide digital quiz running through September 30, followed by an essay writing round in October, district-level presentation contests in November, and the State VBLYD event scheduled from November 17 to December 7. To complement the national movement, Nagaland will host its State Youth Festival from

September 28 to 30, featuring the third edition of the “Sonic Showdown” band competition organized in collaboration with the Task Force for Music and Arts (TaFMA). Winners at the state level will advance to the National VBLYD at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi, in January 2027, where top performers will present regional developmental solutions directly to Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Accused apprehended in alleged rape of elderly Dambuk woman

Itanagar, Sept 11: Police authorities in Lower Dibang Valley district have apprehended a suspect following the alleged sexual assault of a 70-year-old woman in Dambuk subdivision, prompting widespread outrage across civil society organizations and local community groups in Arunachal Pradesh.

According to initial reports from law enforcement officials, the horrific incident occurred late in the evening when the survivor was targeted at her residence. Relatives alerted the local police station immediately after the victim narrated the ordeal, leading officers to register a formal case under relevant provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). Following a swift tracking operation conducted across the surrounding block, police personnel located and detained the accused. The survivor was promptly shifted to a nearby government health facility for comprehensive medical treatment and forensic evaluation, where her condition is currently reported to be stable. The incident has drawn sharp con-



demnation from regional Apex women’s bodies, including the Arunachal Pradesh Women’s Welfare Society (APWWS), alongside youth associations and community elders. Civic leaders submitted representations to the district administration, demanding a fast-tracked investigation, rigorous charge-sheeting, and stringent legal punishment for the perpetrator to ensure speedy justice for the elderly victim. Local organizations underscored that safety measures across

rural outposts must be bolstered to safeguard vulnerable community members. District police officials confirmed that forensic teams have gathered physical evidence from the crime scene, while statements of key witnesses and family members are being recorded. Senior administrative authorities assured the public that a thorough, time-bound investigation is underway and urged local residents to maintain public order while judicial proceedings advance.

Tripura Gramin Bank showcases services at Bhadra Mela

Agartala, Sept 11: Tripura Gramin Bank (TGB) set up a dedicated financial outreach kiosk during the traditional two-day Bhadra Mela at the historic Kesheshwari Kali Temple in Kamalasagar, providing accessible banking assistance and promoting financial literacy among thousands of visiting pilgrims and local residents.

The public service initiative, organized under the supervision of the bank’s West Tripura regional leadership, aimed to connect rural communities with mainstream institutional finance during the major religious gathering. Bank representatives stationed at the Kasba Kali Bari fairgrounds actively assisted visitors with immediate account services, digital banking enrollments, and advisory guidance on government-sponsored social security schemes, including the Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY), Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY), and Atal Pension Yojana (APY). Highlighting TGB’s commitment to rural economic empowerment, officials showcased special credit facilities tailored for small traders, agricultural workers, and self-help groups (SHGs) setting up temporary stalls at the fair. Field personnel demonstrated the convenience of mobile banking, micro-ATMs, and digital payment gateways, encouraging local vendors and rural consumers to adopt secure cashless transactions. Bank executives emphasized that participating in major cultural events like the Bhadra Mela allows the financial institution to directly address customer grievances, raise awareness against financial fraud, and deliver doorstep banking solutions to underserved populations across the border district. Local community leaders and pilgrims appreciated TGB’s proactive customer support.

Manipur government and JFD at odds over NRC outcome

Imphal, Sept 11: Tensions between civil society leadership and state authorities flared across Manipur as the Campaign for Just and Fair Delimitation (JFD) announced a total boycott of state and central government offices, following unresolved differences with the Manipur government over the execution timeline for updating the National Register of Citizens (NRC).

The escalation stems from divergent interpretations of recent administrative progress. While the Manipur Legislative Assembly recently reaffirmed its resolution urging the Union Government to conduct an NRC exercise before proceeding with the deferred national census, the JFD maintained that verbal assurances fail to guarantee binding legal action. Addressing media representatives in Imphal, JFD leaders emphasized that the organization had



stipulated a firm September 10 deadline for the state leadership to travel to New Delhi and secure a formal commitment from the Centre establishing 1951 as the official base year for the NRC update.

In contrast, government representatives maintained that the state administration has repeatedly demonstrated political intent by formally adopting Assembly resolutions, constituting the

Manipur State Population Commission, and advocating for the suspension of census operations until demographic safeguards are established. However, JFD officials expressed dissatisfaction, noting that without an official executive notification from the Ministry of Home Affairs adopting the 1951 cut-off, the state’s recommendations remain procedurally incomplete.

Nagaland filmmaker Theja Rio’s debut feature Angh set for TIFF premiere

Kohima, Sept 11: In a historic cinematic milestone for Northeast India, Angh, the debut feature film directed by Nagaland filmmaker Theja Rio, is set to make its world premiere at the 51st Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF). The film stands as the sole Indian selection in the prestigious Platform Competition section, highlighting director-driven international cinema.

An alumnus of the UK’s National Film and Television School, Rio previously earned international acclaim when his short film of the same title won a Special Jury Award at the Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival. The feature adaptation expands on those themes, following a Konyak chief and his young son in a remote village near the Indo-Burma



border in the early 1960s. As the last remaining residents holding fast to traditional Naga customs, their worldview is upturned by the arrival of an American

missionary, portraying a poignant narrative of faith, tradition, and generational transformation.

Shot on 16mm film to capture the sensory atmo-

sphere of the era, the film features an ensemble cast composed primarily of Indigenous non-professional actors alongside BAFTA Scotland-winning actor Douglas Henshall. International sales rights have been acquired by Jungle Book Studio, while cinematographer Adam Pietkiewicz was named recipient of the Artisan Award at the TIFF Tribute Awards for his work on the project. Rio described the global selection as an essential gesture of representation, affirming that Indigenous Naga stories deserve an enduring space on the world stage. Under new festival rules, the winner of the TIFF Platform Award automatically qualifies for Oscar consideration in the Best International Feature Film category, underscoring the film’s significant global potential.

Central Delhi decked up, security tightened ahead of BRICS Summit

High security and visual makeover mark BRICS Summit preparations

New Delhi, Sept 11: Central Delhi turned into a heavily fortified zone on Friday as administrative authorities and security agencies completed multi-layered security arrangements and urban beautification projects ahead of the 18th BRICS Leaders’ Summit, scheduled to take place at the Bharat Mandapam convention complex.

To safeguard visiting heads of state, foreign dignitaries, and global delegations, the Delhi Police has deployed over 15,000 personnel alongside 200 companies of Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) across the national capital. Special Commissioner of Police (Security) Manish Agarwal confirmed that multi-agency coordination frameworks involving the Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of External Affairs, and the Intelligence Bureau have been operationalized to manage access control, VVIP transit corridors, and venue security. High-definition



CCTV networks, featuring over 500 specialized cameras with automated number plate recognition capabilities, are continuously monitoring key transit routes and sector zones around the venue. Simultaneously, sky and waterway monitoring mechanisms have been instituted. The Delhi Police conducted boat patrols along the Yamuna River, while strict airspace protocols were activated

across a 300-kilometer radius around the capital, restricting non-scheduled aerial activities, drones, and light aircraft. Authorities have also placed quick-response anti-sabotage units and emergency response teams on high alert, while digital surveillance units actively monitor social media platforms for security threats. Alongside stringent security operations, parts of Central Delhi underwent an extensive

visual transformation. Prominent civic centers, including Connaught Place, Khan Market, and major arterial roundabouts, have been decorated with illuminated installations, thematic floral arrangements, and international flags representing member states. Welcome hoardings featuring Prime Minister Narendra Modi and visiting world leaders were erected along primary diplomatic routes.

Mein advocates living river ecosystems

Itanagar, Sept 11: Emphasizing that rivers are living ecosystems rather than mere sources of water, Arunachal Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Chowna Mein called for urgent, community-driven conservation measures to protect the state’s natural river basins during the Nadi Utsav celebrations held at Chongkham.

Addressing a gathering of environmental experts, community elders, and youth volunteers, Mein highlighted that the state’s rivers serve as the ecological backbone for biodiversity and indigenous livelihoods across the eastern Himalayas. He stressed that unregulated pollution, illegal destructive fishing practices, and unscientific sand mining severely threaten aquatic life and downstream hydrology.

To mark the occasion, the Deputy Chief Minister released thousands of indigenous fish fingerlings into the local river system as part of a major ranching initiative aimed at restoring aquatic fauna.

Delhi Police detain five for raising anti-Xi slogans

New Delhi, Sept 11: High security around the BRICS Summit venue was breached briefly on Friday morning when Delhi Police detained five individuals, including pro-Tibet activists, for raising anti-China slogans and unfurling banners near Bharat Mandapam.

The demonstration unfolded around 7:30 a.m. inside an underpass adjacent to the summit complex, ahead of Chinese President Xi Jinping’s scheduled arrival in the national capital. Three activists associated with the Students for Free Tibet (SFT)—identified by authorities as Karma Dolma, Tenzin Nordon, and Tenzin Tsephal—climbed structural poles, unfurled the Tibetan national flag, and displayed protest banners targeting Beijing’s policies in Tibet. Demonstrators shouted slogans condemning alleged human rights abuses, environmental degradation along Tibetan rivers, and ongoing border friction along the Line of Actual Control. Security forces posted around the VVIP transit corridor intervened swiftly,



detaining the three activists alongside two others—an independent student and a media person affiliated with Tibet Radio—who were reportedly recording the action. Police officials confirmed that all five individuals were taken into preventive custody and moved to Tihar jail under relevant administrative provisions to maintain public order during the high-level international gathering. The protest occurred despite stringent multi-tier security measures, strict airspace controls, and heavy police deployment across Central Delhi for the BRICS proceedings. High-ranking police authorities affirmed that surveillance protocols around diplomat-

ic transit routes and venue perimeter zones have been further intensified to prevent any security lapses. Parallel demonstrations erupted across northern parts of the capital, most notably in the Majnu Ka Tila area—often referred to as ‘Mini Tibet’—where hundreds of exile community members organized a symbolic protest march. Demonstrators led by the Tibetan Youth Congress carried placards and shouted anti-Beijing slogans condemning China’s administrative policies, specifically demanding the repeal of the recently enacted ‘Ethnic Unity and Progress’ law, which rights groups allege accelerates forced cultural assimilation.

Students from Tezpur University want the Ministry to respond to their stalled



Dispur, Sep 11: Tezpur University research scholars and students have called for an open and timely resolution to a statutory investigation of the university’s operations, citing unsolved institutional difficulties and delays in the disclosure of the investigation’s results.

In an attempt to get the situation resolved, the students asked the university registrar to forward their representation to the Additional Secretary of the Department of Higher Education and the Secretary of the Ministry of Education. The representation relates to the statutory inquiry established under Section 9 of the Tezpur University Act, 1993, as well as responsibility over the

term of Prof. Shambhu Nath Singh, the vice-chancellor at the time, who the students said was “absconding.” It also brings up a number of unresolved problems that have an impact on researchers and students.

The inquiry committee was established on December 31, 2025, and its report was due by March 31, 2026. According to the students, the committee has finished its work and turned in its report, but its conclusions and any decisions that follow have not been made public. Concerns over student welfare, financial constraints, protracted administrative instability, and the postponement of the convocation for the 2025

graduating class were also voiced by the students. They questioned whether the protracted delay in finding a solution constituted to reprisals against university stakeholders who had voiced concerns about purported wrongdoing. They issued a warning that if their demands were not met, their protest would escalate further and may result in the university’s operations being completely shut down.

The students added that stakeholders might submit public documents and evidence to different fact-finding and inquiry bodies if the Ministry failed to provide meaningful communication. Additionally, they cited a resolution passed at a Citizens’ Convention in Guwahati on December 19, 2025, which allowed stakeholders to form an independent public inquiry committee made up of human rights advocates, educationists, RTI activists, retired university professors, and retired High Court judges. The students have demanded that the investigation’s results be made public, that the previous vice chancellor’s actions be made clear, that any misconduct be held accountable, that any outstanding funds be released, and that the delayed convocation be resolved. They said their demands were aimed at ensuring transparency, institutional accountability and restoration of trust. They have also sought a written acknowledgement and response from the Ministry.

The reasoning behind the BJP’s decision to field an IAS official Nagaon by election



Dispur, Sep 11: Devashish Sharma, a former bureaucrat, is being fielded by the BJP in the Nagaon Lok Sabha bypoll, but this is more than just another experiment with a civil servant-turned-politician. Himanta Biswa Sarma, the chief minister of Assam, is taking a calculated risk to win a seat where the BJP has a sizable organizational and electoral base but confronts a significant demographic obstacle. The Congress’s advantage in the constituency was reinforced by the 2023 delimitation, which greatly increased the weight of Muslim votes in Nagaon. Sarma is placing a wager on a well-liked former administrator whose popularity goes beyond the party’s conventional support base by selecting Sharma, who the BJP formally announced as its candidate on September 11. The goal is to increase the BJP’s support while gaining ground on the Muslim voters who have supported the Congress in Nagaon. Pradyut Bordoloi, a two-term Congress MP who joined the BJP prior to

the 2026 Assembly election and went on to win the Dispur seat, resigned, necessitating the October 6 bypoll. Following the 2023 delimitation, Nagaon’s electoral math saw a significant shift. The anticipated Muslim share of the Lok Sabha electorate increased from about 40% to over 50% with the addition of Muslim-dominated Dhing, Rupahihat, and Samaguri. In 2024, the effects were apparent. Bordoloi defeated Suresh Borah of the BJP by 212,231 votes with 788,850 votes, or 50.9%. Aminul Islam of the AIUDF won an additional

137,340 votes, while the BJP managed to secure a sizable 576,619 votes, or 37.2%. Because of this, the BJP’s goal is very simple mathematically but much more difficult politically. It has a strong core vote already. The Muslim vote in Nagaon does not have to be overturned. It must consolidate its current base while creating a sufficiently large breach in it. Devashish Sharma becomes a unique BJP candidate at this point. Sharma, a 34-year bureaucrat, comes to Nagaon with more than just his party affiliation. He served as Nagaon district commis-

sioner during his final term in office, which allowed him to establish both personal and administrative links with all of the constituency’s communities.

He was well-liked by several members of the minority population due to his approachability and hands-on approach. But his public persona existed before Nagaon. Devashish Sharma developed a close relationship with assisting cancer patients traveling from Assam for treatment at Tata Memorial Hospital during his lengthy assignment at Assam Bhawan in Mumbai. He later established Deep-sikha, a trust dedicated to cancer care, and suggested converting the Assam Bhawan in Navi Mumbai into a shelter for cancer patients. He personally oversaw the difficult return of trapped cancer patients from Mumbai to Assam during the Covid lockdown. Devashish Sharma is beneficial to CM Sarma’s Nagaon plan because of this social capital. In part on administrative delivery and personal accessibility.

Improve interagency cooperation in the hill districts of Rifles organizes an information

Imphal, Sep 10: Through a Lead Intelligence Agencies (LIA) conference, the Assam Rifles, together with other Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) that are crucial to preserving peace and order in Manipur, improved inter-agency coordination, according to officials.

According to a defense spokesman, Headquarters 10 Sector Assam Rifles held a LIA meeting on Wednesday to assess the current state of security in the two high-

land districts of Ukhrul and Kamjong and to improve sister agency coordination. The Deputy Commissioners and Superintendents of Police of Ukhrul and Kamjong districts, representatives from Police and Intelligence agencies, commandants of all units under the Sector, and staff officers from the headquarters attended the meeting, which was presided over by Brigadier Amit Kumar Sharma, the Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of 10

Sector Assam Rifles. The forum offered a place for thorough discussions on current events in the Area of Responsibility (AoR) and matters pertaining to regional peace and stability. The defense spokesperson continued, “The stakeholders talked about the refugee situation, enforcement of government orders, and measures to curb illegal trade, with an emphasis on building greater synergy through timely information exchange and

coordinated action.” The official continued, “The active participation of all stakeholders highlighted the significance of mutual trust and seamless cooperation in addressing contemporary challenges.” In order to protect peace and stability throughout the districts of Ukhrul and Kamjong, the summit reaffirmed the shared commitment to maintaining close cooperation and strengthening interagency cohesiveness.

Five people are being held in connection with a construction worker’s death

Aizawl, Sep 10: According to authorities on Friday, September 11, five construction workers have been arrested for interrogation in relation to the death of a 42-year-old co-worker in the Mamit area of Mizoram. According to a police officer, the victim, a citizen of Nepal, died on Wednesday night while residing with other laborers at a camp close to Lungphun village. Later, his body was found in a nearby gorge.

According to authorities, the laborers worked for a road construction company that fixed the district’s walls, roadways, and culverts. According to the officer, the five suspects—some of whom were citizens of Nepal—were detained for interrogation and had their statements recorded. An autopsy was planned to take place at Friday is

Kanghmun. After the post-mortem, the body is anticipated to be given to a Gorkha association in Aizawl.

According to police, the death was being investigated, although it was not yet clear if it was a homicide. The man was allegedly struck on the leg and then thrown into a canyon by his coworkers after the workers’ altercation on Wednesday night, according to locals. The circumstances surrounding the worker’s death are being looked into by the police. The man was allegedly struck on the leg and then thrown into a canyon by his coworkers after the workers’ altercation on Wednesday night, according to locals. The circumstances surrounding the worker’s death are being looked into by the police.

Manipuri musician was attacked and died from severe internal bleeding



Imphal, Sep 10: According to his post-mortem report, Manipuri singer Chongtham Vikram Singh died from extensive internal bleeding brought on by severe physical injuries to his belly and chest following an alleged assault by a group of guys around 11:30 p.m. on Sunday, the 54-year-old singer was allegedly attacked after confronting a group about noise and disturbance outside his Kilokari village home.

