

Arunachal CM calls meeting over Siang project concerns

CM TO MEET ADI GROUPS

Itanagar, Oct 09: Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu has convened a crucial high-level meeting with representatives of the Adi Baane Kebang Youth Wing (ABKYW) and the Adi Students' Union (AdiSU Apex) on October 13 to deliberate on escalating concerns surrounding the proposed Siang Upper Multipurpose Project (SUMP).

According to an official notification issued by the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) on Friday, the consultative dialogue will be held at the Chief Minister's Niti Vihar office in Itanagar. The invitation follows a joint press conference held by ABKYW and AdiSU Apex at Pasighat on October 3, where the youth and student bodies voiced strong reservations regarding the 11,000-



MW mega-hydropower initiative. The organizations have highlighted critical issues concerning land rights, potential community displacement, environmental impacts, and the deployment of security forces in project-affected areas across

the Siang belt.

The proposed multipurpose dam on the Siang River holds strategic importance for flood moderation, water security, and power generation. However, the project has faced sustained resistance from in-

digenous Adi villagers and community groups who fear irreversible socio-ecological disruptions. Addressing the apprehensions, Chief Minister Khandu recently clarified that current field activities are strictly restricted to a Pre-Feasibility Report (PFR) survey to evaluate technical viability and safety parameters. He reaffirmed that no construction will proceed without explicit public consent and extensive community consultations.

The upcoming October 13 meeting is expected to provide a structured platform for stakeholder delegations to present their grievances directly to the state leadership. The CMO has requested both organizations to submit their delegation lists in advance to ensure smooth administrative arrangements for the talks.

Nagaland Governor launches IDAN health, food processing initiatives

Dimapur, Oct 09: Nagaland Governor Nand Kishore Yadav launched a series of high-impact welfare and entrepreneurship initiatives in healthcare and food processing, facilitated by the Investment and Development Authority of Nagaland (IDAN) in collaboration with Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL).

Speaking at the launch event held at the Integrated Business Hub and Innovation Centre in Dimapur, Governor Yadav flagged off four state-of-the-art Basic Life Support (BLS) ambulances procured at a cost of ₹58.8 lakh under IOCL's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) program. The emergency vehicles will be deployed across critical health centers to strengthen rural emergency medical response, improve patient transport capabilities, and ensure timely access to healthcare facilities in re-



mote hill districts. Concurrently, the Governor virtually inaugurated an Apple Cider Vinegar (ACV) processing plant at Thanamir village in Kiphire district. Established under the Chief Minister's Innovative Programme with a sanctioned budget of ₹50 lakh, the agro-processing unit is designed to utilize locally grown apples, promote horticultural value addition, and generate sustainable rural livelihoods for indigenous

farmers. Addressing the gathering, Governor Yadav noted that while the medical and agro-industrial projects cater to distinct sectors, they converge on the common goal of enhancing quality of life and fostering inclusive economic growth across Nagaland. He lauded IDAN for successfully mobilizing CSR capital and state resources to bridge infrastructure gaps in health services and rural entrepreneurship.

Maharashtra approves VIP vehicle procurement

Mumbai, Oct 09: The Maharashtra government has issued a Government Resolution (GR) sanctioning ₹12.68 crore for the procurement of 44 new official vehicles dedicated to state guests and dignitaries. The sanctioned fleet includes a bulletproof Toyota Land Cruiser valued at approximately ₹4.07 crore, intended for high-security protocol transport. According to the official order issued by the General Administration Department (GAD), the state has approved administrative sanction for the purchase of the single bulletproof Toyota Land Cruiser at ₹4,07,68,000. The financial sanction also covers two Toyota Fortuner SUVs priced at ₹30 lakh each, one Force Urbania multi-utility bus at ₹31 lakh, 32 Mahindra Scorpio Classic vehicles valued at ₹5.10 crore, and eight Maruti Eriga MPVs costing ₹1.82 crore. The entire fleet acquisition will be managed through the Protocol Division to facilitate the transit, security, and hospitality needs of visiting state guests and VIP delegations across Maharashtra. The resolution specifies that all vehicle purchases must adhere strictly to prevailing government procurement norms, store purchase guidelines, and available budgetary allocations. The expenditure will be met using sanctioned funds allocated under the motor vehicle purchase head within the state budget for the current financial year. The substantial financial clearance has drawn significant public and political attention, coming at a time when the state administration has been seeking Central financial assistance to manage agricultural distress and drought-like conditions across several rural talukas in Maharashtra. Opposition leaders criticized the timing of the fleet upgrade, contrasting the multi-crore expenditure on luxury and bulletproof transport with austerity directives recently issued across various departments.

Thai arms smuggler sentenced to six years imprisonment

Dimapur, Oct 09: A special National Investigation Agency (NIA) court in Delhi sentenced a 70-year-old Thai national, Wuthikorn Naruenartwanich, alias Willy Naru, to six years of rigorous imprisonment in connection with an international arms procurement conspiracy for the Naga insurgent group NSCN (IM).

Special NIA Judge Prashant Sharma handed down the sentence under Section 18 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) and Section 122 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) for conspiring to commit a terrorist act and waging war against the Government of India. The court also imposed a fine of ₹5 lakh on the convict.

According to the NIA, the case dates back to December 2010 when intelligence inputs revealed a major

clandestine deal to procure sophisticated military hardware for the National Socialist Council of Nagalim (Isak-Muivah). Investigators established that Willy, a Bangkok-based international arms broker, served as a key middleman contracted to arrange a \$1.2-million shipment consisting of over 800 weapons—including assault rifles and rocket-propelled grenade launchers—and one lakh rounds of ammunition sourced from Chinese suppliers via transit routes in Bangladesh.

Willy was extradited from Thailand to India in 2015 following an extensive international law enforcement operation. Out of the four individuals chargesheeted by the NIA in 2011, two remain absconding while one passed away during the trial. Rejecting arguments for a le-

nient sentence based on the convict's advanced age and time already spent in custody, the court observed that involvement in cross-border weapons trafficking threatening national security called for a firm judicial message. The judgment marks a major legal victory for Indian anti-terror agencies in dismantling transnational arms networks supplying insurgent outfits in the Northeast. The court specifically rejected the defence argument that the conspiracy remained incomplete because no arms or financial assets were directly recovered from the convict. Special Judge Prashant Sharma emphasized that Section 18 of the UAPA mandates a minimum five-year sentence, warning that granting excessive leniency would send a dangerous signal to international gunrunners.

Tawang workshop spotlights Himalayan peatlands as crucial carbon stores

Itanagar, Oct 09: A regional workshop titled "Indian Himalayan Peatlands: Conserving Nature's Carbon Stores for a Safer Planet" was held on Friday at the Indian Institute of Management Shillong's satellite centre in Tawang, Arunachal Pradesh, to raise awareness about the ecological significance of high-altitude peatlands and advocate for their conservation.

The workshop was organized by the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) in collaboration with the National Mission on Himalayan Studies (NMHS) under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. Inaugurating the event as chief guest, Tawang Additional Deputy Commissioner Rinchin Leta highlighted the critical role that Himalayan peatlands play



in climate regulation, carbon sequestration, and regional hydrology. Despite covering a relatively small percentage of the global land surface, peatlands act as vital carbon sinks, storing vast amounts of organic carbon accumulated over thousands of years.

During the inaugural session, experts and researchers emphasized that high-altitude peat ecosystems across the Indian Himalayan Region

are increasingly vulnerable to climate change, land-use shifts, and environmental degradation. A special awareness pamphlet detailing conservation strategies for Himalayan peatlands was formally released by dignitaries, including Tawang Divisional Forest Officer Piyush Gaikwad and Indo-Tibetan Border Police Deputy Commandant Biswajit Mandal. ZSI Principal Investigator Dr. Jasmine

P. outlined the overarching scientific objectives of the initiative, stressing the need for baseline mapping and long-term ecological monitoring.

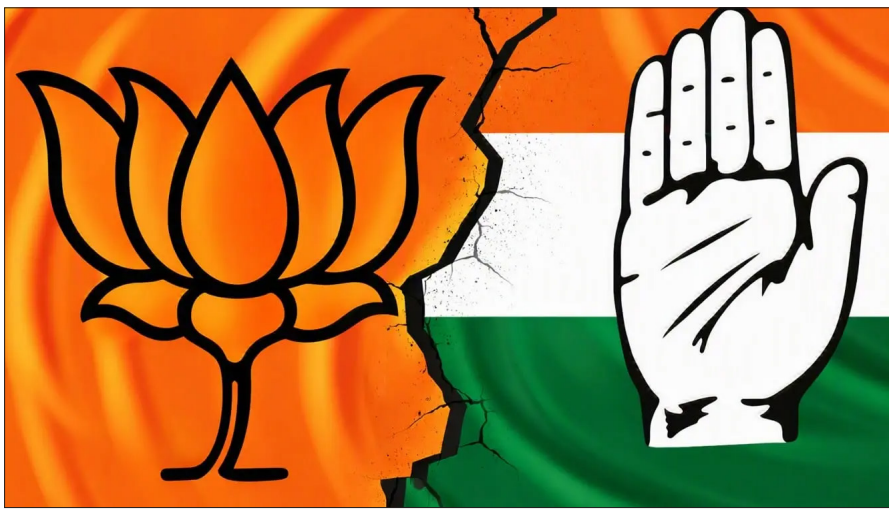
Speakers at the seminar called for robust scientific research, inter-agency collaboration, and active community participation to protect these sensitive ecosystems from degradation. The workshop concluded with a collective resolution urging local authorities, environmental agencies, and indigenous communities to integrate peatland preservation into broader regional climate action plans.

The workshop also emphasized that comprehensive mapping and spatial distribution studies are essential to establish an accurate inventory of high-altitude wetlands and peat deposits across Eastern Arunachal Pradesh.

BJP, Congress trade barbs over MP High Court order on 27 pc OBC quota

Bhopal, Oct 09: A fierce political battle erupted between the governing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Opposition Congress in Madhya Pradesh after the High Court struck down the 2019 law increasing reservation for Other Backward Classes (OBCs) from 14 per cent to 27 per cent. Reinstating the baseline OBC quota at 14 per cent, the court held that exceeding the constitutional ceiling of 50 per cent required quantifiable data proving extraordinary circumstances, which the state failed to establish.

The landmark judgment immediately triggered sharp political exchanges across the state. Madhya Pradesh Congress Committee (MPCC) president Jitu Patwari mounted a scathing attack on the state government, accusing Chief Minister Mohan Yadav and the BJP leadership of conspiring against the backward communities. Patwari



asserted that the enhanced 27 per cent reservation was originally enacted by the Kamal Nath-led Congress government in March 2019 to ensure socio-economic justice. He alleged that the ruling BJP deliberately failed to present compelling empirical data and constitutional arguments before the High Court, leading to the invalidation of the quota. Former State

Backward Classes Commission chairman J.P. Dhanopia echoed the charges, claiming that the government's "ill intentions" and ineffective legal representation deprived millions of OBC candidates of their rightful educational and employment opportunities.

Rejecting the allegations, senior BJP leaders defended the administration, maintaining that the state government

remains fully committed to the welfare and advancement of backward classes within the constitutional framework. BJP spokespersons argued that the court's ruling simply reaffirmed long-standing constitutional boundaries set by the Supreme Court in landmark judgments such as Indra Sawhney. The ruling party blamed the previous Congress regime for promulgating an

unconstitutional ordinance in 2019 without creating a proper statutory commission or compiling verifiable field data, calling the move a political gimmick designed purely for electoral gains. Concurrently, civil society organizations, including the OBC Mahasabha, expressed deep disappointment over the verdict and announced plans to launch statewide agitations alongside challenging the order in the Supreme Court. Congress leaders confirmed that their party would also back legal appeals before the apex court to defend the 27 per cent reservation framework. Meanwhile, the High Court directed the state government to process the 13 per cent posts held on hold during the legal challenge from the unreserved category within three months, setting the stage for intense political maneuvering ahead of upcoming municipal and local body polls.

Rio mourns Adinno Phizo, recalls Naga political struggle

LEADERS HONOR VETERAN NAGA NATIONALIST

Kohima, Oct 09: Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio expressed profound grief on Friday over the passing of Adinno Phizo, president of the Naga National Council (NNC) and eldest daughter of the legendary Naga leader Angami Zapu Phizo.

Adinno Phizo, aged 94, passed away on Thursday evening at a private medical facility in Kohima. In his official condolence message, Chief Minister Rio paid rich tributes to the veteran leader, describing her as a pioneering figure and a steadfast custodian of Naga political history whose life was intrinsically intertwined with the decades-long Naga national struggle. Rio noted that as the daughter of A.Z. Phizo, she grew up amidst the turbulence and sacrifices of the early Naga political movement, carrying forward a historical legacy

that shaped the political consciousness of generations. Recalling her contribution as the head of the NNC for over three decades, the Chief Minister remarked that those who devoted their lives to the Naga cause must always be remembered with respect and dignity. Rio emphasized that her unwavering commitment to her principles and her role in steering the historic political journey earned her a significant place in the annals of Naga leadership. On behalf of the Government of Nagaland and its citizens, the Chief Minister extended heartfelt condolences to the bereaved Phizo family, members of the Naga National Council, and well-wishers across the state. Political organizations and civil society bodies across Nagaland have also joined in mourning her demise. Local authorities confirmed that a

state-honored funeral service will be held in Kohima on Saturday to pay final respects to the departed leader. Highlighting her long journey, civil society organizations and political parties across Nagaland noted that Adinno Phizo took over the leadership of the NNC in 1990 following her father's death in London, remaining steadfast in her stance on Naga rights for over three decades. After living in exile in the United Kingdom for more than 50 years, she returned to Nagaland in 2013 to continue her work from Kohima. The Forum for Naga Reconciliation (FNR) and various tribal bodies observed that her passing marks the end of a momentous chapter in Naga political history, urging all Naga groups to honor her legacy by fostering peace, unity, and mutual understanding across the region.

Special drive launched in Arunachal to enrol left-out, young voters

Itanagar, Oct 09: A comprehensive, state-wide special enrollment drive has been officially launched across Arunachal Pradesh to ensure the inclusion of all eligible left-out citizens, young voters, and first-time electors in the electoral roll. The initiative,

directed by the Election Commission of India (ECI) and executed by the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) of Arunachal Pradesh, aims to plug operational gaps following the conclusion of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process. As part of the ongoing mobi-

lization, Booth Level Officers (BLOs) across all districts are setting up specialized registration camps at designated polling stations, working in tandem with local administrative and field-level functionaries to assist citizens with voter registration. A primary focus

of the campaign is targeting youth who have attained 18 years of age on or before the designated qualifying date but have not yet registered. To facilitate a seamless onboarding process, election personnel are actively helping applicants fill out and submit Form 6

for fresh voter inclusion. Additionally, the drive provides an immediate window for citizens whose names were inadvertently omitted or deleted during previous revision cycles to file necessary correction and inclusion forms. Emphasizing that electoral

roll revision is an ongoing constitutional process, state election authorities reaffirmed that no eligible citizen should remain disenfranchised. The CEO urged young electors, educational institutions, and community leaders across the state's remote and hilly ter-

rains to take full advantage of the specialized polling-station camps. Electronic channels, including the NVSP portal and mobile application workflows, are also being deployed alongside ground-level camps to maximize registration coverage across urban centers

and marginalized rural pockets. Reiterating its mandate of "no voter left behind," the commission emphasized that stringent verification procedures will simultaneously ensure the accuracy and integrity of the state's master electoral database.

NE/EAST

Assam CM Pays Tribute to Ratan Tata's Cancer Care Contributions

Dispur, Oct 09: Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Friday, October 9, paid tribute to industrialist Ratan Tata on his death anniversary, remembering his contributions to the state's healthcare sector and his role in the development of the Tata semiconductor facility at Jagiroad. Sarma recalled Tata not only as one of India's most respected industrialists but also as a friend who took a personal interest in Assam's growth and development.

In a post on X, the chief minister highlighted Tata's association with Assam's cancer care network, which has played an important role in expanding access to cancer treatment in the state. He also remembered the industrialist's contribution to the semiconductor project at Jagiroad, describing his legacy as one that extended beyond business and industry.

Tata, who led the Tata Group for several years, was widely associated with initiatives spanning industry, healthcare, education and social development. His work through the Tata Group and Sarma's tribute served as a reminder of Ta its philanthropic institutions helped establish a broader role for private-sector participation in areas that directly affect people's lives.



For Assam, Tata's contribution to cancer care remains a significant part of his legacy. Access to specialised cancer treatment has long been an important healthcare concern in the Northeast, where patients in several areas have had to travel considerable distances to receive advanced medical care.

Efforts to strengthen treatment facilities within the region have therefore been important for patients and their families. The cancer care network associated with Tata's contribution has been part of a wider effort to improve access to diagnosis and treatment in Assam. Such initiatives seek to make specialised healthcare services more accessible to patients and reduce the challenges associated with seeking treat-

ment outside their home state. Sarma's tribute drew attention to this aspect of Tata's work, highlighting the lasting significance of his involvement in the state's healthcare development.

Beyond his reputation as a business leader, Tata was known for supporting initiatives that aimed to address social needs and improve public welfare. The chief minister also recalled Tata's association with the semiconductor facility at Jagiroad, a major industrial development in Assam. The project has attracted attention as part of the state's efforts to expand its industrial base and establish a presence in the semiconductor sector. Semiconductors are essential components in a wide range of products, including mobile phones, computers,

automobiles and other electronic devices. The development of semiconductor-related manufacturing facilities is considered important for strengthening domestic production capabilities and supporting the growth of technology-driven industries. The Tata semiconductor project at Jagiroad has consequently become a significant part of Assam's industrial development plans. Its progress reflects the state's broader efforts to attract investment, encourage manufacturing and create opportunities in As Assam continues to pursue its development goals, Tata's association with the state remains an important part of the story of its healthcare and industrial transformation.

The cancer care network and the semiconductor facility at Jagiroad represent two distinct areas in which his contribution has been remembered. On his death anniversary, Sarma's tribute served as a reminder of Tata's connection with Assam and the lasting significance of his work. By recalling both his support for cancer care and his role in the semiconductor project, the chief minister highlighted a legacy that combined industrial ambition with an interest in the welfare and progress of the state.

