

Cong MP Rakibul Hussain again raises serious allegations against former Nagaon DC; urges election commission to take action

Guwahati, Sep 13: Lok Sabha MP Rakibul Hussain has once again written to the Election Commission of India, alleging misuse of power and politically motivated decision-making by Devashish Sharma, former Nagaon District Commissioner and District Election Officer.

The MP had previously submitted several complaints regarding various controversial activities and alleged political affiliations during Sharma's tenure as District Commissioner. More recently, Hussain has also raised questions over certain transfer orders issued during Sharma's tenure. In



particular, enclosing copies of immediate transfer orders involving several LRAs (Lot Mandal/Revenue officials) from revenue circles including Rupohi and Kali-

abor, the MP has demanded an independent, time-bound, high-level inquiry to determine whether the entire process was undertaken for administrative reasons or

driven by political interests. Referring to reports and discussions surrounding the former District Commissioner's resignation and his alleged move to join the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), MP Hussain has urged the Commission to thoroughly examine all major administrative and election-related orders and decisions taken during Sharma's tenure. In his letter, Hussain has also specifically urged that Sharma should not be relieved from government service until the investigation is completed, and that the roles of the officials concerned should be examined and accountability fixed.

Jadumani urges action on conflict's roots



Imphal, Sep 13: The National Identity Protection Council (NIPCO) observed its 26th Foundation Day at Lamyangba Shanglen, Palace Compound, today.

Speaking as the resource person, United People's Front (UPF), Manipur adviser Lais-hangbam Jadumani said that our ancestors protected our land without seeking assistance from others and stressed the need for the present generation to shoulder the responsibility of protecting it. He said the people should remember the idea of Manipur and continue to play the role of a "big brother" towards smaller communities. He also appealed to the people not to harbour a sense of revenge against smaller communities, while stressing the need to recognise and preserve the State's long history.

Jadumani called for unity among the indigenous communities of Manipur and said the entire Kuki community should not be treated as an enemy. He maintained that outsiders and armed elements should be dealt with appropriately, while the indigenous communities should unite and live together as a nation. On the prevailing conflict, he said the focus on internal contradictions among communities had diverted attention from what he described as the primary national contradiction. He stressed the need to understand the forces and circumstances that were driving communities against one another and resulting in loss of lives. He also attributed the tensions among different communities in Manipur to what he described as the "divide and rule" policy of the Government of India. Jadumani urged the people to understand the situation and identify the factors that had actually triggered fighting and divisions among the communities.

Dr. Sapam Ranjan calls on youth for healthy habits to tackle demographic shift

Imphal, Sep 13: Konthoujam Assembly Constituency MLA Dr Sapam Ranjan today stressed the need to discourage unhealthy eating habits and promote disciplined lifestyles among the younger generation, saying changing food habits and lifestyle patterns were contributing to growing health concerns and could have wider demographic implications.

He was speaking as the chief guest at the 54th Foundation



Day celebration of the Nambol Mongjing Leikai Students Union-cum-Library at Mong-

jing, Nambol. Dr Ranjan said the declining population of indigenous people in Manipur

was a matter of concern and called for collective efforts to ensure that the state's indigenous population does not continue to decline.

"Manipur cannot survive without its people," he said, stressing that protection of the state's environment alone would not be sufficient without a healthy and growing population. He called for creating a better social environment for children and young people, with emphasis on

Mawthoh backs metbah lyngdoh, predicts 2028 Meghalaya BJP surge

Shillong, Sep 13: Newly inducted BJP leader Jemino Mawthoh has defended UDP president Metbah Lyngdoh amid growing discontent within the regional party and reports of some legislators considering a shift towards the BJP. Mawthoh, a former UDP working president, general secretary and MLA, said the party's internal problems could not be attributed solely to Lyngdoh. He credited Lyngdoh's leadership with helping the UDP expand from six to 12 MLAs and win several by-elections. Speaking to reporters in Shillong, Mawthoh said efforts to unite regional forces had failed to materialise, while regional leaders were increasingly looking towards national parties. He said reported discontent among UDP legislators could also be linked to dissatisfaction with

the performance of the MDA government and demands for greater respect for elected representatives.

Mawthoh said he had no ill-feeling towards the UDP and maintained that his relationship with Lyngdoh remained cordial. "Metbah Lyngdoh is a very respectable man," he said, adding that he could not explain the reported disintegration within the party. On the BJP's prospects, Mawthoh said the party, which currently has two MLAs,



could significantly increase its strength in the 2028 Assembly election through grassroots mobilisation. He compared the BJP's potential growth with the NPP's rise from two MLAs to its present strength.

Nine suspected spurious liquor deaths trigger red alert across Nagaland

Guwahati, Sep 13: Nagaland Police have issued a state-wide red alert following the suspected deaths of at least nine people after allegedly consuming spurious liquor in Tuensang district.

The fatalities were reported from the Civil Hospital in Tuensang, prompting concern among authorities over a possible public health emergency. Director General of Police (DGP) Rupin Sharma said alarming reports had emerged from the district and that preliminary information suggested the deaths could be

linked to the consumption of adulterated liquor. He added that an investigation has been launched to ascertain the exact cause. In an advisory issued on Sunday, the DGP urged residents to avoid consuming alcohol until the situation becomes clear. Special caution was advised for people living in Mon, Mokokchung, Tuensang, Longleng, Kiphire, Shamator and Noklak districts, though the appeal was extended to the entire state.