Police said that once Singh went to the ground, the attackers continuously struck him on the chest and abdomen in addition to kicking and punching him. Singh died as a result of severe physical assault to his chest and abdomen, which caused extensive bleeding, according to Dr. Sudhir Gupta, Chief of Forensic Medicine at AIIMS. In addition to bleeding and blood clots surrounding the fractures,

the AIIMS post-mortem study revealed fractures of the first to eleventh ribs on the left side and the sixth to ninth ribs on the right. Additionally, a spleen laceration was discovered. Following the assault, Singh was transported to Holy Family Hospital at approximately 12:25 am and arrived there at approximately 1:30 am, according to police. He responded to therapy at first, but at around 6:32 am, he died from a hemorrhage.

In relation to the crime, police have detained a youngster and arrested seven men. Bharat Kumar, 19, Pramod, 26, Ramzan Khan, 22, Deepanshu, 21, Mohan Vishwakarma, 32, Vijay, 36, and Mannu, 26 are the names of the accused. Police claim that after Singh protested to the noise but did not anticipate the assault to be fatal, the accused in-

formed investigators that they wanted to “teach him a lesson.” According to police, Singh had repeatedly complained to the proprietor of an adjacent dhaba about the noise made by people congregating there. But he had not filed an official complaint about the matter. Following the assault, Singh was transported to Holy Family Hospital at approximately 12:25 am and arrived there at approximately 1:30 am, according to police. He responded to therapy at first, but at around 6:32 am, he died from a hemorrhage.

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Bokajan celebrates of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika’s birth

Dispur, Sep 11: On September 8, Dr. Bhupen Hazarika’s birth centennial was commemorated in Bokajan with a full day of events at the Dr. Bhupen Hazarika Memorial Cultural Bhawan. The celebrations, which were organized by the Karbi Anglong District Committee of Sanskritik Mahasabha, Assam, in collaboration with the Mandal Committee, started with District Committee President Dipak Kumar Gogoi raising the Sanskritik Mahasabha flag. In front of Bokajan Sub-Division

Additional Commissioner Kakumoni Saikia, Nahor and Bakul saplings were planted on the property. Students also participated in a drawing competition based on Dr. Hazarika’s life and works; competitors and winners received books, certificates, and cash rewards. At the commemorative meeting, attended by Bokajan Municipal Board Chairperson Sardili Be and Vice-Chairperson Partha Bhowmik, among others, retired Principal of Bokajan Higher Secondary School Satyapradip Bordoloi delivered a lecture on Dr. Hazarika’s life, musical journey and contributions to society and culture. Singer Mitashree Bora and noted artist Ambeswar Chetia were also felicitated. As part of the celebrations, a delegation led by President a cheleng chador, gamosa and citation, stated a press release.

Zomi groups claim no consent was requested and dispute

Imphal, Sep 10: The Zomi groups affiliated with the United People’s Front (UPF) have protested to being referred to as “Kuki-Zo SoO Groups,” claiming they were not consulted or notified prior to the nomenclature being used in a joint statement by the UPF and Kuki National Organization (KNO).

One day following the UPF-KNO release on September 10, the Zomi Revolutionary Army (ZRA), Zou Defense Volunteers (ZDV), and Zomi Re-Unification Front (ZRF) released a statement on September 11. The organizations said that before the statement was released, their leadership’s approval was not obtained. The three organizations stated that the UPF-KNO declaration could not be regarded as representing ZRA, ZDV, and ZRF or as a collectively mandated position of the UPF. Additionally,

the organizations objected to the use of “Kuki-Zo SoO Groups,” claiming that their stance on representation and identity had not altered. “Zomi is the indigenous identity through which our community identifies itself,” they stated, adding that permission and consultation should be the foundation of any collective nomenclature.

The groups claimed that rather than being against another community’s right to self-identification, their argument was about representation. They stated, “Our concern is not with others expressing their views, but with views being presented in a way that could be interpreted as representing organizations that were not consulted or involved.” According to the statement, “collective representation must reflect the consent and participation of those it claims to represent.”

Assam CM Approves Crore in Aid for Students Affected

Guwahati, Sep 11: Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma, the chief minister, has authorized the transfer of Rs 1.56 crore from the chief minister’s relief fund to assist students in the districts of Sivasagar and Charaideo who have been affected by flooding. 5,158 undergraduate and graduate students would receive financial aid to continue their education in the wake of the floods, according to Sarma’s social media announcement of the decision. A sum of Rs 1,56,40,000 has been handed to the Directorate of Higher Education, Assam, in accordance with an order issued on Thursday. The money will be used to buy

study materials for qualified flood-affected kids. The goal of the aid is to minimize the interruption that the floods have brought to students’ studies while also assisting them in meeting their basic academic obligations. The Directorate of Higher Education will distribute the money to qualified students. The initiative’s goal is to give kids whose academic endeavors have been impacted by the floods in the two districts immediate educational support. The state government said the assistance would help affected students continue their academic journey despite the challenges caused by the natural disaster.

All Assam Students Union protests in Tingkhong and calls for the immediate



Dispur, Sep 11: The demonstrators asked that the roadway be fixed and rebuilt as soon as possible while yelling anti-government and anti-authority slogans. During the protest, slogans such as “Repair NH-52(B) immediately,” “BJP government, step down,” “Nitin Gadkari go back,” “Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma go back,” and “Bimal Bora go back” were chanted. Despite the ongoing rise in tolls, AASU criticized the government for failing to adequately repair vital na-

tional roadways. The student body said that rather than doing a thorough repair and replacement of the route, patchwork fixes were being made. The demonstrators claim that the Kanubari-Dibrugarh road, which passes through Arunachal Pradesh, is a crucial route for travelers between the two states. According to reports, a number of the highway’s sections have seriously degraded, making it difficult for regular commuters and other road users. Concerns over the flow of patients and

expecting mothers seeking medical care between Assam and Arunachal Pradesh have also been raised by the highway’s poor state. Protesters claimed that commuters are having to put up with a great deal of hardship while passing through the damaged areas. In addition to urging the relevant authorities to take decisive action to enhance road connectivity along the Assam-Arunachal route, AASU reaffirmed its demand for the immediate and permanent repair of NH-52(B).

Railways Records Highest-Ever Bookings Amid Festive Rush: Over 20 Lakh Tickets in a Day

New Delhi, Sep 11: In the midst of a spike in demand ahead of the holiday season, the Indian Railroad Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC), the official portal for booking train tickets, reported its highest-ever single-day reservations on September 7 with over 20 lakh tickets. On September 7, IRCTC bought 20,06,353 tickets, which was the first time the day total exceeded 20 lakh. On September 8, 19,50,699 tickets were purchased, demonstrating the continued high demand. This is six percent more than the 18,40,203 tickets that were booked in a single day during the previous year's holiday season. According



to IRCTC, almost 89% of reserved train tickets are now purchased online. New servers have been installed to manage the increasing load, almost doubling the online ticket booking system's capacity. On July 15, 2026, IRCTC unveiled a new website and user experience that enables trav-

elers to see seat availability across several classes on a single page. Additionally, the railroad ticketing platform has stepped up its efforts to combat fraudulent booking activity and bots. According to IRCTC, suspicious bot traffic has decreased by 55-65% thanks to its anti-bot technology.

A system implemented by the ticket booking platform prohibits authorized ticket agents from making reservations during the first ten minutes following the opening of the booking window, which is between 8 and 8:10 am. When the reservation window opens, those who are purchasing tickets must also verify their Aadhaar.

IRCTC has revoked 3.04 crore user IDs and warned 6.33 crore IDs for re-verification as part of its efforts to combat fraudulent activities.

IRCTC stated that the new online ticket booking system has no significant bugs or outages despite the record booking volumes.

In Jaipur, a man kills his wife and three daughters by smashing their heads with a brick



New Delhi, Sep 11: According to Jaipur police, he killed all four of them by sneaking up on them while they were sleeping and repeatedly smashing their heads with a brick. According to authorities, a 40-year-old mother named Geeta Jha and her

three daughters, Nandini, Girisha, and Radhika, were among those slain. According to authorities, the perpetrator, Rahul Jha, was the woman's husband and the father of the three children, who range in age from 17 to 23. According to authorities, Rahul Jha is on

the run and the event appears to have been caused by a family disagreement. Around ten in the morning on Friday, neighbors and family members grew suspicious when there was no activity at the residence, which led to the discovery of the horrifying murders. The accused's 85-year-old father was present at the house in Govindpura when the police arrived.

Teams from the Forensic Science Laboratory and dog squad were also called to the spot. Blood samples and other forensic evidence from the crime scene has been collected. The brick allegedly used in the attack has also been taken into custody for examination,

police said. When the news broke, a sizable crowd gathered outside the house. Although the precise motivation is still unknown, Deputy Commissioner of investigators (DCP) West Prashant Kiran stated that investigators believe a family quarrel may have been the cause of the deaths. The officer stated, "We are currently attempting to ascertain what allegedly caused the accused to carry out the crime. To apprehend Rahul Jha, special police squads have been established. Additionally, police are conducting raids at potential hiding places for the accused and have increased inspections at entry and departure points.

MLAs leave a women's panel workshop when the Keralan chief minister criticizes "Hindi imposition"

New Delhi, Sep 11: Chief Minister V D Satheesan denounced the "treatment" of delegates at a National Commission for Women (NCW) workshop two days after a group of Keralan women MLAs left the event, claiming Hindi was imposed. Forcing Hindi at a national conclave, he claimed, "strikes at the core of our constitutional compact". Satheesan criticized the purported "imposition of Hindi" and "intimidation of delegates" from states that do not speak Hindi in a post on X. His comments came after the female MLAs left a National Commission for Women training in Faridabad before it was over. The program was mostly

held in Hindi, thus the Keralam lawmakers protested by walking out.

Reacting to the incident, Satheesan pointed out that India's strength lay in the unity of its diversity, with different languages, cultures and identities enriching the national fabric. "Our founding fathers envisioned an India whose strength would come not from uniformity, but from the unity of its diversity, a union where different languages, cultures and identities enrich, rather than diminish, the national fabric," he stated. India is not a single, cohesive country, but rather a union of many linguistic traditions. Our national forums should be defined by mutual respect,



accommodation, and constitutional equality rather than by language imposition, the chief minister of Kerala stated. Satheesan continued by emphasizing that variety was the "very

foundation" of the nation rather than a problem.

Earlier this week, the NCW hosted a two-day capacity-building session for female lawmakers in Faridabad. Deputy Speak-

er Shanimol Osman, state ministers Bindhu Krishna and K A Thulasi, as well as MLAs K K Rema, Fathima Thahliya, Uma Thomas, Vidya Balakrishnan, and Usha Vijayan from Kerala were present.

The Keralam MLAs further claimed that in spite of their objections to the "imposition" of Hindi, NCW Chairperson Vijaya Rahatkar remained silent. Some MLAs from North India allegedly yelled that Hindi was the national language and that talks would only take place in Hindi, according to the female lawmakers. They further claimed that "Jai Shri Ram" and "Bharat Mata Ki Jai" were shouted in response to their demonstration.

The Delhi High Court emphasizes the concerns of female athletes during the Vinesh Phogat case hearing



New Delhi, Sep 11: The Delhi High Court on Thursday highlighted the difficulties experienced by female athletes whose careers are disrupted by pregnancy and childbirth, stating that sporting regulations must strike a balance between the interests of the country and the circumstances of women returning to competition after giving birth. "This is the issue. A lady will get married, have a child, and while this is going on, men will compete, win medals, and then qualify, leaving someone to stay at home and take care of the kids. According to Bar and Bench, the judge noted, "There should be something that you have to do about this also, otherwise this is being very unfair." The remarks came while the court refused wrestler Vinesh Phogat's plea for interim permission to participate in the Wrestling Federation of India's (WFI) selection trials for the 2026 Senior World Wrestling Championships.

The court held that allowing her to compete despite not meeting the prescribed eligibility criteria would amount to creating a special exception in her favour. Phogat's request to be temporarily included to the eligibility pool for the Women's Selection Trials, which are set for September 14 at Indira Gandhi Stadium in New Delhi, was denied by Justice Sharma.

However, the court made it plain that it was not rendering a definitive decision regarding the legality of WFI's September 7 eligibility letter or the ongoing disciplinary actions against Phogat. Vinesh Phogat, a wrestler, was denied permission by the Delhi High Court on Thursday to take part in the selection trials for the 2026 Senior World Wrestling Championships, which are set to take place in Astana, Kazakhstan, from October 24 to November 1. A bench of Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma noted that all athletes were subject to the same eligibility requirements set forth by the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) in its September 7 circular. The criteria included performance in events such as the 2025 Senior Nationals, 2026 Senior Open Ranking Tournament, 2026 U-23 Nationals, Federation Cup, National Coaching Camp and the 2026 U-20 World Championships.

The court held that permitting Phogat to participate provisionally would, in effect, amount to creating an exception exclusively in her favour from the eligibility criteria applicable to all other athletes. According to the court,

the requirements must be applied consistently to all athletes wishing to take part in the selection trials rather than being especially directed against Phogat. According to the court, allowing Phogat to participate by granting her a special dispensation would not only be unfair to other athletes nationwide who might have a similar complaint against the policy but are not before this Court, but it would also have the effect of opening a Pandora's box, with other athletes requesting similar exceptions from the prescribed eligibility criteria. It added that till validity and applicability of the selection policy itself is adjudicated upon, the eligibility criteria prescribed thereunder cannot simply be set aside or wished away in the case of one athlete, and a special class cannot be carved out in Phogat's favour.

"It is undeniable that the aforementioned requirements do not explicitly target the petitioner; rather, they should be applied consistently to athletes who wish to take part in the selection trials. Although the petitioner's pregnancy, childbirth, and postpartum recuperation circumstances would need to be taken into account when evaluating the policy's validity, the judge stated that this does not, in the interim, grant the petitioner a directive allowing her to participate in violation of the eligibility requirements.

The wrestler requested permission to take part in the trials on Monday through her attorneys, Aashita Khanna, Ritwik Prakash, and Neil M. Goswami, and the court granted the order.

PM Modi honors the victims of 9/11 as India leads the battle against terrorism

New Delhi, Sep 11: As the globe celebrated 25 years of the devastating terror attacks in the United States, Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid tribute to the victims of 9/11 on Friday.

Additionally, the prime minister conveyed India's unwavering determination to fight terrorism. "25 years on from the horrific 9/11 attacks, we remember and honor the victims and stand in solidarity with the families whose lives were forever changed," he wrote in a post on X. PM Modi reaffirmed India's resolve to combat terrorism by stating, "Terrorism has claimed countless lives around the world." India has been at the forefront of this battle

for numerous decades as a victim of cross-border terrorism.

PM Modi took the opportunity to voice India's unwavering resolve to counter terrorism as he said, "While the threat keeps evolving, our resolve and opposition to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations remain unwavering. We stand in solidarity with all efforts to combat this scourge." The United States is celebrating the 25th anniversary of the September 11, 2001, al-Qaida attacks. When hijackers crashed three aircraft into the Pentagon in Virginia and the World Trade Center in New York City, up to 2,977 people perished. In a field close to Shanksville, Penn-



sylvania, the terrorists also brought down a fourth aircraft. On Friday, individuals in the US will pay respect to the victims through memorial ceremonies that include wreath-laying, flag-flying,

silent moments, vigils, and recitation of the victims' names. On Friday, US President Donald Trump will be present at the Pentagon's anniversary celebration. "In the course of history, there

are a few moments that divide time into, really, what came before and after," the president stated during a 9/11 commemoration in Washington earlier this week.

NEIGRIHMS hosts a program to raise awareness about suicide prevention

Shillong, Sep 11: In honor of World Suicide Prevention Day 2026, the NEIGRIHMS Departments of Psychiatry and Community Medicine hosted a public awareness event on Thursday at the Institute's Rural Health and Training Center in Bhoirymbong, Ri-Bhoi district. The program's subject, "Changing the Narrative on Suicide," sought to remove the stigma attached to mental health issues while increasing awareness of suicide prevention. Resource people included Senior Resident Doctor Dr. Teju from the Department of Community Medicine, Senior Resident Psychiatrist Dr. Dazelle Sungoh from the Department of Psychiatry, and Clinical Psychologist Kimberly Syiem from the Depart-

ment of Psychiatry. The event was attended by locals who came to the health center for medical advice and care. The program ran from 11 a.m. until the center's registration ended. The awareness session's main objectives were to teach participants how to support individuals who are at risk, recognize verbal and behavioral warning signals, and comprehend risk and protective variables. To promote direct communication and broader information transmission, small-group talks with four to five participants were held.

In order to promote cooperative preventive measures to address self-harm and suicide, a separate sensitization workshop was also held for health center employees, according to a press release.

Jaishankar highlights worldwide unpredictability at the BRICS conference

New Delhi, Sep 11: The world's political and economic system is becoming more unpredictable, according to External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, who noted on Friday that complexity and volatility have become defining characteristics of the world. Speaking at the BRICS Business Forum, Jaishankar stated that while rapid digitization and technical advancements were generating new prospects for growth, productivity, and development, geopolitical conflicts, pandemics, and climate-related disruptions were having an impact on the economy. "We meet during a period of upheaval in the world's political and economic structure. The world we live in is now characterized by volatility, unpredictability, and complexity. We are seeing the effects of pandemics,

geopolitical conflicts, and climate-related disruptions on the economy," he stated. He also said rapid digitisation and technological advances are opening up new possibilities for growth, productivity and development. "The result is an economic landscape where both risks and opportunities are becoming more widely distributed and where the ability to anticipate, adapt and respond is acquiring greater importance," he added. New Delhi is all set to host the BRICS Summit on September 12 and 13, with several world leaders and senior delegations arriving in the national capital from late Thursday evening through early Friday morning.