High Court Initiates Contempt Proceedings Against 24 Bar Members

Shillong , Oct 09: The Meghalaya High Court on Thursday issued criminal contempt notices to 24 office-bearers and executive members of the High Court of Meghalaya Bar Association and the Shillong Bar Association over their decision to abstain from judicial work across the state. The court sought explanations from the members on why contempt proceedings should not be initiated against them for allegedly obstructing the administration of justice. A bench comprising Chief Justice Revati Mohite Dere and Justice Hamarsan Singh Thangkiew issued the notices under Section 15 of the Contempt of Courts Act, read with Article 215 of the Constitution. The members have been directed to show cause why action should not be taken against them for calling for an abstention from judicial work in courts across Meghalaya. The proceedings were initiated suo motu by the court following a resolution adopted by the two bar associations on September 30, 2026. Under the resolution, lawyers were directed to abstain from judicial work from October 1 until the state government removed Advocate General Amit Kumar. The court examined information showing that the abstention had affected judicial



in the High Court and district courts across Meghalaya, with Baghmara being the exception.

The disruption reportedly left litigants without legal representation, raising concerns about the impact of the associations' decision on access to justice and the functioning of the courts. The bench reiterated that lawyers do not have a legal right to go on strike or call for abstention from judicial work, including symbolic or token strikes. In reaching its position, the court relied on the Constitution Bench judgment in Ex-Capt. Harish Uppal vs Union of India and subsequent judicial decisions dealing with strikes by advocates. The court emphasised that advocates have professional responsibilities as officers of the court and are expected to contribute to the smooth functioning of the

judicial system. It observed that strikes and abstentions interfere with the administration of justice and can adversely affect litigants who depend on legal representation to pursue their cases.

The court stated, "...Such action is unprofessional and unbecoming. An advocate is an officer of the court with a duty to ensure its smooth functioning and to protect clients' interests. Strikes interfere with the administration of justice..." The bench also rejected the stated reason for the abstention, which Association not to participate in the abstention. The association had declined to join the call, citing the Supreme Court judgment in Ex-Capt. Harish Uppal vs Union of India. The High Court appreciated the association's decision. The notices were issued to members of both associations who held office.

Guwahati EV Drivers Quit Ola, Uber for Peindia

Guwahati , Oct 09: Electric auto-rickshaw drivers across Guwahati are set to stop offering services through Ola and Uber from October 10, 2026, following an agreement with an alternative platform that has reportedly accepted their key demands concerning fares, passenger capacity and driver welfare. provides a public account of the forum's position and the reasons behind the planned transition.

By outlining the revised fare arrangements and other negotiated provisions, the representatives sought to explain how the agreement would affect drivers' working conditions.

The change could also influence the choices available to passengers who regularly use app-based electric auto-rickshaw services in the city.

From the announced date, participating drivers are expected to receive bookings exclusively through the new platform instead of Ola and Uber. Passengers who depend on those drivers may therefore need to check the availability of services through the alternative application.

Naga Leader Adinno Z Phizo Dies in Kohima



Kohima , Oct 09: Adinno Z. Phizo, president of the Naga National Council (NNC) and the eldest daughter of prominent Naga leader A.Z. Phizo, died at Bethel Hospital in Kohima on October 8 following a brief illness. She was 86 years old. Phizo headed the NNC (Adinno) faction, which is associated with the Naga political movement and its long-standing demand for Naga rights and political identity.

Her death was announced through a joint notification issued by the Naga National Council and the Federal Government of Nagaland. According to the notification, she breathed her last at 8 p.m. on October 8 at Bethel Hospital in Kohima,

the capital of Nagaland. The joint announcement confirmed the passing of the NNC president but did not provide further details about the circumstances surrounding her illness. The organisations stated that information regarding her funeral arrangements and the period of mourning would be communicated at a later date. Phizo's death marks the passing of a prominent figure associated with the Naga National Council, an organisation that has played a significant role in the history of Naga political aspirations.

As the head of the NNC (Adinno) faction, she remained connected to a political organisation that traces its roots to the early stages of the Naga nationalist movement. principal official announcement regarding her death Adinno Z. Phizo's passing brings to a close her tenure as president of the NNC Federal Government of Nagaland. Both organisations are expected to provide further information regarding the funeral arrangements and the period of mourning in due course.

RAF Head Constable Hurt in Imphal East Blast

Imphal , Oct 09: A head constable of the Rapid Action Force (RAF) sustained minor injuries after unidentified miscreants allegedly hurled a grenade at the gate of a RAF unit at New Lam-bulane in Manipur's Imphal East district on Thursday night, October 8.

According to sources, the incident occurred at around 10 pm when a grenade was thrown at the entrance of B/107 RAF. The explosion reportedly left a head constable with minor injuries, raising fresh concerns over security in the area.

The incident took place under the jurisdiction of Porompat police station in Imphal East district. The identity of the individuals responsible for the attack has not been established, and further details about their motive and the precise circumstances leading to the incident remain unknown. Further details are awaited as more information incident occurred at around 10 pm when a grenade was thrown at the entrance of B/107 RAF.

Gargaon College Hosts Workshop on Practical Approaches to GST 2.0

Sivasagar, Oct 09: The Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) of Gargaon College organised a one-day workshop on 'Practical Approaches to GST 2.0' in collaboration with the Pune Institute of Business Management (PIBM) on Wednesday. The programme marked the first academic collaborative initiative undertaken under the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the two institutions, reflecting their shared objective of promoting practical, skill-based and industry-relevant learning.

The workshop was designed to provide an academic platform for understanding the practical aspects of Goods and Services Tax (GST) and the changes associated with GST 2.0. Through the initiative, Gargaon College and PIBM sought to strengthen their institutional partnership and encourage learning that connects classroom knowledge with practical applications. The event represented an important step in the academic collaboration between Gargaon College and PIBM. The MoU be-



tween the institutions aims to create opportunities for academic engagement and knowledge-sharing, with a focus on developing practical skills among learners. The workshop was the first initiative conducted under this agreement, establishing a foundation for further collaborative academic activities.

The theme, 'Practical Approaches to GST 2.0', focused on the importance of understanding taxation not only from a theoretical perspective but also through its application in professional and business settings. GST is a significant component of India's indirect taxation framework, and knowledge of its functioning is relevant to students pursuing commerce, management, accounting and related disciplines.

By organising the workshop, the IQAC of Gargaon College highlighted the importance of providing students with learning opportunities that extend beyond conventional classroom teaching. Practical exposure to subjects such as taxation can help learners develop a clearer understanding of the procedures, concepts and professional requirements associated with the field. The collaboration with PIBM also reflected the institutions' interest in expanding academic engagement through specialised workshops and skill-oriented programmes. Such initiatives can offer students opportunities to explore subjects in greater depth and understand how academic concepts are applied in real-world situations.

Guv Sends Back KHADC Land Bill with Observations

Sivasagar, Oct 09: The VPP-led Executive Committee of the Khasi Hills Autonomous District Council (KHADC) has suffered a setback after the Governor returned the Khasi Hills Autonomous District Council (Regulation and Administration of Land) (Amendment) Bill, 2026, with observations, raising questions over the legislation's next course of action. Deputy Chief Minister Prestone Tysong, who is in charge of District Council Affairs, confirmed on Thursday that the Bill had been returned following observations from the Governor. However, he did not disclose the specific concerns raised or indicate what changes might be required before the legislation could move forward.

"From the government side, from the Governor, we have already returned it with observations," Tysong told reporters. The Deputy Chief Minister advised those seeking further information about the observations and the subsequent steps to approach the KHADC directly. His statement left the details of the Governor's remarks and the Council's possible response to be clarified by the district council authorities.

The development comes after the KHADC passed the amendment Bill during its Summer Session. The proposed legislation seeks to delete Section 16 of the principal Act, a provision that makes consultation with traditional institutions mandatory before the Executive Committee implements land ceiling measures or deals with the settlement and allotment of Raid land.

The provision is significant because it recognises the role of traditional institutions, including the Dorbar Shnong, Dorbar Raid and Dorbar Hima, in matters concerning land administration. These institutions have long been associated with community-level governance and land-related decisions that may affect communities and landholders. The return of the Bill with observations means that the legislation has encountered another stage of scrutiny before its future can be determined. The Governor's observations will need to be examined by the relevant authorities, while the KHADC is expected to clarify how it intends to proceed.

Assam Cabinet Passes 75 Resolutions Honouring Modi's 25 Years in Public Service

Dispur, Oct 09: The Assam Cabinet on October 9 adopted 75 resolutions recognising Prime Minister Narendra Modi's contributions to the development of Assam and highlighting progress in infrastructure, connectivity, industrial growth, healthcare, education, peace and security.

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma chaired a special cabinet meeting that lasted around 90 minutes and was dedicated exclusively to Modi's 25 years in public service. The period under consideration began with his tenure as Chief Minister of Gujarat and continued through his years as Prime Minister of India. The special meeting provided an opportunity for the state government to acknowledge what it described as significant developments in Assam and the wider Northeast during Modi's years in public office. The 75 resolutions covered a range of sectors, reflecting the state cabinet's assessment of changes in infrastructure, economic activity, public services and security. The resolutions highlighted infrastructure development as one of the key areas of progress. Improved connectivity has remained an important focus for the Northeast, a region whose geographical

location and terrain have historically presented challenges for transportation and access to markets. Roads, transport links and other infrastructure projects are central to efforts to strengthen connections between the region and the rest of the country. Connectivity was another major theme highlighted by the cabinet. Better transport and communication networks are important for facilitating the movement of people and goods, supporting tourism and creating opportunities for businesses.

For Assam, which serves as a major gateway to several northeastern states, improvements in connectivity can also have wider regional implications. The cabinet's resolutions also referred to industrial growth, an area that has gained prominence in discussions about economic development. Expanding industrial activity can help attract investment, create employment opportunities and diversify the regional economy. The state government's recognition of this sector reflected its emphasis on the role of economic development in shaping Assam's future. Healthcare and education were also among the areas identified in the resolu-



tions. Access to healthcare services and educational opportunities remains essential to improving living standards and supporting long-term development. By including these sectors, the cabinet highlighted the importance of public services alongside infrastructure and economic growth in its assessment of the period. Peace and security formed another significant part of the resolutions. Stability is an important consideration for development in the Northeast, where security tenure as Prime Minister.

By dedicating an entire cabinet meeting to this milestone, the Assam government sought to formally recognise his political and ad-

Tripura Poll Panel Initiates Process for 21 Civic Body Elections

Agartala , Oct 09: The State Election Commission (SEC) of Tripura has initiated preparations for elections to 21 urban local bodies (ULBs), including the Agartala Municipal Corporation, with senior officials beginning consultations to ensure that the electoral process is conducted smoothly and transparently. Top officials confirmed the development on Thursday after Tripura State Election Commissioner Pradeep Kumar Chakraborty chaired the first preparatory meeting with Director General of Police (DGP) G.S.

Rao and senior civil and police officials. During the meeting, Chakraborty advised the officials concerned to take all necessary measures to facilitate the peaceful and orderly conduct of the upcoming civic



elections. The meeting was held at the State Guest House and brought together senior administrative and security officials responsible for managing different aspects of the election process. Inspector General of Police (Law and Order) Manchak Ipper, District Magistrates and Superintendents of Police from all eight districts, along with other senior civil and security officials, attended

the meeting. According to Chakraborty, the terms of the 21 urban local bodies, including the Agartala Municipal Corporation, will expire on December 9. The approaching end of their terms has prompted the State Election Commission to begin the preparatory process for conducting the elections within the applicable legal and administrative framework.

The preparatory meet-

ing marked an initial step towards coordinating the responsibilities of the election authorities, district administration and police ahead of the civic polls. The discussions focused on the need for adequate planning and cooperation among the departments concerned to ensure that the elections are conducted without disruption.

Chakraborty emphasised the importance of taking all necessary steps to ensure that the elections to the urban local bodies are held in a smooth and transparent manner.

His directions to the officials highlighted the role of the administration and police in maintaining order and supporting the effective implementation of election-related arrangements.

Pinarayi Vijayan is ordered to file a formal complaint in a corruption case by the Kerala High Court

New Delhi, Oct 09: Under the Prevention of Corruption Act, the Kerala High Court has mandated that state law enforcement file a First Information Report (FIR) against former Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, his daughter T Veena, and his son-in-law P A Mohammed Riyas.Public activist Advocate KM Shahjahan filed a writ petition, which was granted by a single bench of Justice A Badharudeen. After the enforcement directorate disclosed the crucial facts while looking into the PMLA case last month, the state ordered a preliminary investigation without submitting a formal complaint. The state government would now be required by this ruling to submit a FIR. The case originates from the controversial financial dealings between private mining firm Cochin Minerals and Rutile Limited and Exalogic Solutions, an IT company owned by T Veena. Investigative findings compiled by the Enforcement Directorate during its money laundering probe revealed that Exalogic received monthly payouts amounting to crores of rupees for services that were never rendered. Further evidence handed over by the ED to state authorities pointed to illicit fund transfers, includ-

ing Rs 85 lakh moved abroad and over Rs 20 crore distributed locally, documented in seized financial records. The state government's defense was clearly undermined by the High Court's decision. The Kerala Home Department had maintained that filing a formal FIR was not required by law and that the Crime Branch's preliminary probe was adequate. This position, according to petitioners and opponents, was an attempt to postpone legal action and protect prominent political figures. By approving the writ petition, the court confirmed that state authorities had a clear need to file a formal FIR rather than depending on drawn-out preliminary investigations due to the seriousness of the evidence discovered by federal agencies. Beyond the immediate political shockwaves, the verdict holds profound legal consequences for the ongoing federal investigation. Previously, the ED faced procedural hurdles in formally naming Pinarayi Vijayan and Mohammed Riyas as accused in its Enforcement Case Information Report due to the absence of a registered predicate offense by state police.

ED sources confirmed to that once the FIR is registered, the probe agency

will enter again in the probe that focuses only on the former Chief Minister and the family. With the High Court directing the registration of an FIR under anti-corruption laws, the state now possesses the legal foundation required to expand its prosecution.

In an exclusive interview, Kerala local self-government Minister KM Shaji attacked former Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, former minister and current MLA PA Mohammed Riyas, and their families over the Enforcement Directorate investigation. If they had nothing to conceal, Shaji replied, they had no cause to be afraid of the probe. Additionally, he cautioned against occurrences like attacks on Enforcement Directorate cars and other attempts to intimidate investigating organizations. The minister said that he had personally been the subject of investigations by the Enforcement Directorate and the CBI and that he had bravely faced them. He also used Rahul Gandhi as an example of a leader who has been questioned by the ED without using coercion. Shaji claimed that because the former chief minister had anything to conceal, he was trying to construct a defense against the probe.

The Jewar Airport, which is close to Noida, will be renamed Narendra Modi International Airport



New Delhi, Oct 09: Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath declared on Friday that the Noida International Airport in Jewar, Uttar Pradesh, would now be known as Narendra Modi International Airport. Speaking to the media, Adityanath expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Modi for the airport, which he called a significant gift to Uttar Pradesh, on behalf of the Cabinet, which had approved the project. The Uttar Pradesh Council of Minis-

ters thanks Prime Minister Narendra Modi for giving the state the Noida International Airport in Jewar.

The chief minister stated, "A proposal to name it Narendra Modi International Airport, Noida-Jewar has been approved by the Cabinet." He added that the airport was set to emerge as Uttar Pradesh's largest airport and a major aviation hub in the country. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had inaugurated the airport

on March 28 this year. It received its first flight landing with an IndiGo plane arriving from Lucknow on June 15. The airport was developed by the Yamuna International Airport Private Limited, a subsidiary of Swiss firm Zurich Airport International AG, in association with the Noida International Airport Limited, which is the implementing agency on behalf of the Uttar Pradesh government. Built at a cost of Rs 11,282 crore, the first phase of the airport had an initial annual capacity of 1.2 crore passengers, which can be scaled up to 7 crore in a few years.

It features a 3,900-metre runway capable of handling wide-body aircraft, as well as modern navigation systems. The goal of the airport's development was to establish a multimodal transportation center that is connected by road, air, and other means.

In addition to providing top-notch amenities, the airport is designed as a high-tech stronghold to guaranty the security of travelers and infrastructure worldwide. Jewar's single runway has ILS installed at both ends, so depending on the wind, planes can approach from either direction.

In local polls, Andhra loses the Supreme Court case over the 34% Backward Class quota

New Delhi, Oct 09: The Andhra Pradesh government's appeal against a high court ruling that overturned its decision to reinstate 34% reservation for Backward Classes in local bodies was dismissed by the Supreme Court on Friday. The court held that the October 1 ruling accurately concluded that there was insufficient empirical evidence to support reservation above the 50% ceiling.

A bench of Justices Dipankar Datta and Sheel Nagu remained unimpressed by senior counsel Mukul Rohatgi's submissions that the state's decision was backed by demographic and empirical material, pointing out that the high court had examined the government's arguments in detail before concluding that the exercise did not meet the requirements laid down by the Supreme Court. The bench emphasized that the state's reliance on data from a unified family survey could not, by itself, serve as the foundation for granting the enhanced quota without the necessary em-



pirical exercise to demonstrate backwardness in the context of local body representation, as the high court correctly concluded. The state administration contested the October 1 ruling of the high court, claiming that the 2026 exercise was new and could not be compared to the reserve system that was overturned six years prior. It maintained that the enhanced quota was based

on a statewide survey, community validation through gram and ward sabhas, local-body-wise data and the work of an independent dedicated commission. According to the state, the survey estimated the Backward Classes population at 50.42% across Andhra Pradesh, with their share at 48.84% in rural areas and 54.35% in urban areas. The government contended that population figures were only one of several inputs considered while determining political reservation and were not the sole basis for its decision. Based on whether the state had met the requirements outlined in previous rulings for reserving seats for Backward Classes above the total 50% cap on vertical reservation for Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), and Backward Classes, the Supreme Court declined to overturn the high court's conclusions.

The then-YSR Congress government's rule granting 34% reservation for Backward Classes in local governments was overturned by the Andhra Pradesh

High Court in March 2020. The court determined that the total reserve for SCs, STs, and Backward Classes would be 59.85%, above the Supreme Court's 50% cap. In accordance with the Supreme Court's decision in *Vikas Kishanrao Gawli v. State of Maharashtra* (2021), which held that a data-driven, contemporaneous, rigorous empirical inquiry into the nature and implications of backwardness qua local bodies within the state was mandatory, the high court ordered the state to bring Backward Classes reservation within the overall limit and conduct a thorough exercise to establish backwardness through relevant data. After the state government attempted to reinstate the increased quota in advance of local body elections, the problem reappeared this year. Two government decrees were issued in August: one restored 33.33% of the Backward Classes' quota in urban local bodies, and the other provided 34% of the reservation in rural local bodies.