Russian President Vladimir Putin arrived in New Delhi on Friday, marking the beginning of a three-

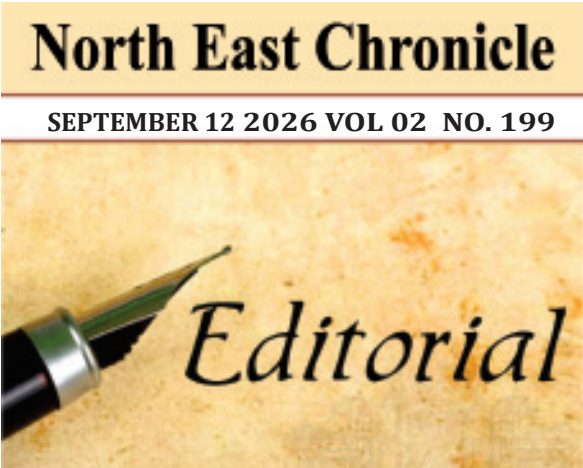


day visit to India to participate in the BRICS Summit and meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi to discuss expanding bilateral trade, investment and energy cooperation. Putin is accompanied by a high-level delegation. His visit marks his first in-person partici-

pation at a BRICS summit outside Russia since the war in Ukraine began in February 2022. Brazilian Foreign Minister Mauro Vieira also arrived in New Delhi to attend the 18th BRICS Summit. The Ministry of External Affairs announced Vieira's arrival,

saying he is representing Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva at the summit, as Lula remains in Brazil for his election campaign. Top leaders attending the summit include Chinese President Xi Jinping, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian,

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa, Indonesian counterpart Prabowo Subianto, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali, and Vietnamese Prime Minister Le Minh Hung. According to a senior police officer on Thursday, Delhi Police has implemented a multi-layered security plan for the upcoming BRICS Summit. Approximately 15,000 officers and 200 companies of paramilitary forces will be stationed throughout the nation's capital. In order to maintain a 24-hour surveillance of strategic locations, the police have also placed over 500 CCTV cameras, including high-resolution and specialized surveillance cameras.



Rural infrastructure upgrades drive economic growth

Benefits of high-ways are opti-mised and reach villages’ doorsteps only when the rural roads which provide the last mile connectivity are properly built, maintained and integrated into the highway network. The primary objective of the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) is to provide all-weather connectivity to unconnected rural habitations. For a state like Assam, which receives heavy monsoon rains, all-weather connectivity plays a crucial role in keeping the roads passable and safe throughout the year. Yet, questions being raised over the quality of 18% of PMGSY roads in Assam, which was highlighted in Wednesday’s edition of this newspaper, reveal glaring shortcomings in construction and monitoring of rural roads in the state. The report brought to light that National Quality Monitors (NQM) have found, during inspection of 442 completed road works from 2012 to the last part of August, 2026, that construction quality of 70 roads is “unsatisfactory” and 24 roads met basic, minimum standards but require improvement. It also found 67 ongoing works “unsatisfactory” and 37 works requiring improvement. The PMGSY has a three-tiered quality control mechanism to ensure that the construction quality of roadworks meets the basic standards of durability, making them truly all-weather. In the first tier, the Programme Implementation Units (PIUs) are required to ensure process control through mandatory tests on materials and workmanship at the field laboratory. The second tier is a structured independent quality monitoring at the state level through State Quality Monitors (SQMs) to ensure that every work is inspected at the initial stage, middle stage and final stage of construction. Under the third tier, independent NQMs are deployed by the central government for random inspections of road and bridge works to monitor quality and also to provide guidance to the field functionaries.

The central government informed the Lok Sabha that as per Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) guidelines, maintenance of roads constructed under the programme is the responsibility of the state or union territory governments. The PMGSY Guidelines also mandate that the programme functions under fixed timeline frameworks, and there is no provision for the enhancement of the sanctioned cost or the payment of cost escalation due to time overruns. Any cost escalation arising from project delays, execution overruns, or tenders invited above the sanctioned cost must be entirely borne by the respective state government from its own budgetary resources. While this requirement is helpful in the timely construction of rural roads, rushing construction work to avoid cost escalation due to time overrun carries the risk of compromising quality in construction work, especially when monitoring is slackened. The Ministry of Rural Development accords clearance and sanctions project cost based on estimates presented in the Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) formulated by the respective State Governments. This calls for meticulous DPR preparation so that construction quality is embedded into the project from the very first design stage until the completion of the construction. If such checks and balances fail to ensure quality, then it signals a persistent systemic gap that has been overlooked. Without all-weather connectivity to the rural habitations, an agrarian state like Assam cannot be expected to derive optimal benefits for expansion of existing highways and construction of new highways as economic corridors. When villages are well-connected with quality roads, then farmers transport their produce from farms, fields and granaries to the nearest commercial hub, which gives them remunerative and competitive prices. When farmers lack direct and easy access to large markets, they become reliant on traders who aggregate farm produce, which often results in farmers receiving lower prices due to their limited ability to negotiate. A quality PMGSY road, therefore, frees farmers from this dependency. Farmers getting remunerative prices for agricultural produce and allied farming, such as dairy farming and livestock rearing, is fundamental to improving the rural economy and preventing distress selling or withdrawal from farming. Agricultural labour remaining remunerative is critical to curbing the outmigration of rural youth in search of alternative livelihoods. Besides, when the rural economy improves, industries also move closer to agricultural clusters, taking advantage of better highway and road connectivity. Viewed from this perspective, PMGSY is not simply a central government scheme to support the construction of rural roads but a strategic lever for rural economic transformation through the transition from subsistence agriculture to commercial farming. A stronger rural economy augments the income of farm households to spare more for the quality education of their children and access to better healthcare. Once a road is built, the isolation ends, and a window is opened for villagers to access markets, services, and vast opportunities that previously remained out of reach. They start looking at the same farm activities with a renewed sense of hope, opportunity and entrepreneurial approach. Maintaining quality of rural roads in Assam, therefore, is not a choice but an essential obligation for long-term economic gain.

Quarter century after 9/11, the religious blame game persists

Today marks the 25th anniversary of 9/11. I still remember watching it as a teenager, seeing those images all over the news. Anyone who watched it unfold at the time would understand how unreal and shocking it felt a feeling perhaps easier to share with those who remember it than to describe in words. At the time, I had no idea how one attack would go on to change so much around us geopolitics, wars, economies and societies. I had even less idea how, over the years, my own identity as a Muslim, and the way Muslim identity was seen and discussed around the world, would change with it.

Looking back, I find myself caught between two conversations that have grown louder since then. One treats Muslims collectively as a threat. The other, within parts of the Muslim community, sometimes treats difficult questions about religion, extremism or reform as attacks that must simply be rejected. But interestingly, as an Indian Muslim at that time, I don’t remember 9/11 feeling immediately connected to my own Indian Muslim identity. The names on the news Taliban and Al-Qaeda moved through a faraway political mist, strangers wearing a faith we shared in name, but little else. It was happening somewhere else, involving people who seemed very far removed from our everyday lives. I consider myself lucky to have been born and brought up in a defence society, as my father was serving in the Indian Navy. It was an environment where my religious identity did not matter much. But later, when I moved into civilian society, I began noticing a slight difference. Comments like “aap log Muslim nahi lagte” (you people don’t look Muslim) became so common that I remember my sister once replying out of irritation, “Toh Muslims ke singh (horns) hote hain kya? (Do Muslims have horns or something?)”

I also realised that there was another complication that Muslims in India had to deal with: Pakistan. And then there were certain stereotypes because of the poor socio-economic condition of a large section of the community. For the most part, I believed people carrying such stereotypes were simply biased, but I also blamed some within the community for feeding them. During India-Pakistan cricket matches, I would hear complaints about some Muslims celebrating a Pakistani victory. Such people existed, though I never believed they represented anything close to the majority. And as a young person,

the obvious question in my mind was: if you support Pakistan over India, then why are you still living in India, especially when your people had the option to choose? Yet, that burden did not feel unique. To be a Muslim in India was to carry a stereotype, but in our crowded country, almost everyone carried a label shaped by caste, region, or dialect. I never felt marked by a birthright of victimhood. I felt like an equal citizen, navigating a world where prejudice was a common weed, growing even within the walls of my own community. Real life happened in the spaces between these biases. We did business together, shared meals, crossed thresholds to celebrate each other’s joys, and built lasting friendships. Like the rest of India, we simply learned to manage the friction, balancing our lives within the beautiful, messy contradictions of a shared existence. But in the years after 9/11, something did begin to change. I remember a growing interest, and perhaps anxiety, among people trying to understand whether Islam and Muslims themselves posed some kind of threat. Terrorism was no longer seen only as a security problem to be handled by armies, intelligence agencies or police. The frightening idea was that an

apparently ordinary person could suddenly attack civilians who had no defence. And as more such attacks and incidents followed, people naturally started asking: where does this come from? Is it political, religious, ideological, or some mixture of all three? As a Muslim, I already had plenty of questions about religion myself. From childhood, I had a habit of asking counter-questions and sometimes raising my voice even within my own family. But I had never understood Islam as having any attachment to violence against innocent people. The wars we read about in Islamic history belonged, in my mind, to an older world where kings, kingdoms and empires regularly fought one another. We don’t live in that world anymore. We had democracy jamhooriyat and the freedom to live, work, pray and follow our own way of life.

For me, being Muslim was much more about the struggle with your own self, trying to remain on the right path, maintaining your imaan, doing what is right and avoiding what is wrong. It was personal before it was political. But gradually, I started coming across comments, posts and articles asking much harder questions about Islam itself. Questions I had rarely encountered while growing up. And for the first time, I found myself not only thinking about what Islam meant to me, but also confronting what other people had begun to believe Islam meant to them. I learned words like taqiyya from social media, which, as a Muslim, I had never even heard of growing up. There were many stereotypes, but slowly some of them crossed a boundary. It was no longer that Indian Muslims have this or that problem and we should work on it. It became sentences like, all Muslims across the world are so and so. The good thing was that mostly I saw this on social media. But I also saw some social media influencers making big careers out of using almost every opportunity to dehumanise Indian Muslims and project them as a threat to everyone.

Some victims were Muslims and non-Muslims. There were Muslim youth getting radicalised to commit such heinous crimes, destroying their own lives and the lives of innocent people. And then millions of ordinary Muslims faced the ripple effects of these acts. Yet our religious and community leaders often seemed more interested either in repeating “this is not Islam” or immediately talking about Muslim victimhood. I don’t think

saying “this is not Islam” is wrong. But surely there has to be another question after that: then what is happening, and why? If young Muslims are being radicalised using the language of our religion, shouldn’t we be among the first people willing to understand it and confront it? We are still not ready to accept or openly discuss within the community that there are many interpretations of Islam, and extremist movements also construct their own interpretations of religious texts and history to justify what they do. It is almost ironic that one terrorist group can consider another terrorist group un-Islamic and even issue a fatwa against them. Everyone somehow believes that only their interpretation is the correct one. But if we accept that different interpretations exist, then we also have to accept something else: there has to be space for disagreement. Someone who interprets religion differently from you, or even chooses not to follow your interpretation at all, has the same right to exist as you do. The answer cannot be the idea of silencing, punishing or eliminating those who disagree. For me, interpretation that takes account of time, context and the reality of the world we live in is an important part of the way ahead.

India’s stance on the Indus waters treaty: the legal framework

The Indus Waters Treaty of 1960 was negotiated over nearly a decade in a spirit of goodwill, friendship, and post-partition reconstruction, with the World Bank mediating an arrangement that allocated roughly 80 per cent of the Indus system’s waters to Pakistan while India accepted severe design constraints and paid substantial compensation. Sixty-five years later, following decades of Pakistani objections to Indian hydro projects and a series of cross-border terrorist attacks culminating in the April 2025 Pahalgalam incident, India declared that the IWT would be held “in abeyance” until Pakistan credibly ends support for terrorism.

On 31 August 2026, a Court of Arbitration (CoA) at The Hague constituted under the IWT issued an award holding that the treaty “remains fully in force”; that India has no unilateral right to suspend or terminate it; and that none of India’s cited grounds material breach, fundamental change of circumstances, countermeasures, or necessity justified “abeyance.” India rejected the award, calling the CoA “illegally constituted” and lacking jurisdiction, and reiterated that the treaty stays in abeyance. This article examines India’s possible legal position through six analytical pillars: (1) forum-allocation under Article IX and the claim of illegal constitution; (2) the collapse of the goodwill premise underlying the IWT; (3) exceptional doctrines permitting temporary non-performance; (4) the legal effect of non-participation and ex parte proceedings; (5) the limits of competence-de-la-compétence in inter-state disputes; and (6) the distinction between suspension or abeyance and outright termination. Drawing on treaty text, arbitral awards, and state practice, the article argues that India’s stance, while contested, is not unreasonable and can be framed as consistent with a law-respecting approach to an extraordinary situation, as it rests on plausible interpretations of the IWT’s architecture and recognised

doctrines of the law of treaties.

First, the IWT contains no clause permitting one party to suspend or terminate the treaty. Article XII(4) provides that the treaty “shall continue in force until terminated by a duly ratified treaty.” Second, even assuming allegations of cross-border terrorism are true, the IWT governs water uses, not security conduct; thus terrorism cannot amount to a “material breach” of the IWT itself. Third, demographic growth, climate stress, and technological change were foreseeable and do not meet the strict rebus sic stantibus (a legal principle implying that a treaty remains binding only as long as the essential conditions and circumstances existing at the time of its creation remain unchanged) threshold under the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties (VCLT). Fourth, the CoA held that the requirements for lawful countermeasures or necessity were not satisfied, noting that India continued building hydro projects despite claiming security impediments. Finally, Pakistan argues that unilateral “abeyance” undermines the treaty’s dispute-settlement system and the credibility of international adjudication; States must use agreed mechanisms, not fiat. In this framing, the CoA’s award is undoubtedly a “decisive affirmation of international law”: Pacta Sunt Servanda (agreements must be kept), and water treaties being lifelines—must withstand political shocks. India’s first pillar rests on the IWT’s dispute architecture, which is deliberately tiered. The treaty channels “questions” to the Permanent Indus Commission, technical “differences” to a Neutral Expert (NE) under Annexure F, and “disputes” to a Court of Arbitration (CoA) under Article IX(3)–(5) and Annexure G. India argues that Pakistan’s challenges to Kishenganga/Ratle design features are technical differences properly referable to the NE, not a full arbitration.

By pursuing the World Bank enabling parallel proceedings (NE and CoA) on substantially

overlapping technical questions, the process created a structural conflict the treaty did not contemplate. Even if the World Bank followed the letter of Annexure G’s appointment mechanics for constituting CoA, the substantive mismatch between the nature of the controversy (design/operation differences) and the forum selected (CoA) can be characterised as a breach of the treaty’s functional design. India therefore treats the CoA as illegally constituted for this subject matter and its awards as null and void. It is pertinent to note that India does not reject all arbitration under the IWT; it only rejects this CoA’s assertion of jurisdiction over technical design questions while an NE process was pending—contrary to Article IX’s allocation of competence. At this stage it must be acknowledged that the CoA rejected India’s competence objections in 2023 and 2025, holding it was validly constituted and remained competent despite India’s abeyance declaration. India presumably treats these awards as contested, not settled law, and advances its forum-allocation argument as a serious, good-faith interpretation of the treaty’s own dispute-settlement scheme. India’s second pillar emphasises the historical and normative context in which the IWT was concluded. The treaty’s preamble and negotiating history emphasise “the most complete and satisfactory utilisation” of the Indus system “in a spirit of goodwill and friendship.” India’s concessions were extraordinary: an asymmetric allocation that gave India roughly 20 per cent of flows (Eastern rivers) while relinquishing claims to the far larger Western system (~80 per cent to Pakistan); a financial concession of ~£62 million (~\$2.5 billion today) to help Pakistan build replacement works; and one-sided design/operational constraints on India’s use of Western rivers, with no equivalent constraints on Pakistan. India’s compliance has been scrupulous for 65 years—through multiple wars and sustained

cross-border terrorism (2001 Parliament, 2008 Mumbai, 2016 Uri, 2019 Pulwama, 2025 Pahalgalam).

However, today there is a growing perception that Pakistan has used the treaty to obstruct development in India: virtually every major Indian hydro project on Western rivers (Baglihar, Kishenganga, Pakal Dul, Tulbul) has faced prolonged Pakistani objections and referrals, delaying development in Jammu & Kashmir; simultaneously and even in the past, Pakistan has lost no opportunity to portray India as a potential “water aggressor” internationally despite its unbroken compliance. Treaties derive legitimacy not only from text but from good-faith implementation and the basic premises on which consent was given. Additionally, there is enough evidence emerging from Pakistan itself, be it from the speeches of UN-designated terrorists or interviews by senior functionaries of the establishment, all openly admitting to their past as well as present and continued support for ‘Mujahideen’ in Kashmir. Where one party persistently breaches foundational norms of inter-state conduct (here terrorism) and exploits the treaty to obstruct the other’s development, the cooperative premise of the agreement is undermined. This is not a claim that any tension allows suspension. It is a claim that persistent, state-sponsored terrorism combined with developmental obstruction strikes at the object and purpose of a treaty premised on goodwill and friendship. India’s third pillar invokes recognised doctrines that excuse temporary suspension or abeyance of a treaty without terminating it. Under the VCLT and the law of state responsibility, suspension is permitted in narrow situations, including material breach (VCLT Art. 60), supervening impossibility of performance (Art. 61), fundamental change of circumstances (Art. 62), and countermeasures/necessity. All of these are temporary, conditional, and reversible by design. They do not end the treaty;

they pause obligations until the breach is cured, the peril passes, or circumstances stabilise. India argues that Pakistan’s support for terrorism, coupled with systematic obstruction of Indian projects permitted under the IWT, defeats the cooperative object of the treaty (material breach); that the security environment and mutual trust underlying the IWT have changed so fundamentally that continued performance under the same terms is untenable (fundamental change); and that temporary non-performance may be justified as a proportionate countermeasure to induce compliance with international obligations, or under necessity to safeguard essential interests.