Jantar Mantar protest is not permitted

New Delhi: The Delhi Police said on Friday that they had denied permission for the Cockroach Janta Party's (CJP) planned protest at Jantar Mantar on October 10. They cited the organizers' short notice, their prior violations of their commitments, and their failure to follow legal instructions during the previous protest at the location.

The decision was made primarily due to the current state of public order, safety, traffic, and law and order, according to Delhi Police. In a press conference held at the Delhi Police headquarters, joint commissioner of police (New Delhi Range) Nupur Prasad said that on October 7, the New Delhi police district received an application from CJP's co-convenor Saurav Das, intimating that they will be holding a protest at protest at Jantar Mantar regarding accountability of Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) on October 10.

According to Prasad, the police looked over the notification letter and discovered that the information was received fairly quickly. She stated that an application for organising an event at Jantar Mantar must be submitted at least ten days before to the event's scheduled date in accordance with the current criteria. It is also crucial to note that, in accordance with the CJP's prior behaviour, their promises made on earlier occasions and legal instructions were disregarded. Permission for the planned sit-in protest at Jantar Mantar is not being granted in light of the non-compliance with the prescribed procedure, past instances of non-compliance with laws and guidelines, and the current state of public order, safety and security, law and order, and traffic situation, joint CP Prasad stated. She reiterated that prohibitory orders under Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) are already in force in the New Delhi area, under which reasonable preventive restrictions have been imposed to maintain public order and safety.

"It is further informed that if anyone is found violating section 163 of the BNSS or is involved in vandalism and destruction of public property, appropriate legal action will be taken as per the previous directions of the courts," she said.

The Karnataka FDA finds infractions at multiple ice cream shops

New Delhi, Oct 09: During a statewide food safety drive that covered 45 facilities, the Karnataka Food Safety and Drug Administration (FDA) said on Friday that expired food products were seized from two ice cream manufacturing facilities in Bengaluru, while inspections at facilities in Raichur and Mysuru revealed unsanitary conditions and labeling violations.For laboratory testing, the FDA gathered seventy samples of ice cream, milk, milk powder, flavorings, sugar, food additives, and other basic ingredients. According to the government, the testing would determine whether the goods complied with established food safety regulations. "During the special inspection drive, a total of 70 food samples were collected from various ice cream manufacturing units, including ice cream, milk, milk powder, flavouring substances, sugar, various food additives and other raw materials. The samples have been sent to the concerned Government Food Laboratories for analysis to assess their quality and compliance with the prescribed food safety standards," the department said in a statement. Inspectors found desiccated coconut powder, alkalized tea and coffee mixes, Nandini Samrudhi milk, and ex-

pired Britannia Marigold cookies at Savara Ice Cream Cafe in Jayanagar's third block. Expired ordinary caramel, Nestlé Milkmaid, and Milky Mist khoa were discovered to be stored at a second Bengaluru firm, M N Enterprises in Bilekahalli, off Bannerghatta Road. The products were seized by inspectors, who noted labeling flaws. "Expired food products, including plain caramel, Nestlé Milkmaid and Milky Mist khoa, were seized from the said ice cream manufacturing unit. In addition, deficiencies relating to labelling requirements were also observed," the department said. According to the agency, both Bengaluru establishments will be subject to additional legal action under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, as well as the norms and regulations established under it. The Gemini Ice Cream Manufacturing Unit in Raichur was notified after inspectors discovered unsanitary conditions there. Officials discovered labeling errors at the John Candy Ice Cream Manufacturing Unit in Mysuru and seized ₹20,000 worth of ice cream items."Deficiencies pertaining to labeling standards were found during the examination of the aforementioned ice cream production facility.

The India Bloc will march to Rashtrapati Bhavan on the fourth day of the "Vote Chori" protest

New Delhi, Oct 09: The leaders of the Opposition INDIA group will march toward Rashtrapati Bhavan on Day 4 of their protests over suspected "vote chori" after gathering at Parliament House in the morning, according to sources.

The protest leader, Rahul Gandhi, has stated unequivocally that "this will not stop" until Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar steps down due to purported errors in the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of voting registers. The Congress and INDIA bloc would continue to take to the streets, face arrests and legal cases to "save the Constitution and democracy", Gandhi has said. Congress sources state that all opposition MPs will sign the memorandum to be submitted to the President

in the Central Hall. The plan, sources say, involves a march on foot from the Central Hall to Rashtrapati Bhavan and court arrest wherever they are stopped. An appointment has been set for 8 p.m. by President Droupadi Murmu.

Congress sources claim that all party floor leaders have received a message. According to sources, the floor leaders of all parties have been told of today's demonstration and invited to take part by Congressman KC Venugopal, a crucial Rahul Gandhi aide.

High-level sources claim that Rahul Gandhi has also asked KC Venugopal for a report on the absence of Congress MPs.

According to sources, the MP has been asked to provide an explanation for their absence. Samajwadi



Party chief Akhilesh Yadav is not in Delhi today, however, several of his party MPs will reach the Central Hall and join the march.

Uddhav Thackeray's Shiv Sena will not participate in today's INDIA alliance protest. None of the leaders - Uddhav Thackeray, Sanjay Raut, or Arvind Sawant - will attend the INDIA alliance meeting, sources said. Before heading to Rajghat for a protest program on Thursday, opposition MPs were entertained by

Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge. Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, and a number of opposition figures were earlier arrested while trying to march in the direction of Jantar Mantar. Delhi cops refuted the opposition's claims that cops stopped their demonstration.

In relation to the demonstration on Wednesday, police also filed formal complaints against Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra.

Meghalaya will shortly see the opening of three additional polytechnics: Education Minister

Shillong, Oct 09: Meghalaya Education Minister Lakhmen Rymbui on October 8 stated three additional polytechnics will be constructed in the state as part of efforts to enhance technical and skill-based education. Speaking at the concluding programme of the Diamond Jubilee celebrations of Shillong Polytechnic, Rymbui said Meghalaya presently has four polytechnics, with three more anticipated to come up soon.He also urged for better industry links to guarantee that technical education maintains pace with evolving technology and the requirements of the job market.

Speaking on the theme "Vocationalising the Future", the minister said technical institutions must continually upgrade their curricula and training programmes. He

questioned whether automobile engineering graduates were adequately equipped to work on electric vehicles and whether electrical engineering students were receiving sufficient exposure to emerging areas such as solar and wind energy.

In order to give students actual training and experience, Rymbui advocated for increased cooperation between polytechnics and businesses. He proposed collaborations with East Jaintia Hills cement plants for mechanical engineering students' industrial training, renewable energy organizations for solar technology exposure, and automakers for electric car training. Additionally, the minister proposed that rather than restricting government support for new polytechnics to approving positions, insti-

tutions might get funding to hire academics and business professionals in accordance with their needs.

He said the government alone could not meet every requirement of technical education and called for innovative approaches to ensure students acquire skills needed to remain employable in a changing job market. Rymbui said Shillong Polytechnic had generated more than 10,000 graduates over six decades, many of whom had gone on to hold prominent posts, including chief engineers and heads of departments.

He said that the development of the Shillong Government College of Engineering and the College of Architecture and Urban Planning were two examples of how the institution's growth has

aided in the state's expansion of technical education. Congratulating the institution for reaching its 60th anniversary, MLA Mawlai Brightstarwell Marbaniang emphasized the alumni's commitment to Meghalaya's progress. Shillong Polytechnic was established in October 1965 under the erstwhile composite state of Assam and has since become a key institution for diploma-level technical education in Meghalaya.

The state's technical education network increased with the establishment of Jowai and Tura Polytechnics in 2001, while Williamnagar Polytechnic was founded in 2026. The College of Architecture and Urban Planning was founded in 2026, and the Shillong Government College of Engineering was founded in 2022.

The Centre keeps a close watch on sellers of spurious seeds and adulterated fertilizers

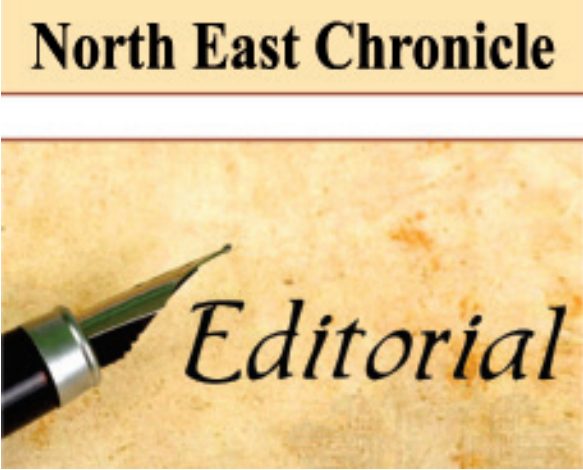
Ranchi, Oct 09: It is important to protect farmers from spurious seeds, adulterated fertilizers and substandard pesticides. To increase the income of farmers, modern agricultural technology, value addition and natural farming have to be promoted. The benefits of the technologies developed in the agricultural research institutes should reach all the farmers of the country. This was stated by the Union Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Shri Bhagirath Chaudhary while addressing the Pre-Rabi Farmers Seminar held at Indian Institute of Agricultural Biotechnology (ICAR-IIAB), Garhkhata, Ranchi on Thursday. Union Minister of State for Agriculture Bhagirath Chaudhary appealed to the farmers to use

natural farming in a part of their agricultural land. He said soil testing and use of balanced fertilizers play an important role in reducing the cost of cultivation and increasing productivity. Farmers need to cultivate through scientific methods and take advantage of available farming techniques. Director General of Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) Dr ML Jat said that there is a huge potential for agricultural revolution in eastern India. In Jharkhand, there is a need to promote the cultivation of Rabi crops in the fields left vacant after paddy harvesting.

This can lead to better utilisation of available agricultural land and opportunities to increase farmers "income. During the programme, Union Agricul-

ture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan inaugurated Birs Munda Multipurpose Auditorium, Jaipal Singh Munda Sports Complex and NextGen Breeding Facility through video conferencing. He also laid the foundation stone of a new guest house. Around 1500 farmers from Ranchi, Khunti, Gumla and Ramgarh participated in the programme. Various agricultural inputs including advanced seeds of wheat, peas, mustard and vegetables, nano urea, nano DAP and mineral mixtures were distributed among the farmers.

Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, while addressing through video conferencing, said that the tribal traditions of Jharkhand have a deep understanding of nature, water and plant conservation.



The hidden costs of unchecked urban sprawl in Assam

Even as an ongoing census exercise in Assam is expected to add more census towns to the map, the persistent unplanned growth of existing urban areas in the state has remained a critical administrative gap. Official data reveals that of the 104 notified cities and towns in the state, master plans have been notified for 77, while master plans for 27 towns are in the draft stage. Master Plans play a crucial role in regulating land use in a notified town for different purposes such as residential, commercial, institutional, transportation, recreational, industrial, roads and drainage networks, waste management, healthcare, etc. When implementation of the Marter Plan gets delayed, growth takes place in mixed and chaotic form, making it difficult for urban authorities to enforce zoning regulation, environmental protection, and infrastructure creation to ensure planned expansion. Various towns in the state now mirror the urban chaos of Guwahati — traffic snarl, waterlogging, and poor waste management in Guwahati as Master Plan implementation missed many target dates. This harsh reality is a grim reminder to the Directorate of Town and Country Planning that notifying the final master plans for the towns is not going to ensure the desired planned growth. One can imagine the accumulation of problems in those towns where the master plans are yet to be notified and enforced. If Master Plans miss their target dates, the goal of transforming all notified towns into climate-resilient cities will remain merely theoretical rather than becoming a practical reality. The mandate for climate-resilient cities requires preparation and creation of an efficient drainage system, conservation of wetlands to address problems of flash floods, creation of urban forests to reduce the heat island effect, etc. The introduction of on-line building permission is a pragmatic approach to enforce land use planning, as it makes the permission process transparent, easily accessible and faster. Extending the system to all notified towns without delay is essential for the retrospective regularisation of buildings constructed without approved designs and mandatory permissions. Real estate growth in various towns has led to drastic changes in land use patterns. If multi-storied apartments or housing complexes come up without the provision of adequate roads, open space for parks and recreation, proper drainage and sewage systems, and adequate public transport connectivity, then there is no escape from problems of waterlogging and other chronic urban dysfunctions. In some towns, accumulated civic stress has already reached such a stage that solutions like

the construction of flyovers have not been able to resolve persistent traffic congestion. Undertaking projects in a piecemeal manner cannot contribute much to planned urban growth. Projects such as constructing an efficient drainage network require implementation phases as outlined in the Master Plan. Still, delays in implementation due to the lack of capacity of the implementing agencies or gaps in detailed project reports and timely utilisation of funds leave a cascading impact, delaying all phases. Often, delays in the timely submission of utilisation certificates result in the postponement of subsequent instalments. This situation calls for prioritising the capacity building of civic authorities in project planning and execution. When a particular area of a city or town witnesses growth in terms of settlement of people, commercial activities or institutional activities that attract more migrant populations to these areas, the authorities cannot afford to delay enforcing the land use and zoning regulations, as it would only render the existing master plan infructuous. Creating a new master plan for an area becomes challenging after the existing plan has failed, as new surveys can reveal unplanned growth but often do not provide effective solutions to address it. Ironically, lessons were not learnt from failure to enforce past master plans for Guwahati City, and the urgency to enforce the notified plans for various towns is still missing. Making participation of people central to the planning and enforcement process is essential to ensure expeditious implementation of the master plans for towns. Building awareness among residents on the importance of Master Plan and adherence to land use and other regulations included is essential to ensure the cities or town resilient and sustainable. Making elected bodies stronger can ensure the people to play their part in electing educated and committed representatives who would push for expeditious implementation of the master plans to make cities and towns liveable and sustainable. Roping in various domain experts is crucial to make correct projections of population growth and how it is going to impact demand for housing, public and personal mobility, healthcare services, education, and commercial services during the Master Plan period and beyond so that adequate resources can be mobilised in time to enforce the plan provisions. Simply classifying an area based on population growth and replacing agricultural activities with non-farm livelihoods does not transform a rural area into a town; only planned growth can truly make it urban.

India’s rise demands a diplomatic leadership role

External affairs minister S Jaishankar’s statement that India has gone “beyond advocacy” to bring about a ceasefire between Russia and Ukraine and an agreement on the safety of shipping in the Black Sea is welcome news. In a parallel back-channel process, India’s good offices were used to facilitate a high-level direct engagement between the UAE and Iran, with the aim of easing tensions between the two States. These developments indicate a nascent shift from the established diplomatic practice of the past few decades, when Indian foreign policy tended to shy away from international peacemaking initiatives. The recent instances of departure augur well for a rising power.

Major powers always project themselves as problem-solvers and solution-providers in order to accumulate soft power, gain acceptance as responsible players, and compete with rivals in multiple corners of the world. Although these motives are not altruistic or humanistic, being seen to be doing good helps sustain a big power’s leadership or hegemony and burinishes its image. This is why even US President Donald Trump, who is an absolute transactionalist and

abhorrer of “globalism”, keeps bragging about having ended eight global wars (factcheckers obviously dispute it). In 2026, Trump also set up an organisation called the Board of Peace, with 27 member-countries and the lofty goal “to promote stability, restore dependable and lawful governance, and secure enduring peace in areas affected or threatened by conflict.” Of course, Trump’s devastating war against Iran and his military intervention in Venezuela can be held up as illustrations of his true nature. His actions, which are against fundamental principles of the United Nations Charter, mean he is nowhere close to being a true advocate of peace, let alone being in consideration for Nobel Peace Prize that he so covets. But the point here is that peacemaking by the US benefits its national interests and gives Washington a say in shaping international security through diplomatic means. The other superpower of our times, China, is well aware of the power dimension that is inherent in peacemaking. In 2025, it launched the International Organization for Mediation (IOMed). IOMed has 47 signatory States and claims to be working “to promote and facilitate peaceful settlement of international

disputes and to develop friendly relations and cooperation among States through mediation.” China has mediated, brokered, or otherwise facilitated agreements between Saudi Arabia and Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan, Sudan and South Sudan, and among the Palestinian factions. The results of all these peacemaking efforts are mixed, at best, and China’s own aggressive expansionist and militaristic behaviour in Asia suggests that its global peacemaking spree is mere window-dressing. But appearing to be a peacemaker bolsters China’s self-promotion as a different kind of superpower, one whose rise need not be feared by anyone. India is not yet a superpower and hence is not going to replicate exactly what the US and China are doing in name of peacemaking. Unlike Washington and Beijing, New Delhi is not a direct military stakeholder or a predominant economic force in either Eastern Europe or in West Asia. But the fact that India is not a camp-follower of either the US or China and is steadily rising as an independent power centre, with strategic autonomy of its own, lends it credibility as a peace mediator or messenger. This is the reason why both the Russians and

the Ukrainians, as well as the Emiratis and the Iranians, have appreciated India’s role and taken India’s behind-the-scenes constructive conversations, messages, and suggestions seriously. Over the past decade, as great power rivalries, tensions, and wars peaked, there has been a clear vacuum in terms of influential, trustworthy, and reliable States that can bring warring parties to the table in an effort to find common ground. By adopting a pro-peace, pro-cooperation, and pro-rules-based-order stance, India has carved out a distinct identity for itself as a bridgebuilder between the geopolitical antipodes of East and West, North and South. This avatar of India brought rich dividends when it hosted the G20 summit in 2023 and the BRICS summit in 2026. But arriving at a consensus in large multilateral forums whose summits India hosted is not sufficient, because the optics of such summits do not last forever. What will as India rises is sustained political will in New Delhi to invest in peacemaking in the conflict-torn parts of the world with the clear-eyed purpose of enhancing India’s power and stature. Conflict-affected regions where India enjoys robust strategic partnerships, and

where the timing for mediation is ripe, should be prioritised for diplomatic interventions to yield long-term gains that are in Indian interests, and lay the basis for India to emerge as a third force vis-à-vis the US and China. Unlike in the era of Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, when as a newly independent India ventured into a frenzy of peacemaking efforts in the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Suez Crisis, and the Congo Crisis out of a sense of moralistic solidarity with post-colonial nations, the scenario today is one where India has greater material and human resources, and bigger ambitions. Arguments that India “lacks capacity” for peacemaking due to its thinly stretched and small foreign service corps or that India does not have enough “leverage” in many war zones to succeed are misplaced. Special peace envoys, representatives, and negotiating teams from India can be drawn from a wider pool of parliamentarians, lawyers, judges, academicians, and domain experts, alongside career diplomats. As for leverage, it is not given on a platter but has to be earned by striving for it. The time for India to shed hesitations and step up to the plate as a peacemaker is now.