Notably, the CoA rejected these grounds, holding that terrorism is outside the IWT’s scope and that the strict thresholds were not met. But India’s position remains arguable: the IWT is not an isolated technical compact; it is a bilateral confidence-building measure whose viability depends on a minimum baseline of security and good faith. The ICJ’s Gabčíkovo-Nagy-maros precedent sets a high bar for these doctrines, and that is precisely why India presents “abeyance” as a provisional, conditional posture—not a termination—pending restoration of a security environment compatible with the treaty’s cooperative premise. India’s declaration is thus carefully framed: the treaty is held “in abeyance” until Pakistan credibly and irrevocably ends support for cross-border terrorism; it is tied to a specific, verifiable change in Pakistan’s conduct; and it is not a termination, as India continues to engage (or has engaged) through the NE track and diplomatic channels, showing it has not abandoned the IWT’s entire framework—only the branch it deems misapplied. This distinguishes India’s stance from unilateralism for convenience. It is a security-linked, reversible suspension aimed at inducing compliance with foundational norms of inter-state behaviour.

Crude oil Mirae Asset Sharekhan explains this is possible

New Delhi: The global crude oil market witnessed yet another change in the underlying dynamics after Yemen’s Iran-backed Houthis seized the strategic Red Sea port city of Mokha from Saudi-backed pro-government forces and are advancing to take full control of the southern gateway to a major trade route linking Asia and Europe on the coastline of the Red Sea. The move has sent crude oil prices to the highest level since May this year; Brent trades above \$108, and WTI trades above \$103, and both benchmarks have surged 23 per cent in September, along with gains of around 78 per cent YTD. The constraints at the Yanbu terminal (5 mb/d of export capacity) and threats of attacks in the Red Sea have reduced vessel availability for exports. War-risk insurance and freight costs have also surged. High transport costs weaken normal arbitrage and prevent surplus barrels in one region from reaching a deficit market quickly. The global supplied had remained short of around 10-11 million barrels during August and with The latest move from Houthis is just going to add to already depleting global reserves as the route of Red sea in its normal course would account for 60-70 ships moving a day that would include Oil flows from Russia heading for Asian markets, while Houthis

have warns to hit ships from Saudi that would mean oil flows from Saudi Arabia which are at lowest in 40 year during August would be at major risk in coming months. Saudi Arabia told OPEC that its crude production in August fell to 6.238 million bpd, the lowest since 1990. Saudi Arabia’s Aug crude exports dropped to about 3 million bpd, the lowest amount in 9 years. Global oil markets are continuing to tighten, with the loss of about 2 million bpd from crude exports in the Middle East, and a further 2 million bpd from Russia as a result of Ukraine’s drone attacks. On the other side of the Red Sea is the Persian Gulf, where resurgence of strikes from Iran and the U.S. The Strait of Hormuz remains disrupted, and the conflict is now heading into its seventh month. At this moment, we believe that any discussion of a short-term deal to open up the Strait of Hormuz for commercial shipping is unlikely, as both sides have very little common ground. The Hormuz traffic is not yet normalised as claimed by White House, although flow had improved in August to around 6 mbpd, but that would still be less than the normal routine outflow of 14mbpd oil at pre-war level. But during the temporary ceasefire in July, floating storage fell from 61 million barrels in mid-June to 16 million barrels within three

weeks. Crude and condensate clearance from the Gulf averaged about 6.1 mb/d during the 30-days the ceasefire was truly in effect, but that improvement over the spring lows came mainly from releasing a tanker backlog. The Russian Invasion of Ukraine remains a central driver of global product tightness. Ukrainian drone strikes have become broader, more frequent, and more effective against Russian refineries. Russian crude runs fell from more than 5 mb/d through much of 2025 to about 4.0 mb/d in July 2026 and 3.9 mb/d in August so far. This implies that 40 per cent of Russia’s 6.7 mb/d refinery capacity is down, and it follows that refined product exports halved from about 2.3 mb/d in 2025 to roughly 1.2 mb/d in July. Diesel has taken the largest hit. Russian diesel exports dropped to roughly 0.2 mb/d in July, compared with about 1 mb/d before the war. Moscow imposed a broad gasoline and diesel export ban to protect the domestic market and, worst of all, has reportedly begun importing diesel. The export loss forces buyers in Turkey, Brazil and Africa to compete for replacement barrels from India, the Middle East and the U.S. Gulf Coast. That competition transmits the Russian shortfall into every major pricing region.

Market crash explained: Sensex dive 700 pts intraday Nifty below 23,250

New Delhi: Benchmark equity indices Sensex and Nifty 50 opened sharply lower on Friday as oil prices surged amid escalating West Asia tensions, while rising bond yields fuelled concerns over a possible Fed rate hike next week. The BSE Sensex opened lower at 74,309 and extended the losses to make a low of 74,160 in early trade, down 742 points or 1 per cent. Similarly, the Nifty 50 index opened in the red at 23,270 and hit a low of 23,231, down 246 points or 1.05 per cent. Analysts said that headwinds for the market are getting stronger with the escalation in the West Asia conflict. VK Vijayakumar, chief investment strategist, Geojit Investments, said that elevated crude oil prices are keeping risk appetite subdued. “Financial markets are adjusting to a stronger probability of monetary tightening, with federal funds futures indicating a greater than 70 per cent chance of a rate hike next week,” Devarsh Vakil, head of prime research at HDFC Securities, said. As of 9:27 AM, the 30-share Sensex traded 630 points or 0.84 per cent lower at 74,270, while the NSE Nifty index was down 222 points or 0.94 per cent at 23,256. On the sectoral front, all the indices were trading in the red. The Nifty Realty tanked over 3.5 per cent, while the Nifty Metal skidded 2.8 per cent. The Nifty Bank index was down more than 1 per cent. In the broader market, the indices mirrored the benchmarks to trade lower. Both the Nifty Midcap 100 and Nifty Smallcap 100 were down 1.3 per cent each. The advance-decline ratio was extremely weak, reflecting the selling pressure, with 2,377 stocks declining against 504 advances. Nearly 90 stocks remained unchanged. From the Sensex pack, Tech Mahindra, Infosys, HCL Tech, Bajaj Finance and ITC were trading in the green, gaining up to 1.5 per cent. On the other hand, M&M, Bajaj



Finance, Tata Steel, IndiGo and UltraTech Cement were the top losers, falling more than 2 per cent each. Oil prices rose and are on track to end the week at over \$100 a barrel for the first time since mid-May. Brent crude futures surged 0.42 per cent to \$108.1 a barrel, while US West Texas Intermediate climbed 0.33 per cent to \$102.8. “Brent crude has shot up to around \$108. If this high price sustains, or worse, spikes further, the impact on India’s GDP growth and consequently on corporate earnings will not be insignificant,” Vijayakumar said. Vijayakumar added that an “equally strong headwind is the rise in US bond yields”. The 10-year yield now sits at 4.96 per cent -- its highest level since late 2023. He said that as it approaches 5 per cent mark, many regard this as a possible inflection point for global equities. “A correction in global equity market is likely, but the timing is hard to predict.” Primary market: Also, the booming IPO market is the centre of attraction of investors now. The heavy over-subscription and attractive listing gains have drawn millions of investors into the IPO market. This has sucked off big money from the secondary market. Meanwhile, NSE has announced the price band and subscription date for its much-awaited IPO.

Index tanks 4.5% as rate bets spark risk-off mood

New Delhi: The real estate stocks witnessed significant selling pressure on Friday as they tumbled up to 7 per cent in intraday deals as rate hike bets gathered steam following inflation concerns amid rising crude oil prices and spike in bond yields. The Nifty Realty index tanked 4.50 per cent to the day’s low of 832.8 on the National Stock Exchange (NSE), hitting an over two-month low, as all constituents traded in the red. Lodha Developers was the top laggard following a 7.56 per cent decline on intraday basis. Godrej Properties followed close behind as it declined 7.42 per cent. Prestige, AB Realty and Oberoi Realty fell 4-5 per cent each. Meanwhile, other stocks such as DLF (down 3.94 per cent), Brigade Enterprises (down 3.5 per cent), Phenonix Mills (down 3.4 per cent), Anant Raj (down 2.9 per cent) and Sobha (down 2.7 per cent) traded with deep cuts. The realty pack is a rate-sensitive sector and higher rates are a dampener for the sector. Indian bond yields spiked past the 7 per cent mark as a double whammy of rising oil and US yields sapped investor appetite. Crude oil prices are currently heading towards \$110 per barrel and creating pressure on inflation through rising bond yields. “Central banks may have to take a stance on controlling inflation, even though the current inflationary pressure is being driven

by crude prices. Given the high volatility in crude prices, any rate hike or higher interest rates, along with rising bond yields, would definitely create pressure on interest-rate-sensitive sectors. Realty is one of the key rate-sensitive sectors as well,” said Kranthi Bathini of Wealthmills Securities. According to the expert, a key consideration remains how long do oil prices remain elevated. Over the last six months, oil prices have touched \$75 per barrel and also \$122 per barrel amid escalation and truce talks surrounding the West Asia war. “In the short term, oil prices are looking very firm. But if crude prices cool off over the longer term, the inflationary situation can also ease,” Bathini said. Meanwhile, the Federal Reserve is under severe pressure, with a dichotomy between dovish and hawkish commentary. At one end, the Trump administration has been putting pressure on the Fed to reduce interest rates. On the other, data and the Federal Reserve’s FOMC members’ hawkish commentary point to rate hike bets. Over the long term, Bathini said, interest rates are expected to soften. “As far as Indian real estate is concerned, there is strong demand despite the headwinds we have seen. So, investors can consider buying realty stocks on dips in a staggered manner.”

Index plummets by 4.5% as expectations of interest rate increases create a risk-averse

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DFS launches three fintech solutions at GFF 2026 to accelerate financial inclusion

Aizawl: Getting a new bank card, accepting digital payments or depositing cash for a family member could soon become easier and faster as the Department of Financial Services unveiled three fintech initiatives at Global Fintech Fest 2026. DFS Secretary Sanjay Lohiya launched an open-source Android ATM that can instantly issue personalised RuPay debit, credit and NCMC cards and merchant UPI QR codes.

The machines can also facilitate cheque deposits, account opening and loan applications, potentially reducing branch visits and waiting for physical card delivery. Banks are exploring their use as Digital Banking Units in rural and semi-urban areas, as well as at airports, metro stations, campuses and corporate parks. Nine banks, including SBI, Bank of Baroda, Union Bank, PNB, Bank of India, Central Bank of India, UCO Bank, Slice Small

Finance Bank and Airtel Payments Bank, are evaluating the solution with NPCI and ATM makers Hitachi Payment Services, Perto India and Vortex Engineering. For farmers and small entrepreneurs, Credit Line on UPI is being extended to eligible KCC and PM MUDRA accounts. The ecosystem represents over 7.7 crore operative KCC accounts with sanctioned limits above ₹10 lakh crore and more than

57 crore PMMY loans exceeding ₹40 lakh crore. The third initiative, AePS Three-Party Cash Deposit, allows eKYC-registered customers to deposit cash directly into another person’s bank account through participating AePS Touchpoint Operators. Aadhaar biometric authentication and beneficiary-name confirmation add security. Fourteen banks currently support the service, with more expected to join.

Raymond surges 20% on huge volume stock

New Delhi: Zoomed 20 per cent to ₹1,024 on the BSE in Friday’s intra-day deals amid heavy volume in an otherwise weak market. In the past four trading days, the company’s stock price rose 33% after it approved raising funds via allotment of convertible warrants on a preferential basis to Minerva Venture Fund. Meanwhile, in the past 11 trading days, Raymond’s market price skyrocketed 66%. It more-than-doubled or zoomed 220 per cent from its 52-week low of ₹320.40 touched on March 30, 2026. traded 19 per cent higher at ₹1,014.25, compared to a 0.79 per cent rise in the BSE Sensex. The average trading volume at the counter rose over two-fold, with a combined 11.72 million equity shares representing 17.6 per cent of Raymond’s total equity changing hands on the NSE and BSE. The board of directors of Raymond at its meeting held on September 8, 2026, approved raising funds. The fundraising will be executed through the issuance of 3.33 million convertible warrants, for cash, at an issue price of ₹645 per warrant (including a premium of ₹635 per warrant), aggregating up to ₹214.71 crore, by way of a preferential allotment on a private placement basis to Minerva Ventures Fund. This issuance is subject to the necessary approval. The tenure of the Warrants shall not exceed 18 months from the date of allotment. Each Warrant shall carry a right to subscribe to 1 (One) equity share, which may be exercised in one or more tranches. In the event the Warrant allottee does not exercise the Warrants within the aforesaid period, the unexercised Warrants shall lapse and the amount paid by the Warrant allottee shall stand forfeited, Raymond said in an exchange filing. Raymond is a diversified company with majority business interests in Precision Technology & Auto Components and Aerospace & Defence businesses, catering to domestic and global original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) and Tier-1 suppliers. The company continues to strengthen its operational capabilities through product diversification, advanced manufacturing technologies, international customer engagement and strategic capacity expansion initiatives, while benefiting from increasing opportunities across aerospace, electric vehicle (EV), hybrid and industrial applications.

Raymond Stock Rally: Shares Climb 57% in Two Weeks Amid Strong Investor Interest

New Delhi: Shares of Raymond Ltd extended their sharp rally on Friday, surging 19.97 per cent to hit a fresh record high of Rs 1,024. The stock was last trading 15.52 per cent higher at Rs 986, taking its gains over the past two weeks to 57.08 per cent. The stock witnessed heavy trading activity along with the sharp price movement. Around 9.65 lakh Raymond shares changed hands on BSE, significantly higher than the two-week average volume of 2.66 lakh shares. Turnover on the counter stood at Rs 92.51 crore, while the company’s market capitalisation (m-cap) was at Rs 6,554.52 crore. Ravi Singh, Chief Research Officer at Master Capital Services, said, “Raymond is witnessing strong buying interest as the government is considering extending the cus-

oms duty exemption on raw cotton beyond October 31, which could provide further relief to textile manufacturers facing elevated input costs. An extension would support margins and improve sentiment across the textile space, making the move positive for Raymond as well.” Singh added, “The company has also approved the issue of 33.29 lakh convertible warrants to Minerva Ventures Fund at Rs 645 per warrant, raising up to Rs 214.71 crore, which adds another positive element from a funding perspective.” On the technical front, Singh said, “Raymond has shown strong relative strength and has touched a fresh all-time high. The stock continues to maintain a positive price structure with strong momentum, indicating

that buyers remain firmly in control. With the trend intact, the upside can extend further towards Rs 1,130. Any meaningful dip should be seen as an opportunity to accumulate, rather than an indication of trend reversal. The overall setup remains bullish as long as the stock sustains its higher-high and higher-low structure. Kranthi Bathini, Equity Strategist at WealthMills Securities, said Raymond’s expansion of its precision engineering business into aerospace manufacturing was positive for its medium- to longer-term prospects. “Raymond is expanding its precision engineering division into aerospace manufacturing, which is one of the sunrise sectors in India. The company’s order book and earnings visibility look promising from a medium- to long-term per-



spective. Investors with a long-term horizon can hold on to the counter,” Bathini stated. Raymond: The stock was last trading 15.52 per cent higher at Rs 986, taking its gains over the past two weeks to 57.08 per cent.

Speed up electricity grid upgrade or else face higher bills, warns UK watchdog

UK: Consumers will pay higher energy bills unless the UK government speeds up work on a vast programme of upgrades to the electricity grid to enable the switch to renewables, the public spending watchdog has warned.

The National Audit Office (NAO) said that without faster action the extra costs associated with managing the ageing power network, which are ultimately passed on to the public, could reach £7.8bn a year by 2030.

A £70bn programme is under way to modernise Great Britain’s network of pylons, overhead lines and substations so that more power can be carried from wind and solar farms and other clean energy sources to homes.

Labour has said its plan to decarbonise the grid by 2030 will keep consumer bills lower than they would otherwise be, but the NAO said that if the planned upgrades did not happen fast enough

then bills could rise instead.

Of the 80 projects it said were needed to meet the target, just 16 are finished and most are in their early stages.

Gareth Davies, head of the NAO, said the planned upgrades would “test systems not designed for activity at this pace or scale”.

He added “Value for money now depends on delivery. Failure to implement these necessary grid upgrades will hamper economic growth as well as increase consumer bills.”

When the grid cannot carry enough electricity from where it is generated to where it is needed, the system operator pays windfarms to switch off and gas plants to switch on elsewhere to meet the demand. These so-called constraint costs are added to bills, and reached £1.9bn in 2025-26. Without faster upgrades, the NAO said, they could climb as high as £7.8bn by 2030. Meanwhile, the £70bn investment will



require transmission owners – the private companies that build and manage the network – to more than quadruple their annual spending on upgrades, from £2.5bn in 2025-26 to more than £11bn

by 2027-28. Ofgem, the industry regulator, believes households would be about £30 a year better off if the upgrades happen at the required pace because of the reduced curtailment costs.

But the NAO said meeting that schedule would be “very challenging”. It said some of the projects were already forecast to run beyond 2030, meaning “some new generation” was likely to connect

before necessary grid upgrades were completed.

“It is important to minimise this gap, as delays will increase project and constraint costs and postpone the benefit of achieving

clean power,” the NAO said.

It added that neither Ofgem, the National Energy System Operator (Neso), which balances the grid, nor the government publishes enough data on the cost and progress of projects, and called for more transparency. Geoffrey Clifton-Brown, the chair of parliament’s spending watchdog, the public accounts committee, said: “Renewables now generate the majority of the UK’s electricity, but the grid has failed to keep pace and is in dire need of upgrading to support the transition to clean energy.

“As one of our most important pieces of infrastructure, the grid must be capable of meeting rising demand whether that is from new homes or datacentres.

“[The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero], Ofgem and Neso must deliver critical projects on time and provide transparent reporting so parliament and

the public can hold them to account.”