Closing India’s facial recognition gap: a three-step legislative roadmap

The Delhi Police used facial recognition at the Jantar Mantar protests in July and told the Supreme Court in August that the system had identified 2,873 people with criminal records in the crowd. ThePrint then reported, citing police sources and prison records, that 22 of those people were lodged in prison while the protest was on. Some may have been out on parole or furlough, the sources said, so the figure needs checking. The episode points to a gap in the law. India’s three new criminal codes rest on a simple idea: record how evidence was gathered before anyone trusts it. Yet the same codes say nothing about the software that now helps police decide whom to look for. This piece walks through that gap and suggests three amendments to close it.

The Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS)

requires police to video-record every search and seizure and send the recording to a magistrate (Sec 105). In serious cases, a forensic expert must visit the crime scene, and that visit must be filmed too (Sec 176(3)). The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) already treats electronic records as documents (Sec 2(8)). The Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA) decides what courts accept as evidence. For an electronic record, Sec 63(4) requires a certificate. The person producing the record fills in Part A. An expert signs Part B, which includes the file’s hash value. A hash value is a digital fingerprint: change a single pixel in a video and the fingerprint changes. In May, the Supreme Court declined to disturb this scheme in *Pune Bar Association v. Union of India*. It noted that artificial intelligence and deepfakes

have sharpened the challenge of proving that a record is genuine. This regime protects the police as much as the accused, because an officer who can show where a record came from has won half the argument before the trial begins. The Act also tells the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) to “process” these records alongside crime records and to share them with any law enforcement agency (Sec 4(1)). If facial recognition has a legal home, it sits inside that one undefined word. The rules the government can make under Sec 8 say nothing about how close a match must be, how the software is tested, whether searches are recorded or what happens to faces that do not match. Each force, therefore, writes its own answers. And because the Act covers anyone arrested, the database can include people

who were accused and never convicted. Sec 35 of the BNSS lets an officer arrest without a warrant on credible information or reasonable suspicion that someone has committed a cognisable offence. The law does not say whether a face match counts as credible information. An officer who acts on one is working in a gap. RTI replies in 2022 showed that Delhi Police treats a match above 80 per cent similarity as positive and looks for corroboration when the score is lower. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta told the Supreme Court in August that no action automatically follows a match. These are sound instincts, but they live in affidavits and RTI replies. The force has never published how often its system errs at that cutoff, and a similarity score of 80 does not answer the question. Prediction tools

raise the same problem. Sec 170 allows preventive arrest when an officer knows of a design to commit a cognizable offence. A forecast that crime is likely on a certain street gives the officer no such knowledge about any person. The gap also hurts investigators once a case reaches court. Sec 230 entitles the accused to the police report and the documents sent up with it. If a software lead first pointed police to him, that lead is a document nobody relies on, so it never reaches him and surfaces for the first time in cross-examination. A constable who searches a house must film it, and that footage protects him. A database search deserves the same protection. The first is timing. A certificate is needed only when someone offers an electronic record to the court. A face match is a lead. It sends officers to a door, and the trial

then rests on footage or a witness. Nobody offers the match itself, so nobody certifies it. That arrangement tells until a defence lawyer asks how the police came to that door. The second reason goes deeper. The certificate tells the court that the device worked properly and that the file has not changed since it was captured. It says nothing about whether a conclusion drawn from the file is correct. If software matches a blurry frame to the wrong face, the hash will be intact and the paperwork will certify the error faithfully. The expert’s signature does not fix this. Sec 39(2) lets an examiner of electronic evidence say whether a file is genuine. Whether a face-matching programme works on a grainy night-time frame is a scientific question under Sec 39(1), and no provision requires anyone to answer it.

Time to navigate India’s maritime frontier for economic growth

For centuries, the ocean has carried India’s trade, shaped its coastal cultures and strengthened its strategic influence. Today, with an 11,098-kilometre coastline, vast marine resources and a commanding position in the Indian Ocean, it offers a new frontier for India’s development. As the nation advances towards Viksit Bharat 2047, the Blue Economy is emerging as a powerful pathway to prosperity, sustainability and national strength. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has placed this opportunity at the heart of India’s growth vision. His 80th Independence Day speech identified the Blue Economy as one of the seven streams, or Sapta-Dhara, that will propel the country forward.

The Blue Economy is not simply an economy of the ocean, but of people, ideas and possibilities. It is about securing better livelihoods for fisherfolk and coastal communities, creating opportunities for entrepreneurs and investors, strengthening food and energy security, and using science to build climate-resilient coasts. Above all, it is about ensuring that economic progress and environmental responsibility move together. This opportunity is accompanied by urgent challenges. Marine pollution and climate change are putting tremendous pressure on marine resources. These challenges can become catalysts for innovation, sustainable intervention and investment. By accelerating technology development, enterprise creation and capital mobilisation, India

can transform emerging sectors such as offshore renewable energy, marine biotechnology, advanced aquaculture, ocean data services, sustainable tourism and deep-sea technologies into powerful engines of Blue Economy growth. A strong Blue Economy can transform sustainable fisheries and aquaculture to improve incomes and nutritional security. Modern ports, shipping and logistics can enhance trade competitiveness. Offshore renewable energy can support India’s clean-energy transition. Marine tourism can generate local enterprise and employment, while ocean science, forecasting and digital services can protect lives, assets and livelihoods. Together, these sectors can strengthen maritime security, technological self-reliance and India’s leadership across the Indian Ocean Region.

India therefore sees the Blue Economy not as a collection of isolated schemes, but as an integrated national development strategy. Its guiding principle is that science must shape policy, policy must enable enterprise, and institutions must deliver measurable value for people and the planet. The Ministry of Earth Sciences is building the scientific, technological and institutional foundation for this transition. Through the Deep Ocean Mission, marine spatial planning pilots, ocean-observation networks, digital platforms, forecasting systems and advanced marine services, the Ministry is converting ocean knowledge into public value. Indigenous

capabilities in deep-sea exploration, marine biotechnology, ocean energy and desalination are opening pathways for resource security, innovation and self-reliance. Fisheries advisories, early-warning services and shoreline-management interventions are supporting coastal livelihoods and strengthening disaster preparedness. The next phase must be defined by scale, speed and impact. India requires integrated ocean governance, stronger coordination, credible project pipelines and wider use of digital technologies for evidence-based decisions. With Blue Economy investments projected to rise from approximately Rs 3.9 lakh crore during 2015-2025 to nearly Rs 25.8 lakh crore during 2026-2035, the opportunity is historic. Innovative finance, responsible private capital, startup participation and transparent implementation will be essential to translate this potential into sustainable outcomes. Coastal communities must remain active partners and primary beneficiaries throughout this journey. The most exciting chapter belongs to India’s youth. To every young entrepreneur, investor, scientist, technologist, professional and skilled worker, the ocean economy offers a horizon without limits. Traditional sectors such as ports, shipping, logistics, fisheries and tourism are being reimaged through automation, digital platforms, cleaner fuels, electric mobility and sustainable opera-

tions. Emerging fields such as offshore renewable energy, marine biotechnology, deep-sea technologies, aquaculture, marine robotics, artificial intelligence for oceans, island tourism, electric boats and green maritime systems are creating new careers, enterprises and investment possibilities. This is the moment to build future-ready skills, launch startups, develop indigenous technologies, invest responsibly and transform research into scalable solutions. Our universities, laboratories, industries and coastal communities must become connected spaces of experimentation and enterprise. Young Indians can design smarter fishing systems, cleaner vessels, resilient ports, ocean-data platforms, bio-based products and technologies that explore the deep sea while protecting its fragile ecosystems. The Blue Economy is not a distant promise. It is a national mission waiting for a generation bold enough to lead it. I call upon India’s youth to bring their imagination, courage and ingenuity to this blue wave of transformation. Let our oceans become laboratories of innovation, engines of livelihoods and pathways to sustainable prosperity. Together, we can build an ocean economy that is productive yet responsible, globally competitive yet locally empowering, and aligned with the spirit of Sapta-Dhara. The journey towards Viksit Bharat 2047 will be shaped not only on land, but across the vast blue expanse that surrounds and connects us.

Tata AIA relaunches Vitality wellness programme with enhanced rewards and life protection benefits

Aizawl: Tata AIA Life Insurance has relaunched its Vitality wellness programme, strengthening its focus on preventive healthcare by combining life insurance protection with rewards for healthier lifestyle choices. The enhanced offering aims to make wellness more accessible through lower activity targets, improved health tracking and enhanced renewal premium discounts. The programme now allows members to earn activity points from 5,000 daily steps, compared with the earlier threshold of 7,500, and integrates Health Connect to improve the tracking of steps, heart rate and other health data. Members can progress through Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum tiers by completing activities such as workouts and health screenings. Benefits include discounts on fitness products, wearables and gym memberships through partners including Decath-



lon, Puma, Google, FitPass and cult.fit. Tata AIA cited a seven-year study involving around 465,000 Vitality members, peer-reviewed by the London School of Economics, which found that moving from inactivity to an active lifestyle could reduce mortality risk by up to 57%. The company said the potential five-year increase in life expectancy is indicative and individual outcomes may vary. In Aizawl, the programme could create opportunities to promote wellness-linked insurance

among customers seeking preventive healthcare and long-term financial security. Its adoption will depend on affordability, awareness and access to participating health and fitness services. “The future of insurance lies in prevention as much as protection,” said Sujeet Kothare, Chief Business Officer – Proprietary Business, Propositions & Marketing, Tata AIA Life Insurance. Tata AIA reported total premium income of ₹38,164 crore in FY26, marking 21% growth over FY25.

Rising neurological and spine disorders highlight specialised healthcare opportunities in Northeast India

Aizawl: Manipal Hospital Mukundapur has highlighted the growing burden of neurological and spine-related disorders in Northeast India, pointing to the importance of early diagnosis, specialised treatment and improved access to advanced healthcare during a press meet in Aizawl on Friday. The session brought together media representatives and senior clinicians, including Dr Sukalyan Purkayastha, Director and Senior Consultant, Neurointervention and Endovascular Surgery, Manipal Hospitals Mukundapur Cluster, and Dr Anindya Basu, Senior Consultant and Clinical Lead, Spine Surgery, Manipal Hospital Mukundapur. Dr Purkayastha identified stroke as a significant public health concern, noting that delayed symptom recognition and late hospital presentation can affect treatment outcomes. He highlighted the role of multidisciplinary teams, advanced neu-



roimaging, specialised stroke management and rehabilitation in comprehensive neurological care. Dr Basu attributed the rising incidence of back pain and spinal disorders to sedentary lifestyles, prolonged screen time, poor posture, occupational strain, obesity and

degenerative conditions. He noted that younger professionals are increasingly affected and stressed the importance of accurate diagnosis, minimally invasive surgical techniques and personalised rehabilitation. In Aizawl, gaps in access to highly specialised

medical services underline opportunities to strengthen referral networks, healthcare partnerships and public awareness. Improved links between regional healthcare providers and metropolitan hospitals could help patients access specialist consultations

and advanced treatment. The discussion also highlighted the role of responsible media communication in promoting informed healthcare decisions, as demand for specialised medical services gains importance across the Northeast.

KEC wins Rs 1,030 cr transmission order,



New Delhi: KEC International, an infrastructure engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) company, has secured new orders worth Rs 1,030 crore across its transmission and distribution (T&D), renewables, and cables and conductors businesses.

The RPG Group company announced the order wins on October 8, 2026. With these additions, KEC International’s year-to-date (YTD) order intake has crossed Rs 8,600 crore.

KEC International wins transmission orders in Bhutan, Saudi Arabia

KEC International’s T&D business has secured orders for a 400 kV transmission line project in Bhutan and an additional order for a 380 kV transmission line in Saudi Arabia. The company has also received orders for the supply of towers, hardware and poles in the Americas. KEC International’s cables and conductors business has also secured multiple orders in domestic and international markets, contributing to the company’s overall order intake. Commenting on the order wins, Vimal Kejriwal, Managing Director and CEO of KEC International, said, “We are pleased with the order wins across our businesses. The T&D business has significantly strengthened its order book with multiple wins, including its re-entry into Bhutan, further diversifying its international footprint. “In Renewables, the business continues to gain momentum in the Wind EPC segment, securing a large order from a reputed private developer, adding a marquee client to its portfolio. With these wins, our YTD order intake stands at over Rs. 8,600 crores.”

Gold Prices Ease Marginally, While Silver Holds Steady for Third Consecutive Day

Mumbai: Gold prices showed a marginal downward trend during early trading in the bullion market on Friday while silver prices remained unchanged for the third consecutive day.

Following the slight decline, 24-carat gold was trading at prices ranging from Rs. 1,49,530 to Rs. 1,49,680 per 10 grams across most bullion markets in the country. Similarly, 22-carat gold was selling in the range of Rs. 1,37,080 to Rs. 1,37,230 per 10 grams. With silver prices remaining stable, the white metal continued to trade at Rs. 2,34,900 per kilogram in the Delhi bullion market. In Delhi, 24-carat gold was trading at Rs. 1,49,680 per 10 grams, while the price of 22-carat gold stood at Rs. 1,37,230 per 10 grams. In Mumbai, the country’s financial capital, 24-carat gold was selling at Rs. 1,49,530 per 10 grams, while 22-carat gold was priced at



Rs. 1,37,080 per 10 grams. Similarly, the retail price of 24-carat gold in Ahmedabad stood at Rs. 1,49,580 per 10 grams, while 22-carat gold was priced at Rs. 1,37,130 per 10 grams. In addition to these major cities, 24-carat gold was selling at Rs. 1,49,530 per 10 grams in Chennai,

while 22-carat gold was priced at Rs. 1,37,080 per 10 grams. In Kolkata, 24-carat gold was also trading at Rs. 1,49,530 per 10 grams, while 22-carat gold stood at Rs. 1,37,080 per 10 grams. In Bhopal, the price of 24-carat gold was Rs. 1,49,580 per 10 grams, while 22-carat gold

Kotak, ICICI, RBL, KVB, SFB: Nuvama shares

New Delhi: Nuvama Institutional Equities expects banks to report strong earnings in the second quarter of the financial year 2026-27 (Q2 FY27), driven by robust credit growth and benign asset quality. The domestic brokerage’s preferred banking stocks are Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd, ICICI Bank Ltd, RBL Bank Ltd, Karur Vysya Bank Ltd (KVB) and Ujjivan Small Finance Bank Ltd. Nuvama said funding through Foreign Currency Non-Resident (FCNR-B) deposits could weigh on banks’ margins in the near term, although the impact should largely reverse over the next two to three quarters.

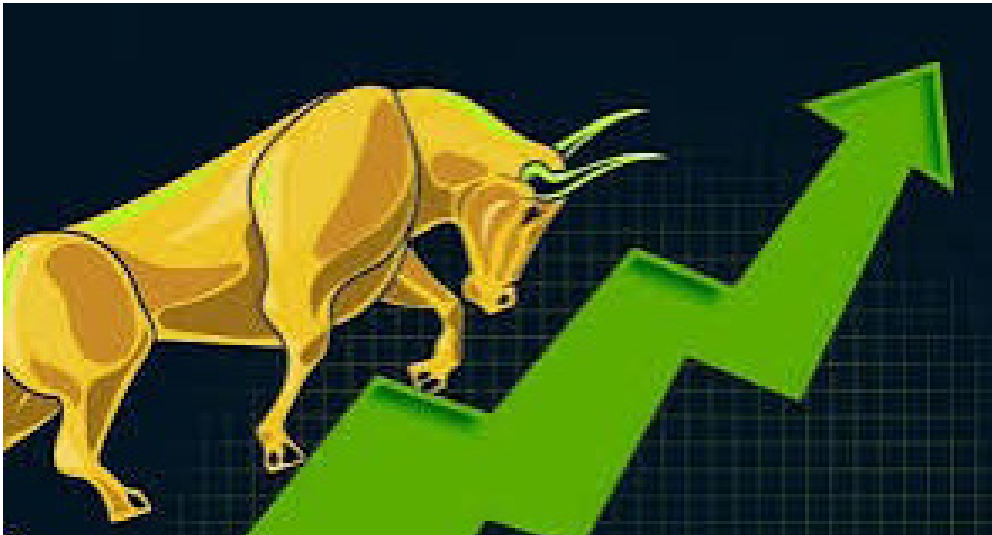
It added that the managing director (MD) appointments at Kotak Mahindra Bank and HDFC Bank remove a key overhang, paving the way for a gradual re-rating of large private sector banks. The brokerage has a ‘Buy’ rating on Kotak Mahindra Bank with a 12-month target price of Rs 550, ICICI Bank at Rs 1,850, RBL Bank at Rs 470, Karur Vysya Bank at Rs 360 and Ujjivan Small Finance Bank at Rs 90. In the non-banking financial company (NBFC) space, Nuvama expects healthy credit and earnings growth in Q2 FY27, supported by operating leverage and benign credit costs. However, it flagged potential earnings risks in FY28 estimates for Mahindra & Mahindra Financial Services (MMFSL) and L&T Finance (LTF) due to rate hikes and the capping of insurance commissions.

The brokerage’s preferred NBFC stocks are Piramal Finance, Shriram Finance, Aditya Birla Capital and CreditAccess Grameen. It has assigned a ‘Buy’ rating to Piramal Finance with a target price of Rs 2,600, Shriram Finance at Rs 1,250, Aditya Birla Capital at Rs 480 and CreditAccess Grameen at Rs 1,700

Sensex, Nifty Rally Nearly 1% as Buying Momentum Lifts Indian Stock Market

New Delhi: The domestic stock market witnessed a strong upward trend during early trading on Friday, with both benchmark indices opening on a firm note. Although the markets came under mild selling pressure shortly after the opening bell, buying activity soon gathered momentum, lifting both the Sensex and the Nifty. By 10 a.m., the Sensex was trading 0.95 per cent higher, while the Nifty had gained 0.98 per cent.