Ofgem welcomed the recommendations, adding that the planned upgrades would “reduce costly constraints on the system and help shield consumers from volatile international gas prices”.

“Protecting consumers and driving down costs remains our priority,” a spokesperson said. “Funding is released in stages, costs are rigorously scrutinised and companies face financial penalties if they fail to deliver.”

The energy minister Michael Shanks said: “This report is another stark reminder of the cost of years of historic underinvestment in the grid ... Our once-in-a-generation reforms are finally building the infrastructure we need: reducing our dependence on the fossil fuels that leave households exposed to price spikes and helping lower people’s bills for good.”

New battery-powered trains will ‘bring faster journeys to north’



UK: No 10 has announced the construction of a new fleet of battery-powered trains that will “bring faster, more reliable journeys to the north”.

The 29 new trains, which will be run by TransPennine Express, are set to be built in Alstom’s Litchurch Lane works in Derby from 2028, which the government says will support 350 local jobs, as well as nearly 6,000 across the UK.

The new fleet will be made up of Adessia Stream trains, a battery-powered model that will be the first of its kind to be used for long-distance mainline journeys in the UK when it enters service in 2034.

Prime minister Andy Burnham, who uses trains

regularly to move between London and Manchester, highlighted the need for more reliable and efficient services, with the new trains pitched as making journeys between major northern cities shorter while increasing capacity on rail networks by 30% in the next decade.

Burnham said: “I’ve lost count of the number of times someone has stopped me to tell me about the train that never came. And when that happens, it means missed shifts, missed appointments and missed opportunities.

“Today that starts to change. These 29 new trains will bring faster, more reliable journeys to the north, and thousands of British jobs for the next generation.

“It’s exactly what Great

British Railways is all about – taking back control of the basics and getting Britain believing again.”

As well as speed and capacity, the new trains are set to run without emissions even on non-electrified stretches of the network, while also having more accessible step-free boarding and onboard wifi.

Transport secretary Heidi Alexander also praised the announcement, calling it a sign of how Great British Railways “will deliver better journeys for people while backing British business” and allowing passengers to “wave goodbye to overcrowded, delayed diesel trains and step onboard faster electric trains which are fit for the future”.

Primark to offer home delivery as it prepares to split from owner ABF

UK: Primark will offer home delivery in Britain for the first time, as the fast-fashion retailer prepares to spin off from its owner Associated British Foods (ABF).

The clothing chain, which already offers a click and collect service in the UK, has long avoided home delivery, arguing that its low prices made it too difficult to absorb the cost of packing and shipping orders.

However, the company disclosed on Thursday that it had acquired an automated fulfilment facility in Sheffield and would offer home

delivery “in the future”.

“Primark’s digital maturity, including the success of click and collect, and online market developments, mean there is now the opportunity for profitable growth through the home delivery channel,” it said in a statement.

The news comes as Primark prepares to split from its parent company ABF, the owner of Twinings tea and Kingsmill bread. The demerger, which is likely to complete in December 2027, is expected to create two new FTSE 100 companies, with analysts predicting that Primark could be valued at

as much as £9bn, and the food business £4bn.

The company told investors in an update on Thursday morning that it expected Primark’s sales to drop 3% in its quarter ended on 12 September, with the UK and Ireland up 0.4% but continental Europe down 4.3%.

George Weston, the chief executive of ABF, said Primark’s trading in Europe “remained challenging”, but the initial customer reaction to its “iconic value” campaign – in which it cut prices across hundreds of autumn and winter products – had been encouraging.

Pilot warned Amazon cargo plane going too fast before deadly crash, data shows

America: A pilot onboard an Amazon cargo plane that crashed in Miami, Florida, on Sunday noted it was going too fast before it overshot a runway, crashed into other vehicles and burst into flames, new flight data shows.

The investigation update from the US National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) said one pilot warned the other in the cockpit multiple times about “the aircraft’s excessive speed” but noted “there was not a consistent verbal response”, even as an altitude alarm sounded.

The Boeing 767-300’s landing speed was 158 knots (292km/h), which experts have noted was on the high end.

The NTSB is leading the investigation into the crash that killed five people and injured five more. The flight data released by NTSB included the plane’s speed, altitude, and other details



like flap deployment as it approached the runway. The update also included the summary of conversation between the two pilots.

The summary noted the pilot’s cautions about speed occurred “throughout the remainder of the recording” as did the inconsistent verbal response.

The update said there was an electronic “sink rate sink rate” callout during

the final minutes - an automated safety warning about the speed of descent. There was also an electronic “too low terrain” callout, another automated verbal warning that the plane was flying too close to the ground without being properly prepared for landing.

Aviation attorney Pablo Rojas told CBS News, the BBC’s US partner, that it was difficult to know with-

out the actual recording what the NTSB was referring to when it noted the inconsistent verbal response.

“But, it really confirms that this was, in a way, a doomed approach,” he said.

Rojas noted that flap deployment data included in NTSB’s update also could be an area of concern. The flaps, located on the back of the wings, are “part of what helps the plane kind of

slow down and gently approach a landing”, he said.

“The flap deployment here happened much later in the accident sequence,” Rojas said. “That’s maybe because the pilots were responding to the fact that they were going too fast.”

After it overshot the runway, the plane - Amazon Prime Air Flight 7598 - struck equipment on the ground, hit a white Ford van, then continued onward through a perimeter fence.

It then collided with a Toyota Corolla, before coming to rest about 1,300ft (394m) beyond the runway.

The five who died were part of a plane-cleaning crew in the van. Miami authorities on Tuesday identified them as Rolando Aleman Leon, 55; Yoel Rodriguez Naranjo, 53; Julio C Pineda, 75; Carlos Acosta Fajardo, 53; and Javierys Reyes Quevedo, 47.

Burnham must overhaul migration reforms, says TUC general secretary

UK: Andy Burnham must overhaul Shabana Mahmood’s migration reforms or risk overstretching social care and fueling far-right sentiment, the TUC general secretary, Paul Nowak, has warned.

Speaking ahead of the TUC’s annual congress in Brighton next week, Nowak welcomed the “sense of optimism” around Burnham’s fledgling government, but he urged the PM to act in a series of areas, including migration and the cost of living.

Burnham reappointed Mahmood as home secretary when he became prime minister in July. Her department is consulting on proposals that would force more than 300,000 low-paid workers to wait 15 years for the legal right to remain in the UK.

These include many carers who came to the UK to fill vacancies after the Covid pandemic, and were

told they could apply for indefinite leave to remain after five years.

“I think it is fundamentally unfair to change the rules when people came to this country with one set of expectations,” Nowak said. “I hope we can think again on that.”

He added: “There are 111,000 staff vacancies in social care at the moment. I want us to train up as many Brits as possible to do those jobs. But I suspect in a growing economy with an ageing population, we are still going to need people to come and live and work in the UK and work in sectors like social care.”

As well as criticising the backward-looking changes, Nowak also condemned the idea of applying a 10- or 15-year wait to many new arrivals, as the Home Office has proposed.

“Both my granddads came to this country after the second world war – one

came from Hong Kong, one came from Poland. Both raised their families here. The idea that you could be here for the next 10, 15 years and you’d still have no legal right to remain in the country ... how the hell do you plan? Can you buy a house? What does that mean for your employment? Do you have kids? Do you send them to school? I mean, it cuts across any effort to integrate at all.” Labour politicians supportive of the changes see them partly as a way of assuaging public concerns about migration, and neutralising the appeal of populist parties, including Nigel Farage’s Reform UK.

But Nowak suggested that by significantly lengthening the time before people can consider themselves settled in the UK, the approach could ultimately fuel far-right sentiment.

“I tell you where you

end up: you end up with Reform claiming that a woman who was born in Somalia and has lived here for most of her life and worked hard and contributed to our society, somehow isn’t fit to hold elected office in this country.”

Reform UK’s home affairs spokesperson, Zia Yusuf, was recently accused of “straightforward racism” by Labour after he suggested the party’s frontrunner to replace Keir Starmer in the Holborn and St Pancras by-election, former child refugee Sagal Abdi-Wali, was not British. Nowak acknowledged that many TUC members will have backed Reform in recent local elections, but suggested the party’s appeal may be waning.

“Our members are a broad cross section of the British public. Of course, large numbers of them voted Reform, like other people did. But certainly the evidence that we’re getting

fed back from unions is that just like the British public, the more they see of Nigel Farage, the less keen they are.” Nowak claimed there was a “direct line” from the rhetoric of Farage and his allies, to what he called the “proto-fascism” of the balaclava-clad vigilantes who blocked infrastructure in Dover and tried to stop migrants arriving in Portsmouth last weekend.

He suggested Labour should focus on cost-of-living issues to combat Reform’s populist appeal – including offering voters more help with rising energy bills.

“The most important thing that Andy Burnham can do is to deliver the change that people voted for back in July 2024. If people feel that the government is taking the stuff that matters to them seriously and is delivering on it, I think it cuts the legs from underneath that right-wing populism.”

Makeup artist Ambika offers advice on selecting the foundation for your skin



A foundation is essential for achieving the desired appearance and finish of your makeup. However, the primary challenge lies in selecting the appropriate foundation for your specific skin type. Options include liquid, powder, cream, and stick formulations, along with descriptors like matte, dewy, satin, full coverage, and skin-like finish. This leads to the most significant question: which foundation truly suits your skin type? However, the answer is not simply about choosing the shade that disappears into your skin. Your skin type, texture, concerns, lifestyle and the finish you prefer all play an important role in deciding whether a foundation will look smooth and natural or settle into fine lines, cling to dry patches or turn greasy within a few hours.If you have ever bought a foundation only to realise that it looks completely different after applying it, this guide can help you make a better choice.Celebrity Makeup Artist, Ambika Pillai tells HT Shop Now, “When buying the right foundation, there are two points to keep in mind”.

1) Find a product that suits your skin type
2) Match the colour tone to your skin tone.
Pillai further says that people choose foundation as a light cover to even their skin tone or to provide high coverage for dark circles, blemishes, and imperfections. You should look for a product that has a smooth, creamy texture that blends easily into the skin. “Foundation gives a natural second-skin look that is hydrating and nourishing, with long-lasting wear that stays intact throughout the day”, she says. Start by identifying your skin type
Before looking at shades and finishes, understand what your skin needs. Most people broadly fall into four categories: dry, oily, combination and normal skin. You may also have sensitive or acne-prone skin, which can influence the type of formula you choose. According to Pillai, “If you choose the wrong foundation formulation, then it’s simply a waste of money. is what you need; if your skin is normal, a cream foundation will work; and
If your skin often feels tight, flaky or rough, a foundation with a hydrating formula is usually a better choice. As per Pillai, “If your skin is dry, then liquid foundation with a higher moisturising quotient is what you need. She clarifies that people with dry skin should look for foundations described as hydrating, moisturising, luminous or dewy. Ingredients such as hyaluronic acid, glycerin and squalane can help give the skin a more comfortable, moisturised feel. Cream and liquid foundations can work particularly well for dry skin. A very matte, long-wearing formula may emphasise dry patches and make the complexion appear dull or uneven.Beauty tip: Prep your skin with a moisturiser before applying foundation, but give it a few minutes to settle. This can help prevent the base from looking patchy. Foundation for oily skin
Pillai tips: “If your skin is oily, then choose a more solid product, like a stick foundation that is designed to control excess oil”. You should try matte, oil-free and long-wearing formulas, which are generally worth considering. Powder foundations can also be useful if you prefer a lightweight base and want to reduce shine throughout the day.However, matte does not necessarily mean better. An extremely mattifying foundation can sometimes make the skin look flat or accentuate texture. A good approach is to choose a foundation that controls shine without making your complexion look overly dry.Beauty tip: Apply a lightweight moisturiser

first and use a small amount of foundation. Building coverage gradually often gives a more natural finish than applying a thick layer.Combination skin can be tricky because different areas of the face need different things. Your T-zone may become oily while your cheeks feel normal or slightly dry.A natural or satin-finish foundation can be a good middle ground. It offers some luminosity without making the skin look excessively shiny. You can also customise your base. Use a mattifying primer around the T-zone and a hydrating primer on drier areas before applying the same foundation across your face. If your skin is neither particularly oily nor dry, you have more flexibility when choosing a foundation.
You can experiment with liquid, cream, powder or stick formulas depending on the finish and coverage you want. A satin or natural finish is a good everyday option, while a dewy foundation can give the skin a fresh appearance. The key is to choose based on your makeup preferences, not to correct a particular skin concern.
Your skin type is only one part of the equation. Think about how you want your skin to look.Matte: Best if you prefer a shine-free, polished appearance. Dewy: Gives the complexion a fresh, luminous look and can work particularly well for dry skin.Satin: Sits between matte and dewy, making it a versatile choice for everyday makeup.Natural or skin-like: Designed to look closer to real skin rather than obviously made-up. This can be a great option if you prefer minimal makeup. Remember that your skin type does not dictate the finish you have to wear. If you have oily skin but love a radiant base, you can still choose a luminous foundation and control shine selectively with powder. Renowned beauty expert Pillai strongly cautions against the common pitfall of selecting an incorrect foundation formulation for your specific skin type, emphasizing that choosing the wrong consistency can single-handedly ruin your entire makeup application by causing the product to either excessively run, oil up, or severely crack throughout the day. When your foundation does not harmonize with your skin’s natural moisture barrier—such as using a heavy, dewy cream on active oily skin or a drying, ultra-matte liquid on flaky, dehydrated patches—the cosmetic layer fails to bond properly, resulting in a compromised finish that stubbornly refuses to last for more than a few hours. This mismatch not only robs your complexion of that coveted, seamless airbrushed appearance, but it also accentuates fine lines, pores, and texture rather than blurring them, turning what should have been a radiant look into a frustrating cosmetic malfunction. By carefully analyzing whether your skin demands an oil-controlling matte formula, a hydrating liquid, or a lightweight powder before purchasing, you can effortlessly bypass these common pitfalls, ensure long-lasting wearability from morning until night, and ultimately achieve that flawless, second-skin finish that makes all your hard work worthwhile. Pillai also says, “You are lucky if you find a foundation that is a correct colour match to your skin tone. Don’t hesitate to mix a couple of colours to get the correct colour tone”. One of the most common and easily avoidable skincare missteps that individuals frequently make when introducing a new cosmetic product, chemical exfoliant, or active serum into their daily regimen is performing a patch test on their inner arm or wrist, which can drastically skew your results and lead to unexpected irritation once applied to more delicate areas. Instead of relying on extremities that are routinely exposed to the elements, friction from clothing, and varying levels of sun exposure, you should always conduct your patch test directly along your jawline and extend it downward onto your neck. This specific anatomical placement is vital because most people harbor a significantly deeper, more resilient tan and thicker dermal layers on their arms compared to the sensitive, thinner skin of their face and neck, meaning an arm test might fail to register a mild allergic reaction or chemical sensitivity that would immediately flare up in your facial region. By testing on the jawline and neck, you accurately mirror the exact skin sensitivity, texture, and pigmentation of the area where the product will actually be used, ensuring that any potential redness, stinging, or contact dermatitis is caught safely before you commit to a full application.

How to Grow Broccoli at Home in Pots

As skyrocketing vegetable prices continue to squeeze household budgets across the country, an increasing number of urban and suburban residents are turning to creative home cultivation, transforming available small spaces like sunny balconies, open terraces, and compact courtyards into thriving, productive kitchen gardens that guarantee a fresh and affordable harvest. Among the many nutrient-dense crops suited for this micro-farming trend, broccoli stands out as an exceptionally rewarding choice, proving that you do not need a sprawling backyard to grow large, cruciferous vegetables. By utilizing a sufficiently deep container—typically one that holds at least five gallons of rich, well-draining potting mix—and placing it in a location that receives at least six hours of direct daily sunlight, aspiring gardeners can easily cultivate healthy broccoli plants right at home. While broccoli does demand consistent moisture, a steady feeding schedule with organic fertilizer, and protection against common pests like aphids during its cooler growing seasons, the effort yields an impressive return in the form of vitamin-packed, pesticide-free heads and tender side shoots. Embracing this rewarding practice not only helps cushion the blow of volatile grocery store inflation but also fosters a deeper, more sustainable connection to your own food supply, all while turning underutilized outdoor spaces into lush, green sanctuaries of self-sufficiency.



When embarking on your urban gardening journey to cultivate delicious and nutrient-rich broccoli at home, selecting the proper container is perhaps the most critical foundational step to ensure a bountiful and healthy harvest, as broccoli plants possess a surprisingly robust, sprawling root system that desperately requires adequate physical space to expand, anchor, and forage for vital nutrients. Rather than confining these ambitious plants to cramped quarters that can stunt their development, prematurely trigger bolting, or make them far more susceptible to drought and root rot, you must intentionally seek out and choose a substantially sized pot that measures at least 12 to 15 inches both in breadth and in depth, effectively providing a generous volume of soil to accommodate their vigorous growth. Furthermore, this spacious container should always feature reliable, unobstructed drainage holes at the bottom to prevent water stagnation, allowing you to fill it with a rich, well-aerated, and nutrient-dense organ-

ic potting mix that retains just the right amount of moisture while encouraging optimal root aeration. By investing this initial care into choosing the ideal pot dimensions, you establish a thriving subterranean environment where your broccoli can develop strong, deep-seated foundations, ultimately setting the stage for the plant to push upward with vigor, withstand varying weather conditions, and reward your micro-farming efforts with heavy, picture-perfect heads of fresh greens.Make Sure You Have Enough Drainage: Broccoli roots might be harmed by wet soil. Select a container that has enough drainage holes to let extra water out. You can use pots made of cement, clay, or plastic. Prepare Nutrient-Rich Soil: Add loose, well-draining, nutritious soil to the container. A healthy growth medium gives the plant the nutrients it needs to grow and promotes root development.
Locate a Sunny Spot: Set the pot where the plant gets four to five hours of direct sunlight each day. A well-lit terrace or balcony is ideal, but keep it from getting too hot. Harvest at the Appropriate Time: The plant’s center progressively produces the tasty green head. When it seems firm and fully grown but before its little flower buds open, harvest it. Growing your own broccoli can help you become less reliant on produce from the supermarket. Additionally, it supplements a varied, well-balanced diet with fibre, vitamin C, vitamin K, and folate.

Top Pedicure and Manicure Kits

Keep your hands and feet groomed at home with these affordable manicure and pedicure kits featuring tools, scrubs, cleansers and moisturising care.
A salon manicure or pedicure can be relaxing, but regular appointments can quickly add up. An at-home kit can be a more convenient option when you want to tidy your nails, soften rough skin or give your hands and feet some basic grooming without stepping out.
The options below cover both treatment-based kits and tool-focused sets. Prices shown on Amazon India can change with ongoing offers. The selection follows the same quick-picks, comparison, product details and buying-considerations format as the supplied sample.
Mintree Tox Detox Manicure-Pedicure Kit: Best overall: The Mintree Tox Detox kit is aimed at those who want more than just nail-trimming tools. The kit is positioned as a home-spa treatment for hands and feet, with cleansing, manicure and pedicure steps designed to help refresh and groom the skin. It makes sense for someone looking for a more complete pampering routine rather than a basic grooming set. Mintree’s manicure and pedicure kits are also available in several step-based variants, including detox and tan-fading options.
VLCC Pedicure-Manicure Hand & Foot Kit: Best value for money: VLCC’s kit is a practical choice if you want several basic hand and foot-care products in one package. The Amazon listing includes a combination of oil, cleanser, scrub, cream and anti-tan care, making it suitable for a straightforward manicure and pedicure routine. The brand currently lists a 210g version of its Pedicure-Manicure Hand & Foot Kit on its website, showing that the product is intended specifically for hand and foot care.
Beauté Secrets 18-Piece Manicure Kit: Best for grooming tools: If your priority is keeping a set of manicure and pedicure tools ready for regular use, this Beauté Secrets kit is worth considering. The 18-piece set is designed around nail, cuticle, hand and foot grooming rather than creams or treatment products.
The brand says the tools use 420 stainless steel and the set includes items such as nail and toenail clippers, cuticle tools, nail files and pedicure knives. It also comes with a portable case, which makes storage easier. AIRSEE 8-in-1 Professional Manicure & Pedicure Kit: Best for travel: The AIRSEE kit is the most compact option among these picks and is designed around essential grooming tools. Its small case makes it convenient to keep in a handbag, suitcase or travel kit without taking up much room.
At Rs 277 on Amazon India, it also offers one of the biggest discounts in this roundup. For someone who mainly needs nail clippers and basic grooming tools while travelling, it is



an inexpensive option.
Vedic Valley Manicure Pedicure Kit: Best budget care kit: The Vedic Valley kit is the most affordable treatment-focused option here. The Amazon listing describes a routine involving soak, wash, de-tan scrub, foot-peeling mask and cream, making it more focused on skin care than nail tools. Vedic Valley also sells several five-step manicure-pedicure variants, including lavender and chamomile and musk melon versions, showing the brand’s focus on multi-step at-home mani-pedi treatments. How we chose these manicure and pedicure kits
In our rigorous and comprehensive evaluation process, we meticulously compared a diverse array of manicure and pedicure kits by assessing several critical metrics, including their specific intended use, the total number and variety of products or tools included, their overall portability, brand reputation, aggregated customer ratings, and price points. Special preference was deliberately given to options that provided a transparent and unambiguous use case, ensuring that whether a consumer required an all-inclusive, multi-step treatment routine, a set of durable, professional-grade reusable grooming tools, or a streamlined, compact travel-friendly set for maintenance on the go, their distinct needs would be effortlessly met. Rather than treating every single manicure and pedicure product on the market as interchangeable commodities, our final curated selection consciously embraces a wide spectrum of kit types, ranging from minimalist emergency pouches to comprehensive salon-quality arsenals. This thoughtful approach guarantees that users of all experience levels—from busy travelers seeking convenience to meticulous self-care enthusiasts looking for deep restorative treatments—can easily identify a tailored solution that aligns precisely with their daily lifestyle, budget, and grooming expectations. Things to consider before buying a manicure and pedicure kit
First, decide whether you want treatment products or grooming tools. A skincare-based kit can include scrubs, creams, cleansers and masks,

while a tool kit gives you clippers, files and cuticle instruments that can be reused. If you want both, you may need to buy the two separately.
Also check what is actually included before ordering. A low-priced kit may look like a complete manicure-pedicure solution but could contain only a handful of tools or a small quantity of treatment products. For travel, a compact case matters, while home users may benefit more from a larger selection of tools.
Maintaining proper hygiene is an absolute cornerstone of any safe and effective at-home manicure or pedicure routine, ensuring that your hands and feet remain not only aesthetically pleasing but also thoroughly protected against unwanted bacterial, fungal, or viral infections. Whenever you finish using your grooming kit, it is vital to meticulously wash all reusable instruments with warm, soapy water, followed by a thorough disinfecting wipe-down using rubbing alcohol to eliminate any lingering pathogens. Once cleaned, these tools must be dried completely before being stored in a clean, dry case to prevent rust and microbial growth.
Furthermore, you should strictly avoid sharing sharp implements—such as cuticle nippers, nail clippers, and metal pushers—with family members or friends unless they have been professionally sterilized between uses, as sharing these tools can easily transfer bloodborne pathogens or stubborn fungal spores. It is equally important to listen to your body and exercise caution if your skin is compromised; should you notice any open cuts, active irritation, inflammation, or pre-existing skin and nail conditions like athlete’s foot or paronychia, you should completely bypass aggressive trimming, heavy buffing, or deep exfoliation until the area has fully healed. By proactively adopting these rigorous sanitation habits and treating your skin with gentle care, you create a safe barrier against infection, preserve the longevity of your high-quality tools, and ultimately enjoy a salon-quality pampering experience right in the comfort of your own home with complete peace of mind.

Create a cozy, well-balanced look by styling your living room rug

Makeover your living area with these three simple rug style ideas. Learn how the right proportions, colors, and textures can create a space that is harmonious, cozy, and beautifully cohesive. Describe Your Living Area
In addition to decorating your floor, a well-placed rug defines the seating area visually, unifies furniture, and establishes balance. Your living area is instantly more finished, welcoming, and well-designed.
Achieving a truly unified, harmonious interior design scheme relies heavily on selecting the exact right rug size, as an improperly proportioned floor covering can instantly chop up a room and make it feel disjointed, whereas a well-chosen rug acts as the ultimate visual anchor that seamlessly pulls all your decorative elements together. To successfully connect your floating furniture pieces and create the optical illusion of a much wider, more expansive, and perfectly balanced space, the front legs of your sofa and armchairs should ide-



ally rest comfortably on top of the rug, bridging the gap between independent seating units and establishing a cohesive conversation area. Building upon this foundational layout, you must then thoughtfully coordinate your colors by drawing inspiration from your existing upholstery, artwork, and architectural details, ensuring that your rug’s palette complements rather than competes with the rest of the room. By carefully marrying the correct rug dimensions with a harmonious, intentional color scheme, you effortlessly eradicate visual chaos and foster a serene, upscale environment where every single design choice works in absolute concert to make your

living space feel both larger and intimately welcoming. Select a rug that goes well with the hues of your pillows, drapes, artwork, or décor. A room can be made visually harmonious without feeling excessively matched or overpowering by repeating two or three accent shades. Add Depth with Texture
Transforming your living room into a masterclass of interior design begins with the intentional and deliberate arrangement of your furniture, anchoring the entire seating group around a stunning area rug that is thoughtfully positioned with a uniform, visible border of bare flooring peeking out all around its perimeter to

frame the space with architectural precision. Rather than pushing every single sofa and armchair awkwardly against the walls or letting pieces float aimlessly in a chaotic sea of floor space, pulling your furniture slightly inward—either resting the front legs comfortably on the rug or centering them entirely upon it—creates an intimate, conversational zone that invites connection and warmth. This meticulous balance of negative and positive space, combined with the grounding texture of a well-proportioned rug, works in absolute harmony to eliminate visual clutter and establish a natural sense of flow throughout the room. Ultimately, it is these few deliberate stylistic decisions and careful measurements that effortlessly elevate a disjointed room into a polished, cohesive sanctuary, successfully blending high-end sophistication with an inviting, deeply cozy atmosphere that makes the entire home feel thoughtfully curated, perfectly proportioned, and harmoniously unified.

The toll of fame: Sharon Stone looks back at basic instinct



Los Angeles : Sharon Stone recently spoke about the lasting impact of her famous role in Basic Instinct. The 1992 erotic thriller propelled her to global fame as Catherine Tramell. However, stepping into the mind of such a dark character brought unexpected dangers into her personal life.

During an appearance on Mayim Bialik’s Breakdown podcast, Stone recalled feeling terrified while exploring that level of darkness. She explained that she was young and inexperienced at the time. She did not know how to separate her core self from the role she played. Instead of maintaining

boundaries, she absorbed the intensity of the character completely. Opening those dark doors exposed her to real threats. Dangerous individuals in the film industry assumed she was like her onscreen persona. They began entering her life, falsely believing she shared their dark tendencies. Others readily believed negative rumors about her, assuming she could only play such a role if she truly possessed those traits.

Overcoming these experiences required her to recognize the thin line between acting and reality. Stone has now learned how to protect her core self while taking on complex roles. Her reflection offers a rare glimpse into the hidden psychological toll of Hollywood success.

Mumbai : For nearly two decades, Dhirendra Mulkalwar worked behind the scenes, composing for independent projects, creating jingles and contributing as a music producer to films including Uri: The Surgical Strike, Toilet: Ek Prem Katha and Article 15. But his first opportunity to independently shoulder the music of an entire feature film arrived with a project that already had a deeply personal connection for him.

Hanuman Ansh, director Vishal Chaturvedi’s film based on the spiritual life of Neem Karoli Baba, gave Dhirendra his first solo credit as a Music Director. He created the film’s background score and also composed Siyavar Ramchandra Ki Jai, a track that was never originally

Neem Karoli baba’s impact on hanuman ansh composer Dhirendra Mulkalwar



conceived as a conventional song. In an exclusive conversation with News18 Showsha, Dhirendra reveals that he had followed Neem Karoli Baba for years before Hanuman Ansh came his way. In fact, only months before Vishal approached him for the film, the composer had finally visited Kainchi Dham after trying to make the journey for six or seven years.

Dhirendra traces his association with Hanuman Ansh to a visit he had wanted to make for years. Despite repeatedly planning to visit Kainchi Dham, something or the other would prevent the trip. That changed last April. “I can only describe it as destiny. For the last six or seven years, I had been praying for an opportunity to visit Kainchi Dham and seek Babaji’s blessings,

but for one reason or another, it simply never happened,” he recalls. “Then, last year in April, I finally had the good fortune of visiting Kainchi Dham. And within just two or three months of that visit, Vishal ji called me.”

At the time, Vishal himself was observing a 43-day spiritual practice that involved reciting the Hanuman Chalisa for the film. Dhirendra says he accepted the offer almost immediately, without initially telling the director that he had recently visited Kainchi Dham. “So, when he offered me the film, I agreed within a fraction of a second. I didn’t even have to think about it,” he says.

“Later, I told him, ‘You probably won’t believe this, but I was at Kainchi Dham just two or three months

ago.” Neither knew about the other’s connection to Neem Karoli Baba. Vishal did not know Dhirendra had been following Babaji for years, while Dhirendra had no idea that Vishal was developing a film around his life. “So, getting this film itself felt like a miracle. It genuinely felt as though it had already been written somewhere that this was supposed to happen,” he adds.

After years of waiting for his first independent feature-film score, Dhirendra ultimately found it in a film about the spiritual figure he had followed since around 2010. From finally reaching Kainchi Dham to finding Hanuman Ansh’s principal melody only after months of struggle, the composer views the project through a deeply personal prism.

Seyon filming swiftly progresses: sivakarthikeyan and team wrap schedule two

Chennai : Kamal Haasan’s Raaj Kamal Films International has announced the completion of the second schedule of its upcoming Tamil film Seyon, starring Sivakarthikeyan in the lead. The production house shared the update on Friday, accompanying the announcement with a behind-the-scenes video that offers a peek at the world and characters of the much-awaited project.

“Stage two completed in the victorious journey of valour,” the banner announced, marking another milestone in the film’s production. While the makers have continued to keep the plot under wraps, the new BTS footage gives audiences a glimpse into the film’s intriguing setting and Siv-

akarthikeyan’s character. Seyon marks a reunion for Sivakarthikeyan and filmmaker Sivakumar Murugesan, who made his directorial debut with this year’s Thaaai Kizhavi. The collaboration also brings Sivakumar back together with Sivakarthikeyan, who produced Thaaai Kizhavi. For Sivakarthikeyan, the film is another association with Kamal Haasan after their successful collaboration on Amaran, which was produced by Kamal Haasan’s Raaj Kamal Films International. The makers have revealed very little about Seyon so far, making the glimpses from the promotional material particularly intriguing. A recently released video appears to establish a fascinating dynamic

between Sivakarthikeyan’s character and the people of a village. In the footage, the villagers are seen treating him as a divine figure, suggesting that the film could explore themes of faith, power and mythology.

However, the exact nature of Sivakarthikeyan’s character and the circumstances surrounding the village remain unknown. The film’s title itself has also sparked curiosity, with the makers yet to offer a detailed explanation of its significance within the story. Seyon has assembled an interesting ensemble around its leading man. Bhagyashri Borse, Raj B Shetty and Seeman feature in important roles, while Bala Saravanan, Singampuli and Aruldoss are also part of

the cast. Behind the camera, the film boasts a strong technical team, with Santhosh Narayanan composing the music and Anbariv handling the action choreography. Vidhu Ayyanna is the cinematographer, San Lokesh is the editor and Arun Venjaramoodu serves as production designer.

Seyon arrives at an interesting point in Sivakarthikeyan’s career. The actor was most recently seen in Parasakthi, directed by Sudha Kongara. The film received a mixed response from critics and audiences. According to Sacnilk, Parasakthi recorded a worldwide gross of approximately Rs 85 crore, although several other reports claimed that the film had crossed the Rs 100 crore mark.

Priyanka Chopra’s seethaiya video delivers upbeat life advice

Mumbai : Bollywood actress Priyanka Chopra has once again caught the attention of social media users with an interesting Instagram post. The actress shared a video from the Telugu movie Seethayya, featuring actor Hari Krishna. Along with the video, she posted a simple but meaningful message about life, arguments and moving forward.

The video carries the message that life is too short to spend time arguing with others. Instead of getting into unnecessary fights or debates, people should choose peace and move on. Priyanka’s post quickly became a talking point among her followers. The message shared by Priyanka is simple, but it has a strong meaning. In everyday life, people often spend a lot of time arguing over small issues. Her post reminds people that not every argument needs a response. Sometimes, walking away and moving forward can be the better choice. The video from Seethayya has



also attracted attention because of its old-school Telugu cinema feel. Hari Krishna was a popular actor in Telugu cinema, and clips from his movies continue to be remembered by fans. Priyanka sharing a scene from the film

made the post even more interesting for Telugu movie lovers.

On the work front,, Priyanka Chopra is pinning hopes on her big ticket entertainer Varanasi to win the love of Telugu audience world over.

Amar Upadhyay on returning as Mihir



Mumbai : Actor Amar Upadhyay, who is set to return in the 2nd season of the show ‘Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi’, has shared his thoughts on the same, calling it a homecoming.

The actor is set to return as his character Mihir Virani. The makers of the show unveiled a new promo confirming his return. Talking about the same, the actor shared, “Mihir mere liye sirf ek character nahi hai. He has been such a huge part of my journey, and the love audiences have given him over the years is something I have always carried with me. There has been so much chatter around whether Mihir is coming back. My fans have been eagerly waiting for my return and haven’t stopped asking when I would be back on the show. Honestly, seeing their excitement has made this homecoming even more special.”

“Shantiniketan mein wapasa aana, Tulsi aur Virani parivar ke beech Mihir bankar khade hona, brings back so many memories. It genuinely feels like coming home. But a lot has happened, equations have changed, and Mihir is returning to a family that has been through its own journey. I’m excited to see how audiences react when he finally walks back into their lives,” he added. With Ganesh Chaturthi around the corner, the timing makes the homecoming even more special.

SidNaaz memories leave mahhi vij emotional on Bigg Boss 20

Mumbai : Television actress and Bigg Boss 20 contestant Mahhi Vij was left visibly emotional after the show took viewers on a nostalgic journey through it’s two decades of existence.

As part of the special segment celebrating 20 years of Bigg Boss, an audio-visual montage featured highlights from Season 1 to Season 19, taking BB 20 contestants through some of the most memorable moments and houses from the show’s journey. The AV captured the many shades of the reality show, from friendships and love stories to rivalries, fights, laughter, heartbreak and emotional farewells.

One of the most emotional portions came when visuals



of late actor Sidharth Shukla and his bond with actress Shehnaaz Gill were shown as part of the friendship and love segment. Watching the visuals, Mahhi was unable to hold back her emotions. Tears were seen rolling down her cheeks as she watched Sidharth on screen. The actress appeared to be deeply moved by the memories of the late actor and was

seen struggling to contain her tears. For the uninitiated, Sidharth Shukla, who participated in Bigg Boss 13, remains one of the most remembered contestants in the history of the show. His strong personality along with his equation with Shehnaaz Gill on the show went on to become one of the most talked-about aspects of the season.

Paresh Rawal reacts to national film awards moving to Gujarat

Mumbai : Actor Paresh Rawal defended Gujarat hosting the 72nd National Film Awards ceremony, saying Gujarat is an integral part of India and there is nothing wrong with holding major national events there.