The BSE Sensex opened at 71,776.67, gaining 183.43 points, or 0.26 per cent. Shortly after trading began, mild selling pressure dragged the index down marginally. However, buyers soon returned to the market, triggering a strong recovery and pushing the index higher. Amid continued buying and selling activity, the Sensex was trading at 72,273.71 at 10 a.m., up 680.47 points, or 0.95 per cent. Similarly, the NSE Nifty opened at 22,314.95, advancing 83.15 points, or 0.37 per cent. However, selling pressure immediately after the opening bell pushed the index into negative territory, with the Nifty slipping to 22,294.75. The benchmark subsequently recovered as buyers stepped in and renewed their purchasing activity. Supported by sustained buying interest, the index moved back into positive territory. By 10 a.m., the Nifty was trading at 22,449.05, up 217.25 points, or 0.98 per cent. Market participation remained active, with 2,421 stocks trading on the stock exchange at the time.



Of these, 1,391 shares were trading in positive territory, while 1,030 were in the red. Among the 30 constituents of the Sensex, 25 were trading higher, supported by buying interest, while five were trading lower under selling pressure. On the Nifty, 35 of the 50 constituent stocks were in positive territory, while the remaining 15 were trading in the red.

Among the major stocks, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), HDFC Life Insurance, Max Healthcare, Apollo Hospitals and Infosys were trading

with gains ranging from 2.51 per cent to 5.06 per cent as of 10 a.m. In contrast, Bharat Electronics, BSE Ltd., Reliance Industries, Cipla and Adani Enterprises were trading lower, with losses ranging from 0.26 per cent to 1.29 per cent.

In the previous trading session on Wednesday, the Sensex had closed at 71,593.24, declining 1,045.46 points, or 1.44 per cent. The Nifty had also ended the session on a weak note, falling 371.25 points, or 1.64 per cent, to close at 22,231.80.

International equity markets demonstrate heterogeneous performance; equities across Asia exhibit divergent

New Delhi: Global markets are sending mixed signals on Friday, with US equities ending the previous session on a mixed note, Dow Jones futures trading higher, and European markets remaining under sustained pressure. Asian markets are also witnessing mixed trading, with major indices moving in different directions. The US stock market remained under pressure during the previous session amid rising crude oil prices and concerns over interest rates. Despite these headwinds, the Dow Jones Industrial Average advanced 0.10 per cent to close at 51,231.64 points. In contrast, the S&P 500 declined 0.47 per cent to settle at 7,765.36 points. The Nasdaq Composite also ended lower, shedding 345.35 points, or 1.25 per cent, to close at 27,193.34 points. Meanwhile, Dow Jones futures were trading 0.14 per cent higher at

51,302.61 points. European markets remained under persistent selling pressure during the previous session. The FTSE 100 declined 0.16 per cent to close at 10,441.60 points, while France’s CAC 40 fell 0.51 per cent to settle at 7,729.69 points. Germany’s DAX suffered a sharper decline, dropping 297.39 points, or 1.20 per cent, to close at 24,806.97 points.

Asian markets are trading on a mixed note on Thursday. Of the nine Asian market indices cited, five were trading in positive territory, while two were registering losses. South Korea’s stock market remained closed for Hangeul Day, which commemorates the Korean alphabet, while Taiwan’s market was shut for National Day. Consequently, the KOSPI and Taiwan Weighted Index remained inactive

during the session. Among Asian markets, China’s Shanghai Stock Exchange witnessed a sharp decline, with the Shanghai Composite Index trading 1.21 per cent lower at 3,765.71 points. Japan’s Tokyo Stock Exchange also faced sustained selling pressure, pushing the Nikkei 225 down by 275.11 points, or 0.40 per cent, to 68,767 points. On the positive side, GIFT Nifty was trading 148.50 points, or 0.67 per cent, higher at 22,403.50 points. Singapore’s Straits Times Index advanced 0.17 per cent to 5,387.36 points. Hong Kong’s Hang Seng Index registered a notable gain, rising 239.21 points, or 1.01 per cent, to 24,025 points. Meanwhile, Indonesia’s Jakarta Composite Index gained 0.16 per cent to reach 6,050.73 points, while Thailand’s SET Composite Index advanced 0.15 per cent to trade at 1,572.95 points.

Trump approves firing-squad execution of Fort Hood shooter, Pentagon says

Pentagon: Donald Trump has approved the execution by US army firing squad of Nidal Hasan, who was sentenced to death for killing 13 people at Fort Hood in 2009, the chief Pentagon spokesperson, Sean Parnell, said in a social media post.

Hasan, who was an army psychiatrist, would become the first US soldier to be executed by the US military in more than 60 years.

Parnell said in a post on X that the defense secretary, Pete Hegseth, “has recommended – and President Donald J. Trump has approved – death by U.S. Army firing squad for convicted terrorist Nidal Malik Hasan”.

He added: “The Secretary of

the Army will set the time and place of the execution. Judgment day for Hasan has finally come.”

Hasan was sentenced to death by a military jury in 2013 for carrying out the mass shooting at the Fort Hood base.

He chose to conduct his own defense during the trial but called no witnesses and gave no testimony, and made no attempt to deny the charges. Court-appointed defense attorneys expressed concern that he was seeking execution.

Hasan, a US-born Muslim of Palestinian descent, opened fire on 5 November 2009 at a medical facility in the sprawling military base, which served as a staging point for soldiers to de-



ploy to combat zones in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Twelve of the dead and 30 of the wounded were soldiers. Hasan was shot and partially paralyzed by a civilian police officer who responded to the attack.

The court that convicted Hasan was told that he was opposed to the US military’s occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan, and that Hasan had spoken online with the radical cleric Anwar al-Awlaki, an al-Qaida propagandist and American citizen subsequently killed in a US drone strike in Yemen.

Although US mass shootings are disturbingly common, they are rare at military facilities.

In 2025, a soldier opened fire at a US military base in the state of Georgia, wounding five fellow troops before he was tackled and apprehended.

In 2019, a US sailor fatally shot two people and wounded a third at a base in Hawaii, while a Saudi military student shot dead three people at a military facility in Florida the same year.

A Kuwaiti-born US citizen attacked two military installations in Tennessee in 2015, killing four marines and a sailor. The FBI concluded the violence was inspired by a “foreign terrorist group”.

Two years earlier, a man killed 12 people and wounded eight at the Washington Navy Yard in the US capital before being shot dead by officers.

Egyptian journalists plan weekend protest over detention of six colleagues

Africa: Egyptian journalists are planning a new protest in Cairo this weekend after six colleagues were charged with terrorism offences amid allegations they had been tortured in police detention.

Last week, Egyptian authorities arrested the journalists, from the independent factchecking and investigative platform Matsadaash, accusing them in a statement of being unlicensed and producing false news on behalf of the outlawed Muslim Brotherhood.

The journalists – Abdallah Qadri, Mohamed Ashraf Abu Emeira, Mohamed Adel, Islam Barakat, Mohamed Mahmoud and Omar Helal – were arrested at their homes and in the street by plainclothes officers.

One was charged on Sunday, the other five late on Wednesday. All six have told lawyers they had been tortured and forced to film false confessions, allegations that police deny.

“We were horrified by the news of the torture of our

six colleagues,” said Hadeer El-Mahdawy, a journalist on the protest’s organising committee.

In a statement issued on Wednesday evening, the public prosecution said “three journalists who alleged ill-treatment had undergone forensic examinations that found no injuries or signs of violence”.

Another journalist, Rasha Azab, was questioned by the



supreme state security prosecution for a post on social media criticising the interior ministry over the arrests. Released on bail, Azab faces charges of using a website to promote ideas advocating terrorist crimes. Her lawyer, Mahienour El-Masry, said prosecutors confronted Azab with 11 identical complaints lodged in different governorates over the post.

Lobna Darwish, of the

Egyptian Journalists’ Syndicate, whose lawyers are representing the six from Matsadaash, said the journalists “had told prosecutors that they were blindfolded and handcuffed for days, beaten and forcibly stripped”. Some were given electric shocks, she said, while journalists also described threats to harm members of their families.

Darwish added that they

were forced to read purported confessions from sheets of paper in filmed sessions involving “repeated takes” in front of what she described as “professional filming crews”.

The interior ministry has denied the journalists’ allegations of torture or ill-treatment, saying they were “baseless and an attempt by the detainees to evade the accusations against them”. It described the six as “Muslim Brotherhood elements working for the group”.

For journalists, the arrests and alleged abuse form part of a broader escalation from the Egyptian authorities against independent media, amid poor pay and insecure employment across the profession.

“We are at a very difficult moment on every level,” El-Mahdawy said. “But it is very important that we declare our rejection of what is happening and use every tool we have to protect what remains of this profession, and to defend our colleagues and ourselves.”

Brazil:

More fire, more ash, more crime, more death. And a globally important ecosystem driven ever more rapidly towards a point of no return. That is the prospect for the Amazon rainforest for at least the next four years if Flávio Bolsonaro holds on to the lead he established this week in the first round of Brazil’s presidential election.

This appears to be of far more concern to the outside world than to voters in Latin America’s biggest, richest and most biodiverse nation.

The far-right son of the former president and jailed coup-monger Jair Bolsonaro won 47% of the vote, putting him in pole position before the 25 October runoff with the incumbent, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, who was backed by 44.2%.

The result is an unnerving jolt to climate and nature campaigners. Taken out of context, this appears to be a vote against the forest. The current administration of Lula (as the veteran Brazilian president is best known) has reduced deforestation in the Amazon by almost 50%.

But that success secured little noticeable electoral traction for either Lula or pro-forest candidates in other polls held the same day. The former environment minister Marina Silva lost a bid for the Senate and Joenia Wapichana, a former head of Brazil’s Indigenous affairs agency, Funai, failed to win a seat in Congress. Out of 57 Indigenous candidates, only two won.

Flávio Bolsonaro is the heir to the political legacy of his father, Jair Bolsonaro, a former army captain whose four years in power resulted in a 59.5% increase in Amazon deforestation, roughly equivalent to destroying 2bn trees.

If he wins, Bolsonaro has promised to free his father, who was imprisoned for plotting a military coup and attempting to annihilate democracy in Brazil. He has said that his father could have any position he wants in his administration.

Flávio Bolsonaro has shown that he will be just as willing as his father to dismantle protections for climate and nature and allow illegal miners, loggers and land grabbers to invade Indigenous territories. As a lawmaker, he backed a 2019 bill to eliminate requirements for landowners in the Amazon to conserve a proportion of native vegetation. In his manifesto, he completely ignored the climate crisis. And he has courted support from some of the most predatory landowners in the rainforest.

He is also part of a move-

ment – Bolsonaroism – that is geared towards maximising profits for extractive industries regardless of the environmental cost. Take its victorious candidate for the Amazonian state of Pará, Daniel Santos, who was fined \$275,000 (£208,000) for deforesting 280 hectares (690 acres) of his land without authorisation and is now promising to waive such penalties. As a result of Sunday’s election, Bolsonaroists now control seven of the nine states in the Brazilian Amazon, and could win an eighth in the runoff.

Bolsonarist influence in the legislature, which is dominated by agribusiness interests, is also growing. Flávio’s brother, Carlos, and mother-in-law, Michelle, were elected to the Senate, while an uncle and brother won seats in the lower house of deputies.

Even before the election, Congress had been pushing hard to weaken environmental protections. Now it will be almost impossible to stop, particularly given the current chaos in the supreme court, which has been a partial check on untrammelled expansion by miners, ranchers and monoculturalists. Against these forces, Lula would struggle to govern even if he wins the runoff.

As a result, it is not just the Amazon that is in peril, but all of Brazil’s biomes, its traditional peoples and the stability of the global climate. The question now is why voters paid so little heed to these concerns.

That inquest is already under way. Many focus on the influence of social media, which has been used far more effectively by the far right. During the Bolsonaro administration, his sons were part of the “hate cabinet” that spread fear and disinformation via WhatsApp groups and other online channels – Bolsonaro’s second son, Carlos, was indicted by federal police for leading the group. Environmentalists were often the target.

Another factor is the expansion of US-style Pentecostalism, which is steadily supplanting Catholicism across Brazil, particularly in the Amazon. The political and environmental consequences of that religious shift can be seen by comparing the pro-nature treatise of the past two popes with the sermons of many evangelical preachers who encourage followers to seek wealth today as much as, if not more, than following moral creeds to ensure a good afterlife.

Lula, 80, has been slow to adapt. Although he is arguably the most iconic and

successful Latin American politician of the 21st century, his messaging seems less attuned to the people than it was in his heyday. The Workers party has struggled in an era of weaker unions and in some ways been the victim of its own success – with education and social policies that raised millions out of poverty and created greater expectations for consumption and entrepreneurship; and huge subsidies to farmers, who now support the right wing because they chafe at environmental limits.

Tied into those explanations are the geopolitics of the climate and nature crisis, which is exacerbating great power rivalry between the US and China and amplifying extreme ideologies as much as extreme weather. In this light, the Brazil election is just the latest in a broader pattern of the far right taking control to expand extractivism despite growing evidence that the capitalist economy is breaking planetary boundaries.

In the past two years, Donald Trump has ripped apart environmental regulations in the US and treated the rest of the Americas as his sphere of influence. Argentina was already onboard. Venezuela has been invaded for its resources, while in Colombia, Peru and Chile there has been a sharp shift to the right.

Will Brazil be the next domino to fall to Trumpism and its bonfire approach to nature? The Bolsonaro family certainly hope so. Jair went so far as to salute the US flag. His son Eduardo urged the US to apply tariffs on Brazilian people to “punish” the government for imprisoning his father. The Brazilian intelligence agency has warned that the US was trying to interfere in the election.

That election isn’t over yet. Lula stands a small chance if he can win over the many millions of voters who chose not to mark their ballots for either candidate. But the odds are stacked against him. Most of the eliminated candidates were on the right so their supporters are more likely to switch to Bolsonaro. No first round leader has ever failed to win the runoff of a Brazilian presidential election.

Voters, of course, are allowed to change their minds. Either on 25 October or, constitutionally, in four years’ time. But for how much longer will that be possible? If Bolsonaro wins, it won’t just be Lula that is finished, it could also be the Amazon and democracy itself.

USS Lincoln returns to US after long deployment supporting war on Iran

The United States aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln has returned to its home port after a 322-day deployment, including a record 265 consecutive days at sea, during which it helped wage the US-Israel war on Iran.

The vessel returned to Naval Air Station North Island in San Diego, California, on Thursday, where members of its crew were greeted by family and friends.

“It feels amazing,” 20-year-old Abel Ramirez told The Associated Press news agency, adding that his parents had driven from Texas to meet him. “There was a certain point when I never thought I would come off.”

The record-setting deployment of the USS Lincoln became a symbol for larger criticisms of the US war effort, which has dragged on since February with no clear end in sight and has strained US military stockpiles.

The prolonged deployment prompted a series of news reports calling attention to deteriorating conditions, food shortages and a



series of reported suicide attempts by crew members.

Pentagon chief Pete Hegseth praised the sailors on Wednesday in remarks that accused the media of trying to turn the ship into “a symbol of dysfunction or a symbol of low morale or a symbol of a failed mission”.

President Donald Trump and members of his administration have frequently

lashed out at the news media for critical reporting on the war on Iran. Trump himself has called the reporting about the USS Lincoln “fake news”.

“The Lincoln has been out there for a period of time, a good period of time,” he said at an Oval Office meeting on August 17. “I know people on the Lincoln, and they say it’s beautifully maintained and beautifully

taken care of.”

Earlier that month, when confronted with the amount of time the USS Lincoln had spent at sea without a port stop, Trump quipped that its deployment was “not nearly long enough”.

The reports of mental health strain on the USS Lincoln come as public opinion polls show low approval ratings among US voters for the war against

Iran.

On Thursday, the Pew Research Center released a poll that found 65 percent of Americans disapproved of Trump’s handling of the war, compared with 33 percent who approved.

The war has also fuelled concerns about the cost of living ahead of the upcoming midterm elections. Since the war began, Iran has hindered commercial traffic through the Strait of Hormuz, a critical waterway for the trade of fuel, fertiliser and other goods.

Sailors returning home on the USS Lincoln said that they were looking forward to fresh meals and spending time with their families.

Alma Solano Velez said that her husband, one of the US service members on board, shared a list of foods he had been craving over his 10-month deployment: oxtail, barbecue chicken, broccoli and shrimp empanadas, among others.

She added that he had spoken about “the lack of food and showers” and was looking forward to seeing their four-year-old daughter.

Is the 10-Step Korean Skincare Routine Effective for Indian Skin



Korean skincare has maintained considerable prominence and global cultural resonance for an extended period, with its enduring appeal demonstrating sustained, ever-growing momentum across international beauty markets. Encompassing a vast array of revolutionary innovations such as the coveted “glass skin” aesthetic and hydrating sheet masks, alongside specialized formulations including essences, highly concentrated ampoules, and rejuvenating overnight sleeping masks, K-beauty has profoundly elevated routine skincare from a mundane daily chore into an elaborate, mindful ceremonial practice. At the architectural cornerstone of this cultural and cosmetic movement lies the renowned 10-step Korean skincare regimen, a meticulously structured, multi-layered protocol thoughtfully designed to nourish, protect, and deliver deeply hydrated, luminous, and visibly radiant skin by prioritizing gentle layering, barrier health, and long-term dermatological vitality over harsh, quick-fix interventions. But does following 10 steps really make sense for everyone? More importantly, does the routine work just as well for Indian skin?

The answer is a little more complicated than a simple yes or no. Despite its name, the iconic 10-step Korean skincare routine is fundamentally less about rigidly and religiously applying ten distinct products twice every single day and much more about embracing the underlying philosophy of holistic skin health, gentle maintenance, and mindful self-care. The core conceptual architecture revolves around the foundational principles of proper, non-stripping cleansing, maintaining optimal cellular hydration levels, deploying targeted active ingredients for specific dermatological concerns, and finishing with a robust barrier-protecting moisturizer and broad-spectrum UV protection. However, when translating this multifaceted ritual into the diverse and demanding climatic conditions of India—where intense summer heat, soaring humidity, heavy urban pollution, and volatile seasonal transitions subject the skin barrier to continuous environmental stress—making thoughtful, localized adjustments becomes not just beneficial, but essential for achieving sustainable, healthy skin. What is the 10-step Korean skincare routine?