While talking to ANI, Paresh Rawal said, “Is Gujarat in Bangladesh or Pakistan? It is also a part of our own country. Why shouldn’t this event be held in Gujarat? Events should be held in Gujarat too... I say such events should take place in every state. There is nothing wrong with that...” The 72nd edition of the National Film Awards will be held in Kevadia, Gujarat, instead of the national capital, where the prestigious ceremony has



traditionally taken place for several years. The ceremony is scheduled to be held on September 22. In a major policy initiative, the Ministry said that it has been decided to hold the National Film Awards in various parts of the country, taking it beyond the National Capital. The ceremony at Ekta

Nagar this year will bring together cinematic talent from across India and embody the spirit of ‘Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat’ (One India, Best India).

The 72nd edition of the National Film Awards will be held in Kevadia, Gujarat. Instituted in 1954, the National

Film Awards are the country’s most prestigious honours for excellence in cinema. Over seven decades, the Awards have recognised outstanding creative and technical achievements across feature films, non-feature films and writing on cinema, while reflecting the rich linguistic, cultural and regional diversity of Indian filmmaking. The ceremony is scheduled to be held on September 22. Further details regarding the event are awaited. At the 72nd National Film Awards, Kartik Aaryan and Mammootty were jointly honoured with the Best Actor in a Leading Role award for their performances in ‘Chandu Champion’ and ‘Bramayugam’, respectively.’

Ghamasaan review: tense Pratik-Arshad thriller ends too soon

Mumbai : Tigmanshu Dhulia returns to the Hindi heartland with Ghamasaan, a gritty crime drama that pits Pratik Gandhi’s IPS officer against Arshad Warsi’s feared dacoit. Streaming on ZEE5, the film revives the filmmaker’s trademark fascination with dusty landscapes and stories rooted in the hinterland. But does this face-off between cop and outlaw rise above the familiar dacoit-drama template?

The film stars Pratik Gandhi as IPS officer Aditya Singh and Arshad Warsi as Maharaj, the outlaw who has established an iron grip over villages in Bundelkhand. Aditya is tasked with bringing Maharaj down, but the mission is not as straightforward, as the dacoit hasn’t left his forest residence in decades, so no one outside

knows what he looks like. The film begins with a promising strategy. Dhulia uses secondary characters to establish the setting. Arshad Warsi does not appear for the first 11 minutes of the film. Instead, the film uses those opening minutes to establish the fear surrounding Warsi’s character through the people who have encountered him, heard of him or live under his influence.

Pratik Gandhi is also introduced much later, and the film uses nearly an hour to set up the premise. While this wait initially feels worth it, it becomes a test of patience until the pace picks up beyond the hour mark. What follows is a battle of strategy and gunpowder to see who will win between cop and dacoit. Tigmanshu Dhulia has spent much of his career

exploring men shaped by power, violence and circumstance. From Haasil and Paan Singh Tomar to the Saheb, Biwi Aur Gangster franchise, his strongest films have often explored the grey areas between right and wrong. In Ghamasaan, however, there is no room for ambiguity.

Warsi’s Maharaj, though introduced with great promise, feels like a surface-level character. Much attention has been paid to establishing terror, but the character has no background. He is outright wrong and kills at the blink of an eye, but we don’t know what corrupted him. This is where Dhulia slightly falters. Though Warsi tries his best to pivot, his acting prowess only takes the character so far. Meanwhile, Gandhi’s Aditya is the antithesis of the swaggering, invincible cop



we have become accustomed to seeing in mainstream cinema. His strength comes from strategy and persistence rather than muscles and bravado. Gandhi is particularly well suited to this kind of material. The actor has repeatedly demonstrated an ability to make restrained characters compelling.

Aditya lets him play a protagonist whose intensity comes from determination

rather than constant theatrics. But Gandhi does become unintentionally one-dimensional in some scenes. Aditya sometimes falls flat and even seems uninteresting due to his tonality. However, the choice to let the character be restrained in today’s time is much appreciated. Interestingly, neither Warsi nor Gandhi outshines the other. This is the most effective aspect of the performances.

There is no obvious attempt to turn Ghamasaan into a star-versus-star showcase. Gandhi and Warsi function as parts of the same cinematic world rather than performers competing for the biggest moment.

The supporting cast also contributes to the larger ecosystem instead of feeling like a collection of characters waiting for their individual showpieces. A sense of cohesion and raw visual texture lends an old-school vibe to the film. This is how Ghamasaan shows a certain confidence in its storytelling. It trusts the audience to understand what is being suggested rather than spelling everything out. The same approach is visible in the film’s handling of caste politics. Ghamasaan places caste within the social and political

landscape of its story as an obvious marker of the territory.

But there is a fine line between confidence and overconfidence. The Pratik Gandhi-Arshad Warsi pairing is unusual enough to pique one’s interest. The film even builds to a promising confrontation, but just as the conflict gets dangerously delicious, the film climaxes too soon. The film’s biggest question, then, is not whether Dhulia knows how to make a gritty crime drama. He clearly does. It is whether Ghamasaan brings enough new material to the genre. The Hindi film industry has a long relationship with dacoit dramas, particularly stories set in the ravines of central India. Dhulia himself has already explored this with Paan Singh Tomar.

“You Took Credit For DRS” is Vaibhav Sooryavanshi’s amazing response to Ishan Kishan’s trolling

Bengaluru: East Zone won the Duleep Trophy 2026–2027 with Ishan Kishan as captain. Vaibhav Sooryavanshi was another player who continued to make headlines, even though Ishan, who scored over 350 runs in the final’s two innings, was named Player of the Match. The Duleep Trophy campaign kept the 15-year-old in the limelight for both his batting and the leadership position that the team management had given him, even if he was unable to give his finest performance in the final. While Sooryavanshi was the designated vice-captain for East Zone, he had to step into Ishan’s shoes when the wicketkeeper-batter left the field due to an injury.

It was during this period that Sooryavanshi had his first taste of making successful DRS calls. Later in the final, even when Ishan was leading the side on the field, Sooryavanshi remained a key figure in deciding whether to take a review. In the final between East Zone and South Zone, Sooryavanshi became a topic of social media discussion after a viral clip showed the teenage prodigy persuading Ishan to take a review, which ultimately proved to be the correct decision. However, in a subsequent video shared by the BCCI, Ishan playfully stated that Sooryavanshi took credit for reviews he had already intended to take.



“My goodness! Vaibhav is the one! Toh bohota acche se isne woh kaarya nibhaya hai. I am very happy. (So he played that role really well. I’m very happy),” the East Zone skipper added. Sooryavanshi was quick with a witty retort. Reminding his captain of the semi-final when Ishan went off with an injury, the 15-year-old highlighted who had stepped up to make the big tactical calls. Ishan praised the youngster’s proactive mindset and suggested he possesses natural leadership qualities. “Haan, that was Vaibhav himself! Yes. Future captain, maybe? Let’s see how it goes,” he said. “But it’s very

good to have him in the team because, you know, more than a very good player, he’s a very nice boy who takes care of each and every one in the team, whether it’s a junior player or senior... Achha, junior toh tu hi hua, sorry, sorry. (Oh, you’re the junior here, sorry, sorry!) And that is one quality which I love about him. And hopefully, he’ll be more dangerous than what he is today. I think it’s not going to be his first or the last. I think he’s gonna play many more like this, and he’ll keep performing the way he’s doing right now,” Ishan concluded as the light-hearted exchange wrapped up.

Investment Push and Motor Sports City Plan on the Agenda for Vijay’s Visit to the UK



Chennai, Sep 11: Using the recently operationalized India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement, or CETA, to draw in new British investment and strengthen current industrial ties, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Vijay’s first overseas trip is taking an investment-heavy turn in Britain. Beyond the economic pitch, however, the visit also has a sports and automotive focus. As Tamil Nadu advances its goal for a world-class Motor Sports City, it hopes to learn from Britain’s motor racing infrastructure. According to the Tamil Nadu government, the state’s manufacturing and services sectors now have more opportunities thanks to CETA, which went into effect on July 15. Among the industries found to be well-positioned to take advantage of the growing UK market are textiles and apparel, leather and footwear, automotive components, engineering products, and electronics. The government stated in a statement that the deal opens doors for additional investments, joint ventures, and technological cooperation in addition to

exports. The government is also pitching Tamil Nadu’s existing British industrial footprint as a foundation for the next phase of investment. British companies have had a long presence in Tamil Nadu across engineering, financial services and technology, with several operating manufacturing facilities and global capability centres in the state. The government said Vijay’s UK visit is aimed at strengthening these existing relationships, expanding the operations of companies already present in Tamil Nadu and attracting fresh investments in advanced manufacturing, automobiles and electric vehicles, electronics and global capability centres. The pitch comes after the state government claimed to have signed MoUs for investments worth more than Rs 1 lakh crore within the first 100 days of the Vijay government, including a major focus on electric vehicle manufacturing. The UK’s motor racing ecosystem is another key component of Vijay’s visit - and the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister is set to do more than simply tour a

racing facility.

Vijay will wave the green flag to officially start the Silverstone round of the Le Mans Cup this weekend, joining the 44-car grid at the iconic British circuit. The Le Mans Cup, in a post on X, announced that a “special guest” would wave the green flag at Silverstone, identifying Vijay as the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu and saying he would be joining the event to support Indian drivers competing in the UK. The appearance comes as Tamil Nadu moves ahead with its plan to establish a world-class Motor Sports City, building on the state’s existing automobile and electric vehicle manufacturing ecosystem. Vijay is also scheduled to study Silverstone’s track design, safety systems and the commercial operation of such a facility. The government says the visit will provide an opportunity to examine the potential for motor sports infrastructure, sports tourism and associated specialist automotive industries. The idea is to look beyond a racing track - and study how a major motor sports facility can operate as a commercially viable ecosystem linked to automobile manufacturing, technology, entertainment and tourism. With the state’s investment pitch in Britain coinciding with an attempt to understand how the UK’s well-established motor racing environment may be tailored to Tamil Nadu’s automotive capabilities, the move adds a sports element to Vijay’s first international trip as Chief Minister. Sports Development Minister Aadhav Arjuna, SDAT Member Secretary Meghanath Reddy, and CEO of Guidance Tamil Nadu Deepak Jacob are among Vijay’s entourage.

A man in Nagpur flees with Rs 4 lakh after throwing chili powder at bank employees

Nagpur, Sep 11: An SBI bank office in Nagpur, Maharashtra, experienced panic and bewilderment when a man started hurling red chili powder at staff members, rendering them blind and forcing them to flee for their lives. The guy took Rs 4 lakh in cash from the counter and ran away while bank employees grappled amid the mayhem. But within 30 minutes, police found him and retrieved the full sum. The event happened at the State Bank of India (SBI) branch in Nagpur on Thursday at about 6:00 p.m. Information claims that when a guy entered the bank pretending to be a regular client, work at the branch was going as usual and staff members were occupied with their tasks. Before anybody could react, he approached the cash counter, took out the red chili powder that was concealed on him, and flung it straight into the bank employees’ eyes. The culprit is seen hurling red chili powder at bank personnel in the CCTV clip while donning a red kurta and black pajamas. In one of the films, a man with his face completely concealed is seen fleeing behind two or three employees as they flee for their lives. The sudden attack triggered panic inside the bank. Taking advantage of the situation and the staff’s helplessness, the accused quickly picked up Rs 4 lakh in cash from the counter and ran out of the bank. Some bank employees and a security guard tried to chase him despite the danger, but the accused managed to escape by taking advantage of the crowded area. Bank officials immediately informed the local police station about the robbery.

In the temple, Suwendu Adhikari consumes fish The BJP says the non-vegetarian controversy must end

Kolkata, Sep 11: at other regions of the nation, eating non-vegetarian cuisine at a temple would make religious leaders angry, and steps would be made to switch to a more socially acceptable diet that does not include meat and eggs. That is nothing more than a routine event at certain temples in West Bengal. It’s customary. However, when Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari had fish at Kolkata’s centuries-old Kalighat temple, attention was drawn to his comments, which have reverberated across the city for the last week. Bengali Hindus who eat non-vegetarian food during Durga Puja were chastised by a Hindu priest. Adhikari visited Kalighat last evening on the occasion of Kaushiki Amavasya, considered auspicious by Shakta Hindus. A video showed him sitting on the floor and having the bhog that comprised a massive fish head, iconic to the Kalighat bhog platter. Besides, there was fried fish and basanti pulao (yellow rice). Kalighat has a tradition of offering fish and sacrificial goat meat to Kali, the presiding deity. The offering is then consumed by devotees. Often criticised for importing vegetarian dietary habits from northern states to a rather meat-eating Bengal, the BJP has time and again rejected such narratives. Taking a cue from Adhikari’s video, the ruling party suggested that it should end the veg-non-veg debate. “Let the controversy end where it should. At Kalighat, CM @SuwenduWB takes part in Maa Kali’s traditional Fish Bhog - respecting Bengal’s faith, traditions, and way of life. Under his leadership, the BJP will always stand firmly for Bengal’s interests, Bengal’s traditions, and what is right for Bengal,” said BJP spokesperson Pradeep Bhandari. The controversy stems from an appeal by Bageshwar Dham head priest Dharendra Shastri, also known as Bageshwar Baba, to Bengali Hindus to shun non-veg food during Durga Puja. He also called Bengali Hindus who consume non-veg during Durga Puja a “pa-



khandi” (hypocrite). “Who wants the sale of non-vegetarian food to stop? Please indicate this by turning on the lights of your mobile phones. This message needs to reach every person in West Bengal, and the government needs to be made aware of this issue. Meat and liquor shops in West Bengal should remain closed during Durga Puja,” Shastri said. This infuriated the community that is known not just for consuming non-veg during Puja but also for offering it to the deity. The BJP, however, was quick in balancing public and ideological sentiments. While Adhikari laid out a red carpet for Shastri, welcomed him with much fanfare, and urged him to open a centre in Bengal, his party asserted no godman can decide people’s dietary choices. “Bageshwar Baba comes from another ‘dunia’. Bageshwar Baba has no right to decide what the people of Bengal will eat. Bengalis will eat fish and meat. Vivekananda has spoken in favour of Bengalis consuming meat and fish,” said the BJP’s Bengal chief Samik Bhattacharya. He ordered the arrest of those who burnt Bageshwar Baba’s photos during protests. But he also responded to Bageshwar Baba’s appeal with the most Bengali answer: He went and consumed non-veg in the temple, from the offer-

ing made to the deity. Asked later about Shastri’s remark, he said he was entitled to his personal opinion, and people can either accept or reject it. “I am a Sanatani Hindu. On Mahashatami, when I worship Maa Durga, I consume sattvik food. During Kartik month also, I consume sattvik food. At the same time, I consume non-vegetarian food such as goat meat offered to Maa Kali. Today, the bhog offered at the temple had fish head, fried fish, and basanti pulao. I ate that,” he said. Fish is a staple in the regular Bengali diet. With cultural habits intertwining with religious practices in the eastern stretches of India, fish has emerged as an important offering in the Shakta traditions practised in this part of the country. At Kalighat, for instance, fish and sacrificial goat meat are both offered to Kali. Food during Durga Puja, the biggest festival in this part of the country, is a non-vegetarian affair. And it’s not looked down upon, but rather celebrated. Some customs include providing non-vegetarian food to deities as part of ceremonies, while others uphold vegetarian dietary regulations. However, there aren’t many people who follow similar traditions in the north or west, which is why dietary preferences like these still arouse interest and controversy.

Al-Nassr, led by Cristiano Ronaldo, starts their Asian Champions League bid as Saudi clubs aim for their third consecutive championship



Riyadh: What could be Cristiano Ronaldo’s last chance to win a first Asian Champions League title for his Saudi club will get underway next week. Ronaldo’s Al-Nassr is one of five Saudi Pro League teams in the tournament. Combined, they’ve spent more than \$2 billion on foreign players since 2023, with Al-Ahli lifting the continental trophy in each of the last two seasons. Al-Ahli captain and goalkeeper Edouard Mendy is hoping to make it three in a row in the 32-team tournament. “This is the biggest club in Saudi Arabia and Asia and we will do everything to win,” Mendy, who signed from English Premier League club Chelsea in 2023, told The Associated Press. “Last year, we won the Champions League and we will have to use all the things we did then to be successful this time, too. We are building year after year.” “Last year, we won the Champions League and we will have to use all the things we did then to be suc-

cessful this time, too. We are building year after year.” The tournament is divided into two geographic zones until the playoffs, with the top eight teams from each progressing to the Round of 16. Al-Ahli starts its defense against Pakhtakor of Uzbekistan in the western zone. Saudi league champion Al-Nassr’s roster contains 41-year-old Ronaldo and his Portugal teammate Joao Felix, last year’s domestic league player of the season. Al-Nassr was a finalist in the second-tier continental championship last season. Felix, who joined the Riyadh club in 2025 for a fee of around \$60 million, is determined to win a major title under new coach Ange Postecoglou. “We have a really good squad, a deep squad, our goal is to win every competition we can,” Felix told AP. “We want to win the league, the cup and the Champions League - everything. We don’t play to dream - we play to win.” Riyadh rival Al-Hilal has won a record four Asian

titles.

After spending more than \$200 million in the summer on English Premier League stars and three internationals - Ollie Watkins of England, Brazil’s Gabriel Martinelli and Crysencio Summerville of the Netherlands - Hilal will be dealing with high expectations. Al-Ittihad, winner in 2004 and 2005, is aiming for a third continental crown. Al-Qadsiah, under former Liverpool and Celtic boss Brendan Rodgers, is making a first appearance in the competition. The Saudi teams have avoided Iran’s two representatives - Esteghlal of Tehran and Tractor - in the group stage. With tension high due to war in the region, the Iranian clubs are set to host home games in neutral countries. Esteghlal will host Al-Sadd of Qatar in the Iraqi city of Basra in the opening round.

Tractor will travel to the United Arab Emirates to face Shabab Al-Ahli in Dubai. Al-Ahli has defeated Japanese clubs in the previous two finals. Additionally, Japan has five participants in the competition, much like Saudi Arabia. Only Gamba Osaka and Kashima Antlers have previously won the title, in 2008 and 2018, respectively. When it comes to the total number of Asian titles, South Korea is the most successful country. Pohang Steelers, a three-time champion, and Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors, a two-time winner, will have South Korean aspirations this season. China is represented in the competition by Shanghai Port and Beijing Guoan. For the first time, Thailand had three teams. The Newcastle Jets, who are just making their second group stage appearance, hold Australia’s aspirations.

Prior to D Gukesh vs. Javokhir Sindarov’s World Championship match, Magnus Carlsen makes a significant prediction

Chennai: World No. 1 Magnus Carlsen believes that challenger Javokhir Sindarov is the clear favorite to win the World Championship, but he insisted that D Gukesh should not view his impending championship defense as a burden because the defending champion has “everything to gain.” In the next World Chess Championship, which will be held in Geneva, Switzerland, from November 24 to December 12, Gukesh will face challenger Sindarov of Uzbekistan. “I think the word defend is really not a good place to begin, because in terms of how Gukesh has played for the last couple of years, he should not be in a position where he has to defend anything. He should be in a position where he has everything to gain,” Carlsen said on the sidelines of the ongoing Global Chess League here. “He has shown previously in 2024 that when things click, he has the potential to play at an extremely high level. I don’t think a lot of people believe that he will do it now, but I think it’s even more of an interesting challenge for him to try and get back to that. Since chess is a very psychological game, it probably won’t take much to give Gukesh some confidence and Sindarov some misgivings. Sindarov is without a doubt the favorite right now, he continued. Carlsen stated that in order to keep Sindarov on the defensive, Gukesh must seize the initiative right away. Sindarov’s early advantage is likely to be extremely detrimental to Gukesh.

Gukesh becomes a clear favorite if he leads early on. These matches operate in this manner. Regarding his own profession, Carlsen stated that he now favors fast chess over traditional chess. “I think in terms of their chess styles, the current generation, I don’t know if they’re making conscious choices about it, but they’re doing very well, for sure. In that sense, chess is in very good hands with the kids.” It depends on the tournament. Honestly, I was excited here to experiment a little bit, and that is certainly fun. I think it’s an important step for chess to rate slightly faster games as classical. We kind of have needed a more universal system of rating every tournament game for a long time. Attempts have been made, but it’s always been that the classical rating has been the gold standard,” he said. “Every tournament that doesn’t have a classical rating for certain people matters less for this reason. I’m happy that Total Chess can both be classically rated and be a mix of formats that makes it harder for people to master weaknesses,” he added. Carlsen said after becoming father he decided to give away with the classical format. “I think after I became father as well, it made even more certain for me that I was never coming back to the classical World Championship.” There are a lot of aspects of chess that I enjoy. I enjoy participating in a lot of competitions. Classical, particularly the competitions held in the classroom.

Satya Niketan PG Operator Refused Anticipatory Bail Following Delhi Building Collapse

New Delhi, Sep 11: Advocate Shubham Tyagi, a PG Operator of the Satya Niketan Building that collapsed on September 6, killing seven persons and wounding several others, was denied anticipatory bail by the Patiala House Court on Thursday. The judge observed that the inquiry is still in its early stages and that the rent agreement was hidden in the bail application. Five suspects have been taken into custody in this case thus far. Saurabh Pratap Singh Laler, the Additional Sessions Judge

(ASJ), rejected Tyagi’s request for anticipatory bail after reviewing the evidence against him, including a testimony from a pupil who was hurt. The court stated that more research regarding knowledge, consent, and the applicant’s financial and operational participation is necessary given the circumstances. Anticipatory bail should not be granted in this situation. While opposing the anticipatory bail application, Additional Public Prosecutor (APP) Mukul Kumar submitted that the applicant is not a mere in-

vestor. He is a co-lessee and business partner of co-accused Sudhanshu. It was further submitted that Sudhanshu and Shubham jointly ran paying-guest accommodations under the name “Hotel / Hostel Daze”. Building No. 14 was taken on a combined rent of Rs. 1,05,000 per month from Urmila Gupta. The Prosecution further asserted that two separate rent agreements, both of September 6, 2025 and covering the same tenure (September 1, 2025 to August 30, 2026), were executed on the same day:

Gujarat Allocates Rs 301 Crore for Commonwealth Games

New Delhi : The Gujarat government has allocated Rs 301 crore for preparations to host the 2030 Commonwealth Games, including Rs 200 crore for payment of the host fee, the state assembly was informed on Thursday. Deputy Chief Minister Harsh Sanghavi, who holds the Sports and Youth Services portfolio, provided the details in a written reply during the Question Hour on the second day of the state assembly's monsoon session. The question was asked by Congress MLA Amit Chavda. Sanghavi confirmed that Gujarat had been awarded the

hosting rights for the 2030 Commonwealth Games. The state had signed the Host Collaboration Agreement (HCA) for the Games and paid the host fee, he said. The government has also constituted a company named "Amdavad 2030 Commonwealth Games Organisation" under Section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013, through a resolution dated August 12, 2026, for planning and management of the Games, according to the reply. Necessary action has also been taken regarding organising the sporting events, management of ven-

ues and other arrangements related to the Games, he said. He said the state government has held consultations with Commonwealth Sport, the Indian Olympic Association and international sports federations regarding preparations for the event. According to the reply, Rs 100 crore have been allocated in the last one year under the revenue head for organising the 2030 Commonwealth Games. Another Rs 1 crore have been set aside as a token provision under the capital head for organising the Games, while Rs 200 crore have been allocated for



payment of the host fee under the Host Collaboration Agreement. The total alloca-

tion for the Games stands at Rs 301 crore, the reply said. The Commonwealth Games

are scheduled to be hosted by Gujarat in 2030, with Ahmedabad at the centre of

the preparations. The Gujarat government has allocated Rs 301 crore to prepare for hosting the 2030 Commonwealth Games, including Rs 200 crore for the host fee. A company, Amdavad 2030 Commonwealth Games Organisation, was established to manage planning and execution. The government has engaged with Commonwealth Sport, the Indian Olympic Association, and international federations. Ahmedabad is the central venue. The allocation covers sporting events, venue management, and related arrangements. The prepa-

rations were detailed during the state assembly's monsoon session. "The occasion in Gandhinagar was also attended by Gujarat's para-athletes Rakesh Bhatt and Rohit Majgul, who competed at the 2026 Commonwealth Games. Para table tennis player Sonal Patel was also present as the state marked the symbolic start of its journey towards hosting the Games." Speaking to reporters after landing at Ahmedabad Airport on Wednesday, Sanghavi said the city is determined to raise the bar with its hosting of the 2030 Commonwealth Games.

Why Even Discuss It? Virat Kohli's Coach Confident He'll Be at 2027 World Cup

New Delhi : There is still a question being asked about Virat Kohli's place in India's 2027 ODI World Cup plans. His childhood coach Rajkumar Sharma, however, believes there should be no question at all. "I think you should see for yourself what he's doing, what he has done in the last few matches, and how he is doing it on the field. So I think it should not be a discussion even," Rajkumar told IndiaToday. in on the sidelines of Delhi District Cricket Association ceremony to honour and reward grassroots cricketers in Delhi. Since the 2025 Champions Trophy, Kohli has been India's leading ODI run-scorer, making 760 runs in 12 matches at an average of 76, including three hundreds and five fifties. For Rajkumar, the performances have already made the case. "I mean, as



a player, I think he's a tremendous player. Undoubtedly, he's a match-winner. On his given day, he's a match-winner," he said. The same, Rajkumar believes, applies to Rohit. At 39, the former India captain continues to find himself at the centre of speculation over his ODI future, despite scoring 727 runs in 15 matches since the Champions Trophy at an average of 51.92, including two hundreds. "I mean, as a player, I think he's a tremendous

player. Undoubtedly, he's a match-winner. On his given day, he's a match-winner." Rohit's century at Lord's in July briefly pushed the retirement chatter into the background, his hundred serving as the kind of on-field response that had been missing from the debate. Yet the speculation resurfaced ahead of the BCCI's September review meeting, prompting secretary Devajit Saikia to address it directly, insisting Rohit was still playing superbly

and remained firmly in the selectors' plans. But while Rohit's future continues to invite questions, Rajkumar sees little reason to spend time debating Kohli's.

His confidence comes from having watched the batter long before he became one of the biggest names in world cricket. "He had tremendous confidence in his own ability, and he works really hard. He's got tremendous work ethics," Rajkumar said. Those qualities, he believes, were visible from the beginning. "Yeah, he was a God-gifted guy. I mean, God has made him for cricket and the work ethics he had were simply brilliant, and that is why he became such a big player." For Rajkumar, Kohli's longevity is not simply about runs. He points to the standards the former captain has set with his fitness and preparation.

Sabalenka Emulates Serena Williams, Storms Into Her Fourth Successive Final in Style

New York : Aryna Sabalenka is once again the last woman standing at Flushing Meadows. The defending champion powered past Jessica Pegula 7-5, 6-2 in the 2026 US Open semi-final to reach her fourth successive final, joining an elite club of players who have dominated New York year after year. Sabalenka's latest run has echoes of Serena Williams' remarkable reign at the US Open. Serena reached four consecutive finals from 2011 to 2014, winning three titles, and Sabalenka now has a chance to match another piece of that legacy by completing a hat-trick of championships in New York. The Belarusian overcame an early challenge from Pegula before taking control, striking seven aces and 29 winners in an 80-minute masterclass.

More importantly, she has again found a way through the pressure that comes with being the player to beat. One victory now separates Sabalenka from a piece of US Open history. She will take on the winner of the other semi-final between newly-crowned World No. 1 Elena Rybakina and fourth seed Coco Gauff. Sabalenka admitted she was desperate to reach the final of the season-ending Grand Slam after a dif-



ficult stretch across the clay and grass seasons. The World No. 1, who lost the Australian Open final earlier this year, was beaten in the French Open semi-final before crashing out in the fourth round at Wimbledon. Her hold on the top ranking also slipped away earlier this week, adding another layer of motivation as she arrived at Flushing Meadows determined to make a statement. On Thursday, she did exactly that. "I was so desperate for the win, I wanted it badly," she said in her typically straightforward manner. There was evident frustration in the way Sabalenka went about her business. After missing an early break-point opportunity, a double fault later in the set saw her frustration boil over and she smashed her racquet onto the court. But she

quickly regained her composure, secured the decisive break and closed out the opening set without being dragged into a tie-break. The intensity only increased in the second set against local hope Pegula as Sabalenka raced to a 3-0 lead. From there, there was no looking back. She powered through to the finish line in just 80 minutes. Sabalenka made sure the crowd knew exactly what the victory meant to her. "No complaints. I'm super happy I was able to pull out such tennis.

The last match I played against Jessica it was almost impossible for me to get the win. I'm super happy I was able to play such tennis in front of you all. Thank you for the atmosphere. You guys are the best. Your respect to me is priceless. I know you wanted her to win, it's obvious. But thank you for being so respectful to me. Love you guys," she said. The past few months have not quite lived up to the standards Sabalenka has set for herself. But her run to a fourth successive US Open final has restored the belief. Since winning her first Grand Slam title at the 2023 Australian Open, Sabalenka has finished every season with at least one major crown.

Man United Return With a Bang as Como Shine During Stunning Champions League Debut Campaign

New Delhi : Manchester United marked their return to the UEFA Champions League with a convincing 4-0 victory over Sabah FC at Old Trafford, while Como announced themselves on the European stage with a 4-1 win over RB Leipzig. Bayern Munich also began their campaign in style, cruising past Bodo/Glimt. United had waited more than 1,000 days to hear the Champions League anthem again, but there was little rust in Michael Carrick's side as they raced into a three-goal lead before half-time. Como, meanwhile, produced one of the night's biggest statements by overwhelming Leipzig in their first-ever European appearance. Bayern were made to work harder than the scoreline suggested during a stubborn first half, but Jamal Musiala's early second-half goal opened the floodgates. Harry Kane, Alphonso Da-



vies and Michael Olise then completed a comfortable night for Vincent Kompany's side. For United, the victory was particularly welcome with a Manchester derby against City waiting on Sunday. Carrick's team still have plenty to prove after an uneven domestic start, but their first Champions League outing offered plenty of encouragement. Sabah started positively at Old Trafford, but United eventually found their stride when

Matheus Cunha converted Patrick Dorgu's cross in the 27th minute. Bruno Fernandes and Benjamin Sesko then struck late in the first half, putting the hosts firmly in control. Sesko's return to the starting XI was one of the night's biggest positives. The 23-year-old's physical presence gave United a focal point in attack, while Joshua Zirkzee impressed after coming off the bench before Lisandro Martinez added a fourth following

a lively move. With goal difference potentially proving important in the league phase, United could hardly have asked for a better start. Como's Champions League debut turned into a night of celebration as Martin Baturina, Anastasios Douvikas and Assane Diao put the Italian side three goals ahead before Maximo Perrone added a fourth late on. Leipzig's only response came during a one-sided evening at a reduced-capacity Stadio Giuseppe Sinigaglia. The result underlined the progress made under Cesc Fabregas, who guided Como to fourth in Serie A last season. Playmaker Nico Paz remained central to their attacking threat, while Baturina was named player of the match as Como embraced their first taste of European football. "We are audacious," Baturina said, reflecting the fearless approach that carried them through the night.

Vinesh Phogat Barred From 2026 World Championships Trials by Court Order

New Delhi : Vinesh Phogat's bid to return to the international wrestling circuit has suffered a setback after the Delhi High Court refused to allow her to compete in the selection trials for the 2026 Senior World Championships. Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma dismissed Phogat's plea for interim relief late on Thursday, ruling that she could not be given an exemption from the eligibility conditions set by the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI). The trials are scheduled for September 14 at the Indira Gandhi Stadium in New Delhi. "To reiterate, the criteria prescribed under the circular dated September 7, 2026 apply uniformly to all athletes. An athlete who has not participated in the prescribed competitions, for whatever reason, would not fall within the eligibility categories specified by respondent no. 1 (WFI)," the court said. The order does not settle the larger question of whether the WFI's policy is valid. The court acknowledged that Phogat's pregnancy, childbirth and postpartum recovery would have to be considered while examining the policy, but said those circumstances did not automat-



ically warrant an interim exemption. Phogat became a mother in July 2025 and subsequently resumed training and competition. Her latest legal challenge centres on the WFI's September 7 circular, which sets eligibility conditions for trials across six Olympic weight categories. The framework includes medal winners from specified competitions, wrestlers attending the national coaching camp and athletes selected for the 2026 U20 World Championships. Phogat has argued that the system effectively shuts her out because she could not participate

in several qualifying events during her maternity-related absence. Phogat is not seeking automatic selection for the World Championships. She wants an opportunity to enter the trials, with her place on the Indian team ultimately decided by her performance. She has pointed to her participation in the Asian Games selection trials on May 30, where she competed in the 53kg category, won her quarter-final bout and reached the semi-final. The World Championships are scheduled to take place in Astana, Kazakhstan, from October 24 to November 1.

French Football Federation Withdraws Support for FIFA President Gianni Infantino Amid Tensions



New Delhi : The French Football Federation is withdrawing its support for Gianni Infantino's re-election bid as FIFA chief next year, FFF President Philippe Diallo said on Thursday, saying trust in the head of world soccer's governing body had been broken. The decision was taken unanimously by the FFF's executive committee, Dial-

lo said. "The trust placed in the FIFA president has been broken," Diallo told reporters. "The way in which we envisage the running of world football no longer corresponds with the way it is being conducted." Infantino, who is seeking another term as FIFA president, has faced mounting criticism since his failed proposal to sell a 20%

stake in FIFA competitions, including the World Cup, to private investors was abandoned in July following widespread opposition from football's regional confederations.

Diallo said France had initially backed Infantino's candidacy at the end of June, when he was the only declared candidate, but that subsequent events had fundamentally changed the circumstances. "The conditions for our support for his candidacy were no longer there," he said. Diallo added that the proposed stake sale, which emerged without what he described as proper consultation or information being provided to federations, had raised serious questions over FIFA's governance and decision-making. Several European federations, including England's and Italy's, have withdrawn their backing for Infantino since the collapse of his proposal.

Pakistan Stare at Embarrassing Whitewash as England Tighten Grip on Edgbaston Test Match

New Delhi : Pakistan are staring at another humiliating defeat after England tightened their grip on the third Test at Edgbaston, leaving the tourists facing the prospect of a 3-0 series whitewash. England, already 2-0 up after convincing victories at Leeds and Lord's, extended their first-innings lead to a massive 320 runs before Ollie Robinson struck twice in his opening over to leave Pakistan reeling at 52 for 2 at stumps on Thursday. Rain brought an early end to play, offering Pakistan a temporary reprieve from what had threatened to become an even more embarrassing day. Pakistan, who were



dismissed for just 133 in their first innings, now need another 268 runs simply to make England bat again. Shan Masood was unbeaten on 21 alongside Azan Awaiz, who was on 29, but the visitors remain overwhelmingly behind with three days still scheduled. Robinson has been the defining bowler of

the series. After taking five wickets in the first Test at Leeds and four in Pakistan's second innings at Lord's, the England seamer added three wickets in the first innings at Edgbaston before claiming Saim Ayub and Abdullah Shafique in the second. He has now taken 21 wickets in the series at

an extraordinary average of 6.66. England resumed the day at 156 for 4 and eventually reached 453, turning a modest 23-run overnight advantage into a 320-run lead. Harry Brook made 75 from 97 balls before being run out attempting an impossible single, while Dan Lawrence continued his impressive return to Test cricket with 65. It was his third successive half-century of the series. Jamie Smith also produced a timely 69 from 84 balls despite suffering a finger injury, his highest Test score at Edgbaston since his 88 against India 14 months ago. He subsequently handed over wicketkeeping duties to Jordan Cox.