The traditional Korean skincare routine usually follows a particular order: oil cleanser, water-based cleanser, exfoliator, toner, essence, serum or ampoule, sheet mask, eye cream,

moisturiser and sunscreen. While adopting an elaborate multi-step regimen can initially feel overwhelming and time-consuming, it is crucial to recognize that flexibility and customization are central to maintaining a sustainable skincare practice. Not every specialized step needs to be performed religiously twice a day; for instance, chemical exfoliation and nourishing sheet masks function best as occasional, targeted additions to your weekly routine rather than daily obligations, while broad-spectrum sunscreen is primarily reserved for daytime protection against harmful ultraviolet radiation. By understanding that skincare should adapt dynamically to your personal schedule, skin tolerance, and daily needs, you can easily streamline the process without sacrificing long-term dermatological benefits. The whole idea is to build skincare gradually, with lighter products generally applied before heavier ones. Why is Korean skincare so popular?

One reason K-beauty became such a global phenomenon is that it shifted the focus from fixing skin problems after they appeared to maintaining skin consistently. Rather than taking a reactive approach—waiting passively until severe dryness, irritation, or dullness manifest as troublesome skin problems—the proactive K-beauty philosophy places an immense, unwavering emphasis on continuous, deep hydration and maintaining optimal skin comfort and barrier integrity day in and day out. By focusing on prevention, nourishment, and sustained moisture retention, this forward-thinking paradigm has fundamentally transformed how global consumers approach daily dermatological care, successfully propelling once-niche formulations such as lightweight, nutrient-rich essences, intensely hydrating overnight sleeping masks, and convenient, serum-soaked sheet masks from specialized Korean laboratories into mainstream cosmetic staples across vanity tables worldwide. There is also something undeniably appealing about the ritual. Taking 15 or 20 minutes at night to cleanse, layer products and slow down can make skincare feel less like a chore and more like self-care. But that doesn't mean everyone needs a bathroom shelf packed with 10 different products. Does the 10-step routine work for Indian skin?

Indian skin isn't one single skin type, and that is probably the first thing to consider. Someone living in humid Mumbai may have a very different skincare routine from someone living in dry

Delhi or cooler Bengaluru. Some people deal with oily skin, while others struggle with dryness or dehydration. Then there are concerns such as tanning, uneven-looking skin, breakouts and pigmentation that can influence the products someone chooses. This is where following the Korean routine step by step can become unnecessary. A rich moisturiser that feels comforting in winter may feel far too heavy during an Indian summer. Similarly, layering several hydrating products may be lovely for dry skin but excessive for someone with oily or combination skin.

So rather than asking whether Korean skincare works for Indian skin, a better question might be: which parts of Korean skincare actually work for you? You don't necessarily need all 10 steps

The double-cleanser is one of the best-known parts of the routine. Starting with an oil-based cleanser and following it with a water-based cleanser can be useful at night, particularly if you have been wearing makeup or sunscreen. But if a single gentle cleanser is enough for your skin, there is no need to force yourself into a two-step cleanse. The same applies to toner and essence. Both can add hydration and make the routine feel more luxurious, but they aren't essential for everyone. If your moisturiser and serum already keep your skin comfortable, you may not notice much difference by adding several more layers. Then there is the sheet mask. Few products are more closely associated with K-beauty, and they can certainly make for a relaxing addition to a skincare routine. But they are better viewed as an occasional treat than something you have to use every day.

What about exfoliation? Exfoliation is another step where it is easy to get carried away.

With so many products now containing exfoliating ingredients, adding a separate exfoliator on top can sometimes make a routine more complicated than it needs to be. If you already use a treatment product with exfoliating ingredients, you may not need another exfoliating step.

The goal should be skin that feels comfortable and balanced—not a routine that contains as many products as possible.

The steps worth keeping

If you want to borrow from K-beauty without committing to the full 10-step routine, there are a few elements that are easy to incorporate. Cleansing is an obvious place to start, particularly at night. Hydration is another major part of the K-beauty philosophy. A toner, essence

or serum can be added depending on how your skin feels and how much hydration you need. Targeted serums can then be used for specific concerns, rather than simply collecting multiple products.

And then there is moisturiser and sunscreen.

For a morning routine, you could easily keep things simple with a cleanser, serum if you want one, moisturiser and sunscreen. At night, cleansing, a treatment or serum and moisturiser may be enough.

K-beauty for an Indian summer

If there is one thing that can make the 10-step routine feel less appealing, it is standing in front of your bathroom mirror on a hot, humid evening with ten products waiting to be applied. Indian weather can make lightweight textures much more appealing. Gel moisturisers, lightweight serums and easily absorbed sunscreens can feel more comfortable than several thick layers. During cooler or drier months, however, adding an extra hydrating step or switching to a richer moisturiser can make more sense. In other words, your skincare routine doesn't have to remain exactly the same throughout the year. So, should you try the 10-step Korean skincare routine?

If you love skincare and enjoy having a detailed routine, there is nothing wrong with experimenting with all 10 steps. But you don't have to follow the routine simply because it is called the 10-step routine. For most people, a simpler routine can be just as appealing and much easier to maintain.

Ultimately, the most valuable lesson to glean from the global K-beauty phenomenon is that effective skincare is never truly about accumulating an overwhelming number of products or blindly following rigid numerical rules. Instead, the true essence of the practice lies in the foundational pillars of unwavering consistency, prioritizing deep and sustained skin hydration, intentionally selecting formulations tailored to your unique skin needs, and having the patience to allow your routine the time it needs to deliver visible, lasting results. So take what works for you. Keep the essence if you love it, skip it if you don't. Use a sheet mask when you have the time. Double-cleanser when you actually need to. And don't forget the sunscreen. Because when it comes to skincare, 10 steps aren't necessarily better than five. The best routine is the one that suits your skin, your climate and, most importantly, your lifestyle.

LIFESTYLE

How to select appropriate jewelry for various party dress types

A cocktail dress inherently conveys a degree of sophistication and allure. Appropriate jewelry should enhance this aesthetic while maintaining a harmonious balance rather than creating visual conflict. Regardless of whether your dress features a streamlined, understated design or incorporates vibrant hues and intricate embellishments, the strategic selection of jewelry possesses the capacity to elevate the entire ensemble—imparting refinement, individual character, and precisely calibrated visual impact. When preparing for a cocktail occasion, one should consider pronounced geometric forms, distinctive precious stones, and layered compositions that demonstrate deliberate curation.

Let the neckline guide your necklace

When building a sophisticated jewelry ensemble, fashion expert Kanak notes that evaluating your dress neckline serves as the single most intuitive and effective starting point to ensure both visual harmony and stylistic balance. Specifically, garments featuring an open silhouette—such as a dramatic strapless cut or a romantic sweetheart neckline—provide an expansive, uninterrupted canvas that grants you absolute freedom to experiment with bold statement pieces and artistic styling combinations. Rather than defaulting to a solitary, predictable ornament, style enthusiasts can elevate their look by masterfully layering a delicate, close-fitting metallic choker with a longer, vibrant gemstone necklace that catches the light with every movement. This curated combination not only introduces rich textural dimension, depth, and structural contrast to your outfit, but it also effortlessly maintains an aura of understated elegance and refined sophistication suitable for any high-end occasion. Expanding on how neckline geometry dictates jewelry selection, fashion expert Kanak emphasizes that choosing complementary accessories is all about accentuating the natural lines of your garment without causing visual clutter. For instance, when wearing a plunging or deeper V-neck dress, opting for a delicate gemstone pendant or a classic locket serves as an ideal stylistic choice because it naturally follows, mirrors, and elongates the sharp V-shape of the neckline, creating an unbroken and harmonious



flow. Conversely, if your dress already features intricate embroidery, beadwork, structural embellishments, or high-detail lacework directly around the collar area, Kanak advises entirely bypassing a necklace to avoid visual competition; instead, allowing your statement earrings to take center stage results in a much cleaner, uncluttered, and inherently more luxurious aesthetic. Make statement earrings the focal point

Cocktail dressing provides the ideal stylistic opportunity and sartorial license to break away from everyday minimalism and embrace bold, expressive earrings that you might otherwise hesitate to reach for during your routine daily schedule. Highlighting this philosophy, fashion expert Kanak suggests stepping outside your comfort zone by leaning into striking designs such as oversized metallic hoops, avant-garde sculptural earrings, cascading dramatic drops, or eye-catching gemstone-studded statement pieces that instantly elevate your look. By deliberately choosing these high-impact accessories for evening events and social gatherings, you can effortlessly transform a simple cocktail dress into a memorable ensemble, using your earrings as a focal point to showcase your personality, frame your face, and add a touch of glamour to the occasion. Silver works particularly well here because it adds a polished, luminous quality without making the

outfit feel overly heavy. If you're wearing large statement earrings, keep the rest of your jewellery slightly more restrained, perhaps a few rings or a simple bracelet. The goal is to create one strong focal point rather than having every piece compete for attention. Bold gemstone rings are an effortless way to add personality

If you're wearing a relatively minimal cocktail dress, your hands can become the unexpected highlight. “A bold gemstone ring can add colour, character and a sense of individuality to an otherwise classic outfit,” suggested Kanak. Amethyst, moonstone, aquamarine, citrine and other gemstones can introduce subtle pops of colour while still keeping the overall look elegant. Kanak recommends trying wearing one substantial gemstone ring on its own for a refined statement, or pair it with slimmer silver bands for a more contemporary, layered effect.

Silver brings effortless elegance

There is something inherently modern about silver with evening wear. Against darker cocktail dresses, it catches the light beautifully; with jewel tones, it creates a cool contrast; and with neutral dresses, it adds just enough shine to elevate the entire look. For an evening outfit, 925 sterling silver jewellery with gemstones can strike the balance between statement and sophistication. Instead of looking overly formal, it feels contemporary, wearable and personal.

Blushes are among the greatest cosmetics since they give your complete look a rosy hue

Achieving a breathtaking look for celebratory occasions and festive gatherings does not invariably necessitate an elaborate or heavy cosmetic routine built upon layers of substantial foundation, heavily pronounced eye definition, or striking, high-intensity luminous highlights. On the contrary, minimalist beauty philosophies frequently demonstrate that a delicate, thoughtful application of a subtle flush of pigment directly to the cheekbones completely suffices to instantly impart a naturally rejuvenated, healthy, and luminous appearance to the entire visage. An appropriately selected blush product—whether choosing a cream, liquid, or finely milled powder formula—possesses the remarkable capacity to gracefully introduce organic warmth to a tired skin tone, subtly establish refined facial contour and underlying structural depth, and cultivate that authentically flushed, post-cardio aesthetic that harmonizes effortlessly and elegantly with any elaborate festive attire or traditional garb. The absolute key to mastering this effortless yet impactful technique, however, lies in intentionally selecting the right product formula, finish, and shade to complement your unique skin type and personal aesthetic. For instance, lightweight cream and liquid blushes effortlessly melt into the complexion to impart a wonderfully dewy, youthful, and remarkably skin-like appearance that radiates natural vitality, whereas finely milled powder blushes prove exceptionally useful if you lean toward a velvety soft matte finish or require your makeup to stay locked in place through a long, high-energy festive celebration. Furthermore, aligning with modern cosmetic movements, current makeup trends are steadily shifting away from harshly sculpted lines and sharply defined cheek color, embracing instead a softer, beautifully diffused, and watercolor-like blush placement that blends seamlessly across the high-points of the face for an ethereal, naturally flushed glow. If you are looking for blushes that can give you a natural-looking festive glow, here are 7 options available on Amazon to consider.

1. Maybelline New York Fit Me Mono Blush, 60 Passionate: If you prefer a classic powder blush, Maybelline Fit Me Mono Blush is an easy option to add to your festive makeup bag. It has a finely milled texture that can be built up gradually, making it easier to achieve a subtle flush instead of an overly pigmented finish.

Best for: Everyday-to-festive makeup and beginners

Finish: Natural-looking powder finish

Key ingredients: Talc, dimethicone, synthetic fluorphlogopite and colour pigments. Check the individual shade's packaging for the complete ingredient list.

2. Mamaearth Matte Glow Serum Blush With Vitamin C & Cherry Extract - 5 Ml - Cherry Red: For those who prefer a liquid or serum-like blush, this option can add a fresh wash of colour without making the cheeks look too powdery. It is particularly suited to the current skin-like makeup trend, where the aim is to let some of the natural-looking skin texture show through. Best for: Dewy festive makeup

Key ingredients: Serum-based formula with hydrating ingredients; check the pack for the complete shade-specific INCI list.

3. Swiss Beauty Cream It Up Blush | Highly pigmented: Swiss Beauty's Cream It Up Blush is another option for anyone who prefers cream makeup. Amazon listings describe it as a highly pigmented, blendable and buildable blush, with shea butter in the formula. The buildable texture is particularly useful for festive makeup because you can start with a small amount and add more colour depending on your outfit and the intensity of the rest of your makeup.

4. MARS Liquid Blush Hour (12 ml) (05-DUSK) : MARS Sugar Rush Liquid Blush is designed for a lightweight application and comes with a doe-foot applicator. Amazon listings describe it as having a dewy-matte finish, high pigmentation and a lightweight formula. For a natural look, use just one tiny dot on each cheek and blend it quickly. This technique gives you much more control than applying a large amount of liquid blush at once.

Key ingredients: Check the individual shade's packaging for the complete ingredient list.

5. INSIGHT I'm Tinted Blush – Berry Bliss (6g) | Niacinamide-Infused: If convenience matters to you, a blush stick can be easier to carry and apply during festive occasions. Insight's On The Go Blush Stick is a cream formula designed for use on the cheeks, lips and eyes and is infused with vitamin E, according to its Amazon listing.

You can swipe a small amount directly onto your cheeks and blend it using your fingers. This also makes it useful for creating a coordinated monochromatic festive look.

6. Swiss Beauty Softy Blush | Buttery Texture: For those seeking a powder formula that delivers an exceptionally smooth application, the Swiss Beauty Softy Blush stands out as an excellent option worth considering due to its luxurious, buttery texture. According to online retail listings on platforms like Amazon, this popular blush is celebrated for being effortlessly blendable, richly pigmented, and remarkably long-lasting while maintaining a wonderfully soft, velvety feel on the skin. However, because highly pigmented blushes can quickly become overpowering if applied too heavily, beauty experts recommend picking up only a tiny amount of product on a fluffy blending brush, gently tapping off any excess powder before application, and then slowly building up the color intensity until you achieve your desired, perfectly flushed look.

Key ingredients: Check the shade-specific packaging for the complete ingredient list.

7. FACES CANADA Ultime Pro Face Palette - Fresh 01, 12g: FACES CANADA's Ultime Pro HD Light Camera Blush is a powder blush available in shades such as Roseate. The product is listed on Amazon India, making it another option for those who prefer traditional powder cheek colour. For festive makeup, a rosy or peachy shade can add warmth while still keeping the complexion looking natural.

ENTERTAINMENT

Ajay Devgn starrer Drishyam 3 nears ₹250 crore domestic net after beating part 2

Mumbai : Drishyam 3 is wrecking havoc at the box office. Ajay Devgn's crime thriller had a massive opening at the ticket windows and it refuses to stop. In just five days of its release, the film has managed to cross the Rs 200 crore mark, surpassing the lifetime haul of Drishyam 2.

Drishyam 3 has recorded the biggest opening of Ajay Devgn's career. Advance bookings for Drishyam: The Conclusion opened on September 27, with the film collecting Rs 27 crore before its release. On its opening day, it earned Rs 66.75 crore net across India, making it the third-biggest opening for a Hindi film. The film collected Rs 53.50 crore on Saturday, followed by a jump to Rs 61 crore on Sunday. The film saw its first major drop on Monday, earning Rs 21 crore, around 65.6% less than its Sunday collection. The downward trend continued over the next two days,



with Drishyam 3 collecting Rs 19.50 crore on Tuesday and Rs 15.50 crore on Wednesday.

According to the latest Sacnilk update, the film earned Rs 13 crore on Thursday, taking its total India net collection to Rs 245.50 crore. With this, Drishyam 3 has surpassed the lifetime India net collection of Drishyam 2, which earned Rs 239.67 crore. Vijay Salgaonkar is back, and this time, he has more to deal with. After protecting his

family in Drishyam 2, Vijay faces another challenge in Drishyam 3: The Conclusion. The film follows his efforts to keep the secrets from his past hidden. The third film continues the story from Drishyam 2 and is expected to bring Vijay's journey to its final chapter. In the earlier films, he managed to stay one step ahead of the police. However, this time, his carefully planned moves face another test.

It is important to note that the Hindi film is not a direct

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

Gauahar Khan sells Mumbai flat for 6.01Cr

Mumbai : Gauahar Khan has sold her Mumbai home for a little over Rs 6 crore, nearly 12 years after buying it in 2014. The deal was registered in September 2026, according to property registration documents accessed by CRE Matrix. The property is a duplex in Versova, Andheri West.

Gauahar's duplex is located in Versova Shiv Kutir Co-operative Housing Society Ltd., in S.V.P. Nagar, Versova, Andheri West. The property is spread across two floors and sits on a higher floor of the building. According to the registration documents, the duplex has a super built-up area of 2,340 sq ft (217.47 sq m) and a built-up area of 1,872 sq ft (173.98 sq m). The documents do not mention any car parking space as part of the deal. The property was sold for Rs 6.01 crore, with the transaction registered on September 24, 2026. The buyers paid Rs 36.06 lakh in stamp duty. Gauahar had bought the same duplex in November 2014 for Rs 3.2 crore. With the latest sale, the recorded value has gone up by Rs 2.81 crore, marking an appreciation of nearly 88% in close to 12 years. The sale price works out to around Rs 32,100 per sq ft based on the property's built-up area. If calculated using the super built-up area, the rate comes to approximately Rs 25,700 per sq ft. These figures are based on the consideration value recorded in the documents.

Vijay Deverakonda slams trolls, calls out deliberate negativity online



Hyderabad : Hot shot Vijay Deverakonda has hit back at the online criticism surrounding his upcoming film Ranabaali, alleging that some social media negativity is deliberately manufactured. At the trailer launch, the actor questioned reels claiming audiences would prefer Rajinikanth's Jailer 2 over his film.

Addressing the release clash, Vijay said that repeated reels promoting

Jailer 2 as the better choice appeared suspicious to him. He suggested that such content could be paid promotion, adding to the debate over online campaigns and negativity surrounding big ticket Telugu releases. Ranabaali draws inspiration from the suffering of people under British colonial rule and the devastating famine of the 1870s, blending historical themes with fictional storytelling. With Jailer

2 arriving on October 15 and Ranabaali following a day later, both films face a crucial festive box office window. Vijay's remarks have added another talking point to the much discussed clash.

Nonetheless, Vijay Deverakonda is taking on mighty Rajinikanth in Telugu states and his film has to provide good content to outwit Tamil superstar during Dasara holidays.

Nithiin's 'Alias Rukmini' to release on December 4, announced by Nani

Hyderabad : Starring Nithiin, Alias Rukmini is set to arrive in theatres on December 4. The release date was officially announced today by presenter and actor Nani, who has built a reputation for backing stories with substance. His association with the project has already sparked curiosity. The film is directed by Murali Kanth Devasoth, known for last year's Dandoraa, and appears to bring a distinct sensibility to the narrative. The approach seems quiet and observant, prioritising character over spectacle—a welcome change in an industry

often driven by scale. Early indications point to a story with texture and a strong emotional core. "Probably the most beautiful Telugu film of the year," Nani wrote on X while sharing the release date announcement.

Nithiin appears to be venturing into unfamiliar territory with Alias Rukmini. His recent films, Robinhood and Extra, leaned towards commercial entertainment, while Thammudu attempted to blend devotional themes with heroism. Alias Rukmini, however, seems to take a different route. The female lead appears to oc-



cupy a central position in the narrative, raising questions

about how the story unfolds and whether an unexpected

The actor also recalled Nana's appearance on Kaun Banega Crorepati Season 16, where he had spoken about his work with drought-affected farmers in Maharashtra and dedicated his prize money to a social cause. Addressing Nana's death, Amitabh said the loss extended beyond the film industry to everyone who had known him personally.

"Deviyo aur sajjano, Nana Patekar ji ka achanak aaj sub-

ah swargwas ho gaya. Ek adwitiya kalakar, mitra, shubhchintak, aur ek utkrisht samaj sevak aaj hamare beech nahi rahe," he said. Amitabh added that Nana's straightforward personality, simplicity and ability to say exactly what he believed made him different.

"Unki bebaki, unki sadgi, aur sach ko sach kehne ka unka saahas, ye sari baatein unko sabse alag banati thi," he said. He further remarked that while some people may

no longer be physically present, what they said, taught and did for others continues to remain behind. "Kuch log hamare jeevan se chale jaate hain, lekin unki aawaz, unke paropkar, unki sikhai hui seekh hamare bhitari reh jaati hai. Nana unhi logon mein se ek the," Amitabh said.

Offering his personal respects, he added, "Aapko, Nana, vyaktigat roop se mera naman. Aur aapki us kala ko pranam, jise aapne puri iman-

dari se jeeya aur hum sabko samarpit kiya." Amitabh also looked back at Nana's memorable appearance on Kaun Banega Crorepati Season 16. He recalled how Nana had used the platform to speak about his social work and had dedicated the prize money he won to a cause he supported.

"Iss manchi par hamare vishesh karyakram mein ek aatithi ke roop mein unka aagman hua tha. Wo yaadgar shaam sada hamare saath rahegi," Amitabh said. He added that Nana's words during the episode had made an impression on those present, but his decision to give away his winnings was equally significant.

"Unki baaton ne na keval hume prabhavit kiya, balki jisi nek kaaj ke liye unhone jeeti hui dhanraashi ko samarpit kiya, wo unki samaj seva ka udaharan tha," he said.

Bipasha Basu calls out paps for ignoring her gratitude in viral video



towards her. She also pointed out that the video did not include her saying thank you at the end.

Meanwhile, Bipasha is gearing up for her acting comeback with Hansal Mehta's upcoming web series Barabanki. She was last seen in Dangerous, which also starred her husband, Karan Singh Grover, in 2020. After six years away from acting, she is now ready to return to the screen. According to a report by Mid-Day, Bipasha started shooting for the series in Mumbai in August. A source also revealed that the actress agreed to the project soon after Hansal narrated the story to her. The show will mark her return to the OTT space after

Dangerous, which was her streaming debut. The source added that her character has a strong connection to the protagonist.

Barabanki is reportedly based on IPS officer Alok Lal's book The Barabanki Narcos: Busting India's Most Notorious Drug Cartel. It also stars Vishal Jethwa and Sunny Kaushal. Set in the 1980s, the show will follow Lal's efforts to carry out a major operation against the opium trade in Uttar Pradesh's Barabanki district. Away from work, Bipasha has been enjoying life as a mother to her daughter, Devi Basu Singh Grover. She and Karan welcomed Devi on November 12, 2022.

Amitabh Bachchan gets emotional remembering Nana Patekar



Mumbai : Amitabh Bachchan has paid a heartfelt tribute to Nana Patekar following the veteran actor's sudden death. Remembering Nana as a friend, well-wisher, exceptional actor and social worker, Amitabh spoke about the qualities that made him stand apart, from his simplicity and forthrightness to his willingness to speak the truth.

The actor also recalled Nana's appearance on Kaun Banega Crorepati Season 16, where he had spoken about his work with drought-affected farmers in Maharashtra and dedicated his prize money to a social cause. Addressing Nana's death, Amitabh said the loss extended beyond the film industry to everyone who had known him personally.

"Deviyo aur sajjano, Nana Patekar ji ka achanak aaj sub-

twist awaits audiences. Having made his debut around 24 years ago, Nithiin has experienced his share of successes and demonstrated his versatility. Jayam marked an early breakthrough, followed by the success of Dil. Films such as Ishq and Bheeshma further showcased his ability to balance charm with sincerity. Alias Rukmini could prove to be one of his more intriguing projects in recent years.

Telugu cinema has increasingly made room for stories that favour authenticity and distinctive perspectives. Films such as Dandoraa,

Court, Committee Kurrollu and Balagam have connected with audiences through their rooted settings, emotional depth and fresh voices. Court was produced by Nani, whose association with Alias Rukmini adds another layer of interest to the upcoming film.

Against this backdrop, Alias Rukmini arrives with the promise of combining commercial appeal with emotionally driven storytelling. The film may also explore a social theme beneath its narrative, although its precise concerns remain to be seen. Balancing enter-

tainment with meaningful commentary is no easy task. When achieved effectively, however, it allows a film to engage audiences while leaving them with something to reflect on. The film features an ensemble supporting cast including Sai Kumar and Harsha Vardhan, alongside a technical crew comprising cinematographer Jomon T John and music composer Vijai Bulganin. While details regarding the female lead have been tightly kept under wraps, the makers have announced that a major character reveal will take place on October 13.

Team issues clarification over recent Bigg Boss 20 controversy



Mumbai : Aman Gandhi faced backlash following a controversial comment directed at co-contestant Qazi Touqeer on Bigg Boss 20. A viral video clip showed Aman speaking about population growth in relation to

Qazi.

The remark sparked sharp criticism online. Many social media users accused him of targeting Qazi on religious grounds. Aman's team released a formal clarification on Instagram Stories.

They strongly denied any malicious intent. The team stated that the comment was strictly about Qazi's game strategy.

They argued that critics took the statement out of context. According to the team, Aman was referring to how Qazi had fooled other housemates during the early weeks of the show. They added that Aman respects all religions equally. His team described the accusations as an attempt to portray him negatively. They appealed to viewers to judge the situation based on facts rather than creating false narratives.

Chiranjeevi to showcase formidable avatar in fast-progressing 'Kaaka'

Chennai : Chiranjeevi's Kaaka has completed nearly 70 per cent of its shoot, with production progressing at a brisk pace. Audiences can expect large-scale action sequences and plenty of swagger, a marked departure from the more subdued characterisation seen in Mana Shankara Vara Prasad Garu.

In the Bobby Kolli-directed action thriller, Chiranjeevi plays K Satyam, a mild-mannered aquaculture factory supervisor and devoted father who leads a

modest life. However, the character has two distinct shades, with his hidden past eventually resurfacing to reveal Kadiri Kalidas, a formidable gangster with a dangerous history. Chiranjeevi is no stranger to dual roles and characters with hidden identities. Over the course of his career, he has portrayed layered characters and taken on dual roles in popular films such as Mutha Mestri, Sneham Kosam, Andarivaadu and Indra.

Bobby Kolli specialises in high-octane commercial en-

tertainers built around larger-than-life heroes. In Waltair Veerayya, which starred Chiranjeevi, and Daaku Maharaaj, led by Nandamuri Balakrishna, the filmmaker combined intense action, layered characterisations and nostalgic moments tailored to the leading stars. Having worked with senior actors as well as younger stars such as Pawan Kalyan and Jr NTR, Bobby has continued to refine his approach to mainstream commercial cinema. Recently, Bollywood filmmaker Anurag

Kashyap was brought on board for a significant role. His character is expected to add another gritty dimension to the film. The teaser for Kaaka is expected to be unveiled in November.

The film also features Anaswara Rajan, while Nivetha Pethuraj is rumoured to be part of the cast. Kaaka is slated for a worldwide theatrical release on January 13, 2027, during the Sankranti festive season. Recent rumours suggest that Chiranjeevi has heard a story narrated by Tamil

filmmaker Karthik Subbaraj, known for Jigarthanda and the recent Dorothy. However, there has been no official confirmation about the project.

Following Kaaka, Chiranjeevi is expected to return to theatres with Vishwambhara. Meanwhile, actor Nani recently stated in an interview that the announced project between Chiranjeevi and The Paradise director Srikanth Odela would take off only after the Megastar completes his current commitments.

Argentina's treatment of Benin players during a friendly match has led to criticism of Lionel Messi's farewell



Buenos Aires: After Lionel Messi had an emotional final performance for Argentina against Benin earlier this week, a significant discovery has emerged. The West African country's manager, Gernot Rohr, has claimed that Messi and the other Argentina stars "did not give anything" to the Benin players. The German manager, who oversaw Nigeria from 2016 to 2021, also disclosed that, according to protocol, the traveling group was not permitted to swap jerseys or take photographs with the Argentina captain following the game. "My players tried everything, but nothing worked. The Argentinians didn't give our players anything,

not even a photo with Messi," Rohr told RMC Sport. Despite the 3-0 loss to the three-time world champions, Rohr suggested the experience could have been much better for his players had Argentina acknowledged them more warmly. Despite the 3-0 loss to the three-time world champions, Rohr suggested the experience could have been much better for his players had Argentina been more accommodating towards them. "We wanted to exchange shirts, but we didn't get any. They wouldn't even allow us to enter their player corridor. Security was turning everyone away. Players were coming with their shirts hoping to swap

them with Argentina players," the 73-year-old added. Rohr also revealed that he had to wait 30 minutes after full-time before his counterpart, Lionel Scaloni, signed an old match-worn Messi shirt that he had in his possession. On the field, the first half ended goalless before Argentina broke the deadlock shortly after the restart. Messi created the opening goal in the 48th minute, setting up Nicolas Otamendi, who made no mistake to put the hosts ahead. Messi was at the heart of Argentina's second goal as well, teeing up Nico Paz for a superb curling effort that doubled the advantage and sent the home crowd into celebration.

The 39-year-old then completed the scoring from the penalty spot, calmly converting to make it 3-0 and adding another memorable moment to an extraordinary international career. The crowd erupted in cheers and clapping as Messi greeted his Argentina teammates on the field as the final whistle blew. An period in which the striker changed Argentina's fortunes on the international scene came to a fitting end with the poignant moments.

"Rahul Gandhi's Supporters Thrashed Me": Man Beaten During Delhi Demonstration



New Delhi, Oct 09: On Thursday, a guy from Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir, participated in a protest against the INDIA bloc in Delhi. The guy yelled "Narendra Modi zindabad" while holding a poster. Amidst a sea of anti-government demonstrators in the nation's capital, CJP Murdabad said, "Long live PM Modi. Down with CJP." Raising anti-government shouts was another man in the crowd. The voices increased. The stress increased. Before long, slaps were traded. Fahim Nazir, a guy from Srinagar, has stated that he was beaten by Rahul Gandhi supporters for shouting pro-Modi chants. Delhi Police have now registered a First Information Re-

port (FIR) against unidentified persons following a complaint by Nazir. Fahim Nazir remembered the events of Thursday afternoon's rally in the Connaught Place neighborhood: "I went to protest against the INDIA bloc and the negative narrative that they have created against PM Modi, the Home Minister, and Chief Election Commissioner of India Gyanesh Kumar." The opposition has accused the administration of stealing votes. I went to ask Rahul Gandhi if there were any anomalies when you won the elections in 2004 and 2009. You say that votes are being rigged now that PM Modi has won consecutive elections

since 2014, according to Nazir, one of his supporters. "AAP Chief Arvind Kejriwal became Delhi Chief Minister twice, and votes were not rigged. Now CJP has been brought in as a proxy to turn the country into Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka," he added. Major youth-led and public uprisings toppled governments in Sri Lanka (2022), Bangladesh (2024), and Nepal (2025), driven by economic distress, inflation, and resentment against entrenched political elites. "I went to ask these questions to Rahul Gandhi," he said. It is then that the supporters of the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, thrashed him, Nazir claimed. The BJP took an offence and blamed the Congress for "attacking", what it called, "We The People of India" "Shame on Congress workers! When a citizen of India raised slogans in favour of PM narendramodi, Congress workers encircle him and beat him up!" BJP spokesperson Pradeep Bhandari posted on X, along with the video. "Anarchist Congress is now attacking "We The People of India". The fight is between People of India who want to save Democracy & Anarchist Congress!" he continued. Since October 6, the opposition has been demonstrating against Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar over purported errors in the electoral registers' Special Intensive Revision, or SIR. Kumar's resignation has been requested by the opposition.

An Assam dancer's final text before being discovered dead in Andhra

Vishakhapatnam, Oct 09: A 20-year-old lady from the Kamrup region of Assam who had traveled to Visakhapatnam with a dance group was discovered dead next to a railroad track in the Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh. While traveling home on the Dibrugarh Vivek Express, she vanished. The circumstances surrounding her death are being looked into by the police. The woman, whose family is from the Kamrup area, has been identified as a tribal woman who attends B Borooah College in Guwahati. She traveled to Visakhapatnam for dancing programs after joining a dance ensemble, according to the police. On October 10, she had a bank exam in Guwahati, therefore she made the decision to go back home. She allegedly tried to purchase a Tatkal ticket for the Silchar Express online on the evening of October 5, but the reservation was not verified, according to the police. After that, she proceeded to the railroad station in Visakhapatnam and boarded the Vivek Express (Train No. 22503), which was headed for Assam. Her mother complained that she boarded on October 5 at 11:50 p.m. On October 7, the train was scheduled to depart Visakhapatnam at 12:10 am and arrive in Guwahati at 9:05 am. During the journey, she reportedly told friends about the heavy crowd in the coach and said she was afraid after finding herself surrounded mainly by male passengers. In her last message to her family, she said she was afraid as there were a lot of men around her, according to the family. She stayed in touch with her family and friends after boarding. Police said her family last spoke to her at around 1.30 pm on October 6. According to the family's account in the complaint, the last conversation took place at 2:39 am on Tuesday, October 6. Her phone later became unreachable and was then switched off. Her mother filed a complaint with the Government Railway Police (GRP) in Guwahati and also lodged it through the Railways helpline 139. Relatives also alerted the Railway Protection Force (RPF) and police in Assam, seeking help in tracing her. Railway police began searching along the route after her bag was found in the S2 coach of the train. Her belongings were reportedly found inside the train. Later, her body was discovered in the Srikakulam area next to a railroad track. According to an RPF source, it was found in a jungle close to Malayapuram, Andhra Pradesh. According to railroad police officials, the cause of death has not yet been determined. Police are investigating the scene, the body's location, the injuries, witness accounts, CCTV video, and her conversations before to her disappearance. Investigators have not yet determined with certainty whether her death was caused by an unintentional fall from the moving train or by other factors. The cause of death should be made clear by the post-mortem and additional forensic investigation. Additionally, investigators are attempting to identify an unidentified male who was saw with her on the Visakhapatnam platform and ascertain whether or not he was involved in the subsequent events.

The court ruled on the AIADMK's petition against the resignation of six rebel MLAs

New Delhi, Oct 09: The Madras High Court is poised to rule on a critical appeal challenging the Tamil Nadu Assembly Speaker's decision to accept the resignations of six AIADMK rebel MLAs while disqualification proceedings against them were pending. The judgment came on the same day as the results of the Madurantakam and Dharapuram Assembly byelections, in which the governing TVK fielded two of the six former AIADMK MPs, Maragatham Kumaravel and Sathyabhama. The six lawmakers - Maragatham Kumaravel, Sathyabhama, Isakki Subbaya, Jayakumar, MR Vijayabaskar, and C Vijayabaskar - were facing disqualification procedures for voting in favor of the TVK administration during a trust vote, breaking the AIADMK whip. They resigned as MLAs and shortly thereafter defected to the governing TVK. The Speaker accepted their resignations, stating that the resignation letters were in order and that the legislators had stepped down freely. AIADMK whip and former minister Agri Krishnamoorthy appealed the Speaker's decision to the High Court. The petition contends that the Speaker should have first addressed the pending disqualification petitions, and



that there was no significant investigation into whether the resignations were truly voluntary. The petitioners further pointed out that the MLAs joined TVK shortly after filing their resignations. Horse-trading allegations were raised in conjunction with the defections, and the Governor was also made aware of the situation. TVK has refuted this. The Speaker's side, however, said that the constitutional need is to determine if a resignation is voluntary and genuine. It contended that questions of inducement, political bargaining, and the grounds for the resignation should be addressed in separate disqualification processes. The

six former MLAs also stated that quitting from the Assembly and then joining another political party is legal. Their attorneys contended that their resignations were legitimate and that accepting them did not immediately halt the current disqualification processes. TVK emerged as the single largest party in the Assembly, forming the government with the assistance of Congress, VCK, and IUML, who later became allies and joined the administration. CPI and CPM provided external help. By accepting the resignations, the prolonged disqualification process was effectively overtaken by vacancies, allowing the former AIADMK legislators to con-

test again on TVK tickets. If they win, the minority TVK can increase its strength and move closer to the majority mark. The timing of the verdict makes tomorrow particularly significant. In Madurantakam and Dharapuram, where Maragatham Kumaravel and Sathyabhama are contesting as TVK candidates, the court's ruling and the bypoll results could together determine their political status. AIADMK legal wing secretary and MP Inbadurai has pointed to an unusual possible situation. If the court holds that the Speaker's acceptance of the resignations was invalid and the former MLAs are held to have continued as legislators, their victory in the bypolls would pose no practical difficulty. However, if they lose and another candidate is proclaimed elected, he claims that there might be two candidates for the same Assembly seat until the legal situation is sorted. If, on the other hand, the court confirms the Speaker's decision, whomever wins the byelections would be the new representative for the individual seats. The ruling will be widely monitored not just for its constitutional implications, but also for its possible influence on the TVK government's strength.

Samir Zeljkovic's strike helps Mohun Bagan win their 22nd IFA Shield title over East Bengal

Kolkata: Mohun Bagan Super Giant maintained the IFA Shield with a hard-fought 1-0 victory against archrivals East Bengal in a hotly contested Kolkata Derby at the Vivekananda Yuba Bharati Krirangan in Kolkata on Thursday, thanks to Samir Zeljkovic's only goal. Bosnian midfielder Zeljkovic scored the winning goal in the 45th minute, finishing soon before halftime to earn the Mariners their 22nd IFA Shield victory. This is Mohun Bagan's 22nd title in the renowned event, and their first in over five decades to win both the Calcutta Football League (CFL) and the IFA Shield in the same season. Last time they achieved the feat, late PK Banerjee was the coach in the year 1976. It was far from a fluent performance from either side, but Mohun Bagan looked considerably more assured than they had in the Durand Cup final earlier this season, when East Bengal had inflicted a 4-1 defeat on their city rivals. Zeljkovic broke the deadlock on the stroke of half-time after controlling a chipped pass from Sahal Abdul Samad on his chest before calmly slotting the ball past the East Bengal goalkeeper. The goal gave Mohun Bagan a crucial advantage in a game that remained tightly contested after the break, with East Bengal



pushing for an equaliser but failing to find a way past the Mariners' defence. East Bengal and head coach Antonio Habas will be disappointed with the performance, particularly with the Indian Super League season set to begin in a couple of days. The Red-and-Gold brigade had looked impressive in their run to the final but struggled to reproduce that attacking fluency against their arch-rivals. East Bengal had stormed into the final with a 7-2 demolition of NorthEast United FC in the semi-final, with David Lalhlansanga scoring a hat-trick. Mohun Bagan, in contrast, had to endure a much tougher route, edging past Punjab FC on penalties in the last four. The semi-final had ended goalless after 120 minutes before the Mariners prevailed 4-3 in the shootout,

with goalkeeper Vishal Kaith making a key contribution. The victory also gave Mohun Bagan a measure of revenge for their Durand Cup final defeat and extended the rivalry's recent run of high-stakes encounters. The two sides had also met in last year's IFA Shield final, with Mohun Bagan winning on penalties, and Thursday's contest marked their second successive meeting in the tournament's title clash. The 2026 final was their fifth meeting of the year, further underlining the intensity of Indian football's biggest rivalry. For Mohun Bagan, the Shield triumph provides a timely boost ahead of the new ISL season, while East Bengal will hope their below-par showing was only a temporary setback before the start of their title defence.

New-Look India Women Go Down 0-4 To Russia In Kolkata Friendly

Kolkata: A new-look Indian women's national team held their own for much of the first half before losing 0-4 to Russia in the first of two international friendly on Thursday at rain-soaked Kishore Bharati Krirangan. Iana Sheina's brilliant performance gave the visitors the lead in the 40th minute, and replacement Kira Petukhova scored again in the 60th and 65th minutes. Iana Svistunova finished the goal in the 81st minute as Russia's persistent pressure wore out the Blue Tigresses after the interval. Head coach Crispin Chettri used the occasion to test his emerging players, handing international debuts to Babysana Devi Thingbaijam, Malati Munda, Cindy Colney, Shubhangi Singh, Dhurga Perumal and Sibani Devi Nongmeikapam. Goalkeeper Monalisha Devi Moirangthem made her first start and earned her third cap overall. The 69th-ranked Blue Tigresses faced a considerable challenge against 27th-ranked Russia in what was India's first-ever women's international match in Kolkata. Yet, for much of the opening half, the hosts defended with discipline and created opportunities that could have changed the course of the

contest. Russia enjoyed more possession and territorial control, pushing players forward to stretch India's defensive shape. The Blue Tigresses responded with a compact block, tracking runners and closing passing lanes, while Monalisha stood firm behind them. India's best opening came around the half-hour mark when the ball dropped kindly for Malavika P for a potential close-range finish. Russian goalkeeper Natalia Silina reacted quickly, charging out to deal with the danger before the forward could capitalise. Lynda Kom Serto also had an opportunity later in the half, but India were unable to turn their moments of promise into a goal. The breakthrough instead came through Sheina's individual quality. In the 40th minute, she found the bottom corner with a precise finish past Monalisha. It was a harsh setback for a defence that had worked hard to frustrate the visitors. India went into the interval trailing 0-1, with the contest still within reach. Heavy rain made the second half a tougher examination. Russia pinned India back during the opening exchanges, keeping the hosts under relentless pressure on an increasingly slippery surface.

Ajmer Jailer Took Murder Accused Prisoners Home And Made Them Clean Their Flat



Jaipur, Oct 09: A jailer suspected of illegally transporting two female detainees from Ajmer Central Jail to clean her private flat was apprehended in Kota on Thursday after being on the run for over two months, officials said. Divya Chaudhary, who had

previously been suspended due to the incident, was arrested on Wednesday and taken to court, where she was placed in judicial detention, according to reports. According to DSP (North) Shivam Joshi, Divya, a jailer at Ajmer Central Jail, allegedly

took two women prisoners, Kiran and Sana, who were serving life sentences in separate murder cases, out of the jail in a private vehicle on July 12 without court permission and without recording the incident in the jail records. The two detainees were allegedly

brought to Divya's private flat in ARG City, Ajmer, and forced to clean it, he claimed. Following the incident, a case was registered at the Civil Lines police station on August 5 and Divya and jail guard Sonia Chaudhary were suspended. Police traced Divya's location using technical evidence and arrested her from a residential flat in Kota, Joshi said. According to police, Divya and Sonia had allegedly threatened women staff at the jail's main gate when they objected to the inmates being taken out. The prisoners were subsequently brought back to the jail and a report was sent to senior officials, according to the police. Police are still looking for Sonia who is still on the run.

Erling Haaland urges Manchester City fans to stick together before Anfield

Manchester: Manchester City striker Erling Haaland has urged the club's supporters to 'stick together' and remain positive as City prepare to face Liverpool at Anfield on Sunday, his first public comments since the club was found guilty of more than 100 breaches of Premier League financial rules. City have appealed against the independent commission's verdict, which they said contained 'clear material errors of law, principle and fact'. The ruling comes as Pep Guardiola's side prepare for a crucial Premier League fixture, with City three points clear at the top of the table. "We have to stick together. We have to stay with each other, and we have to stay



positive," Haaland told Sky Sports. "No matter what happens in life, we always have to have a smile." The independent commission found that City had arranged what it described as "sham" contracts with several commercial partners as part of a "disguised funding scheme".

It said the arrangements artificially inflated the club's revenues and reduced its costs by more than £900 million. The charges covered almost a decade and relate to the club's financial dealings during that period. City have rejected the findings and are challenging the

verdict through an appeal. Haaland said his connection with City extends beyond his role on the pitch. His father, Alf-Inge Haaland, played for the club, while the striker has developed a strong relationship with the supporters since joining from Borussia Dortmund. "I care a lot about this place, and the UK generally. I care a lot about the fans because I'm a fan myself, and I feel with them as well," he said. The Norway international called on the club and its supporters to focus on the future as City attempt to navigate the controversy. "We have to stick together; we have to spread the love to each other. So yeah: stick together, and enjoy the ride and smile."

Temba Bavuma says South Africa bring their own fire against Australia now

New Delhi: South Africa captain Temba Bavuma believes Australia remain one of the toughest opponents in Test cricket, even if the character of the team has changed over the last few years. The Proteas will begin their three-match series against Australia on October 9 at Kingsmead in Durban, with both teams currently occupying the top two places in the World Test Championship standings. For Bavuma, however, playing Australia is about more than facing a group of individual cricketers. The rivalry itself brings out an added competitive edge, something he expects to be evident when the first Test begins on Friday. In their last bilateral series, South Africa lost 0-2 in Australia in 2022-23 and will be looking for a better showing this time. "When you play against Australia, you don't just play against those individuals, you play against what it means to be Australian," Bavuma said in an interview with Cricinfo. "It's always



a clash we look forward to. It tends to at least bring out the competitive edge of both teams. We have a strong desire to get the better of them.

Granit Xhaka receives suspended fine for fraudulent vaccine certificate



New Delhi: Switzerland and Sunderland captain Granit Xhaka has been handed a suspended fine of 150,000 Swiss francs (around 1.7 crore rupees) for obtaining a fraudulent COVID-19 vaccination certificate, with the midfielder saying he accepts the decision and takes responsibility for his actions. Xhaka, 34, said on Thursday that the fine will not be enforced provided he does not commit another offence during a two-year probationary period. He has already paid the associated court costs. The fraudulent certificate was obtained

in 2022 when Xhaka was playing for Arsenal, according to multiple reports. The midfielder acknowledged the matter in September, describing his decision as a mistake and saying he had a deep mistrust of the COVID-19 vaccine at the time. Xhaka said he had previously committed to taking responsibility and maintained that position after the public prosecutor's decision was issued. "A few weeks ago, I spoke personally here and said that I would take responsibility for my decision. I stand by that," Xhaka said in a social media

post. "After I gave a full statement to the public prosecutor's office, the public prosecutor's decision has now been issued. I accept the decision and take responsibility for my actions," Xhaka also thanked those who had supported him during the process. The former Arsenal midfielder has won a record 152 caps for Switzerland but was left out of the national team for four UEFA Nations League matches in the second-tier group following his admission. Switzerland won all four games while Xhaka remained away from the squad as he dealt with the case in Lucerne. His future with the national team remains unclear. Swiss Football Association president Peter Knabel said Xhaka's situation would be reassessed following the current international window. "We welcome Granit taking this step and facing the consequences," Knabel said. "At the same time, we jointly concluded that it is in the team's best interest to complete this training camp without him." Knabel added that Xhaka's status would be discussed again after the international break. "After the conclusion of this international match window, we will reassess the situation together with Granit and discuss the next steps," Xhaka, who also captains Sunderland, remains one of Switzerland's most experienced players.

Hockey India sets December elections amid internal fighting and state row

New Delhi : Hockey India will elect its new office-bearers for the 2026-2030 term on December 5, with the federation officially kicking off the process. The elections will be held against the backdrop of the infighting going on within the federation and growing dispute over the validity of the member-unit polls and voting rights across several states. As part of the election process, newly-appointed HI electoral officer, Sudhir Tripathi, has directed all permanent member units to put forward one male and one female nominee for the federation's electoral college by October 15. The publication of the final electoral roll has been set for November 15. The filing of the nominations will take place between November 22 to 24, with the draft nominations being announced on November 24. Following this, objections, if any, to the draft nominations will be reviewed before the final nominations list will be announced on December 1. The withdrawal of nominations will be possible on the



following day, before the final list of the participants will be announced on December 3. If the polls are necessary, then they will take place on December 5 and the result will come out on the same day. The move comes amid growing scrutiny of electoral procedures and the composition of electoral colleges across several state hock-

ey associations, according to a report from Times Of India. Documents reviewed by TOI point to complaints, objections to elections and appeals for intervention in states including Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Assam. Stakeholders have raised concerns over the conduct of elections, the eligibility of

representatives and adherence to the National Sports Governance Act, 2025. The issue has also come into focus in Odisha, where the proposed Hockey Association of Odisha elections did not take place after the electoral officer flagged concerns regarding district-unit documentation and governance.

Shreyanka Patil utilizes Zimbabwe T20I break to train alongside Kevin Pietersen

New Delhi: For Shreyanka Patil, a break from international cricket has turned into an opportunity to sharpen her skills in the company of one of the game's most celebrated batters. Rested for India's upcoming T20I series against Zimbabwe, Shreyanka spent time at the Mumbai maidans training with former England captain Kevin Pietersen. The India all-rounder bowled a few deliveries to Pietersen, who made full use of the crease to manoeuvre the ball around and also used his feet to launch one down the ground. Shreyanka, though, had her moments. She managed to hit Pietersen on the pads and immediately erupted into a loud appeal, adding a competitive touch to what appeared to be a relaxed training session. After the session, Shreyanka shared a glimpse of the outing on Instagram, describing it as a much-needed day away from the usual grind. "That was so much



fun. Much-needed day out," Shreyanka wrote on Instagram. The outing comes after another demanding year for Shreyanka, who has had to fight her way back from injury once again. She suffered an ankle injury while fielding against the Netherlands in the Women's T20 World Cup in June and was ruled out of the remainder of the tournament. She subsequently recovered in time to return to competitive cricket at the Asian Games in Japan. Shreyanka was part of In-

dia's gold-medal-winning squad as the Harmanpreet Kaur-led side successfully defended the women's T20 cricket title. Her return was particularly significant given the difficult injury journey she had already endured. The ankle setback came after she had worked her way back into the India setup following an extended period on the sidelines. Despite being part of the Asian Games triumph, Shreyanka was not included in India's squad for the upcoming T20I series against Zimbabwe. The selectors have opted for a squad featuring several younger players, with Smriti Mandhana taking over as captain. For Shreyanka, the time away from international cricket could therefore prove useful. Training alongside a batter of Pietersen's calibre offers another chance to test her bowling, work on her plans and learn from one of the game's most experienced competitors.

Chief selector Ajit Agarkar's performance report card: Was the present unkind to him?

New Delhi: The words on Rohit Sharma's T-shirt were difficult to miss: "Non-committal?" The former India captain was promoting his latest television show when the shirt caught the internet's attention in September, and the reaction was swift. Fans linked it to the debate over his place in the 2027 ODI World Cup and to comments widely attributed to Ajit Agarkar, who had been at the centre of discussions around the futures of Rohit and Virat Kohli. Some read it as a pointed reply to the chief selector. There was, however, no confirmation from Rohit that it was meant as a dig at Agarkar, nor any evidence that he had privately told Agarkar he was non-committal about the World Cup.



Whether he intended it that way is almost beside the point. The online narrative had already taken shape, and a T-shirt was all it needed to spring back to life. It was a neat illustration of what Agarkar's three years as chief selector had become. A decision would be made, a player's future would turn

into a talking point, and Agarkar would find himself at the centre of the argument. Sometimes the criticism was about the cricket, sometimes about the way a decision was perceived, and often the two were impossible to separate. Agarkar's tenure ended on October 4, 2026, with three ICC titles

to his name: the 2024 T20 World Cup, the 2025 Champions Trophy and the 2026 T20 World Cup. India also reached the final of the 2023 ODI World Cup. These are not small achievements for a selection committee to have overseen. Yet when Gautam Gambhir wrote that "history will be kinder" to Agarkar, it was that line that stood out. Why would history need to be kinder to a selector whose tenure had delivered so much? Was the present really unkind to him? Senior Managing Editor and Head of SportsTak Vikrant Gupta does not quite buy the premise. "Very strong. Very strong," was his assessment when asked whether Agarkar had been a strong chief selector.

Mohun Bagan exact revenge as tired East Bengal fall short today

Kolkata: There was something missing from the Kolkata Derby on Thursday night. The noise was there, the occasion was there, and so was the history between East Bengal and Mohun Bagan. But the energy that usually makes this fixture feel different was not quite there. Perhaps it was inevitable. India had only just finished a three-match international window against Panama, Brazil and Uruguay, with the last of those games coming on October 6. Two days later, some of those same

players were back at the Salt Lake Stadium, this time wearing club colours in an IFA Shield final. It showed, particularly for East Bengal. The first warning came early. Edmund Lalrindika, who had scored a hat-trick against Mohun Bagan in the Durand Cup final less than two months ago, found himself with an opportunity in front of goal. This was the same player who had been ruthless in that August final, making decisions almost before the defenders had time to react. Here,

there was hesitation and the chance went begging. It was not an isolated moment. East Bengal had the ball for long stretches, but their attacks lacked the sharpness that had been so obvious in their 7-2 semi-final win over NorthEast United. Jay Gupta, fresh from international duty, did not quite have his usual spring either. There were moments when East Bengal's players looked a fraction slower on the ball, and those small differences began to add up. Mohun Bagan, meanwhile, seemed



to understand exactly what this game required. Panagiotis Dilmeris' side were not interested in matching East Bengal's possession sim-

ply for the sake of it. They were happy to sit in, move across as the ball travelled and wait for their opportunities rather than spend energy

unnecessarily. East Bengal had arrived at the final after an emphatic semi-final, with David Lalhlansanga scoring a hat-trick in the 7-2 win over NorthEast United. Mohun Bagan had taken a much more exhausting route, going through 120 goalless minutes against Punjab FC before Vishal Kaith saved two penalties in the shootout. Neither side, therefore, came into the final completely fresh, and with the international window sitting between the two matches, the lack of

sharpness was always likely to matter. But it was Mohun Bagan who found the moment that East Bengal could not. Samir Zeljko put the Mariners ahead in the first half, and suddenly the game belonged even more to the side that had been willing to give up possession. East Bengal were now forced to chase, while Mohun Bagan could simply continue doing what they had been doing. There was certain intelligence to the way Mohun Bagan played after taking the lead. East Bengal contin-

ued to have more of the ball, but Dilmeris' players were rarely dragged into a frantic contest. They kept their shape, protected the central areas and allowed East Bengal to circulate possession in front of them. That made the task increasingly difficult for Habas' side. The ball was moving, but the game was not. East Bengal could reach the final third, yet the final pass or decision was often missing. Edmund's early miss had set the tone, and the same uncertainty kept appearing elsewhere.