The incident has renewed debate over the effectiveness of the Nagaland Liquor To-

tal Prohibition (NLTP) Act, 1989, which has been in force since 1990. Introduced to curb alcohol-related social problems and promote social reform, the legislation was strongly supported by churches and civil society groups at the time. More than three decades later, however, critics argue that the law has failed to achieve its core objectives. Discussions in the Nagaland Legislative Assembly have highlighted the widespread availability of illegal liquor despite the prohibition. Excise Advisor Moatoshi Long-

kumer recently informed the House that hundreds of unauthorised liquor outlets continue to operate, particularly in Dimapur and Kohima. A survey reportedly found more than 500 such outlets across Kohima's wards alone.

Officials have also expressed concern that the ban has encouraged an underground market where unregulated and potentially hazardous liquor is widely available. The Excise Department has warned that the circulation of adulterated alcohol has contributed to serious health

risks and avoidable deaths. The state's porous border with Assam has further complicated enforcement efforts, with illegal supply networks reportedly thriving in border areas. Authorities also believe that the high cost and limited availability of alcohol have pushed some young people towards more dangerous substances, including narcotics and illicit drugs.

The prohibition policy has additionally been blamed for significant revenue losses to the state and challenges for the tourism, hospitality

and hotel sectors. Limited manpower and inadequate enforcement resources have further weakened implementation. Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio has previously acknowledged that while the government can regulate the sale and movement of liquor, it cannot completely prevent individuals from consuming alcohol. He observed that as long as demand exists, illegal supply networks are likely to continue operating.

Against this backdrop, several organisations have called for a review of the

existing prohibition framework. Among the proposals being discussed are a tightly regulated licensing system, restrictions on the number of outlets in each district, community oversight mechanisms, strict age verification norms, limits on sale hours and higher excise duties to support de-addiction and rehabilitation programmes. The suspected liquor tragedy in Tuensang has once again highlighted the challenges of enforcing prohibition and ensuring public safety in Nagaland.

Tripura CM proposes tri-agency panel for border management



Agartala, Sep 13: Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha has proposed the formation of a co-ordination committee involving the state administration, police and Border Security Force (BSF) to strengthen management of the international border and improve coordination among agencies.

Saha made the proposal while speaking to reporters after attending a blood donation camp organised by the Rotary Club of Aspiring Agartala in collaboration with the BSF at the Shalbagan BSF headquarters. IG BSF Tripura Frontier Prince Rani was present at the event. Saha said closer coordination

and regular communication among the state administration, police and BSF would help the agencies respond more quickly to emerging security situations.

He also said a pilot project under the smart border initiative was underway in Sepahijala district. Tripura shares an international border with Bangladesh on three sides. Referring to the border management requirements, Saha said the proposed coordination committee could help improve joint efforts among the agencies concerned. He stressed the need for heightened vigilance in border areas to prevent illegal activities, smuggling and other criminal activities through the international border.

Assam CM chairs district commissioners' conference in Jorhat

Jorhat, Sep 13: Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma today attended the District Commissioners' Conference, which commenced today at the Jorhat Convention Centre as part of a two-day programme.

It may be noted that this is the first District Commissioners' Conference following the formation of the new State government. The conference will deliberate extensively on the overall development of every district of the State, effective resolution of public needs and grievances, revenue administration and public amenities, infrastructure development, law and order, implementation of State



and Central Government schemes, and measures to make administration more responsive and people-oriented. "Our DCs are at the forefront of delivering governance on the ground. The

deliberations will focus on improving service delivery and ensuring that the benefits of development reach every citizen," the CM said. Dr. Sarma said that Assam has undergone significant trans-

formation in recent years and has emerged as one of the leading States in the country. The Government, he said, has focused on creating durable public assets, implementing major infrastructure projects and welfare initiatives, strengthening educational institutions, and bringing administration closer to citizens through the creation of co-districts and new revenue circles.

He also highlighted the initiatives such as Mission Basundhara for resolving land-related issues and other measures aimed at making governance more accessible, efficient and responsive to the needs of citizens.

State congress steps up efforts to rebuild food-damaged houses in three upper Assam districts

Jorhat, Sep 13: The Congress party has decided to extend a helping hand towards rebuilding the houses of people affected by the devastating floods in Assam's Sivasagar, Jorhat and Charaideo districts.

The important decision was taken at a meeting held on September 12 at Rajiv Bhawan in Guwahati with the general secretaries of the Assam Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) and presidents of the District Congress Committees, in the presence of Bhupesh Baghel, AICC General Secretary and Assam in-charge,



and Gaurav Gogoi, President of the Assam Pradesh Congress Committee. As per the direction of Gaurav Gogoi,

all general secretaries of the party, district in-charges and presidents of the District Congress Committees have

been instructed to coordinate with the Congress committees of Sivasagar, Jorhat and Charaideo districts and identify, without delay, the villages where houses need to be rebuilt.

Through a formal notification signed by Ramanna Barua, Organisational General Secretary of the Assam Pradesh Congress Committee, these instructions have been issued, directing all concerned to implement the entire process on the highest priority, informed a press note issued by the Media and Communication Department of APCC today.

Seasonal produce steals the show at 9th annual farmers' market



Shillong, Sep 13: The ninth edition of the monthly Farmers' Market was held on Saturday, further establishing itself as a vital link between Meghalaya's rural producers and urban consumers.

Organised by 1917 iTE-AMS under the Department of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare, with support from the Meghalaya Farmers' (Empowerment) Commission, the September edition featured seasonal harvests such as sohiong (wild cherry) and tomatoes, alongside a variety of fresh vegetables and value-added products.

The initiative is part of the state government's broader effort to improve market access for farmers and strengthen local agricultural value chains.

Simendaris Rynthathiang from Mairang in Eastern West Khasi Hills district, a second time participant and an organic farmer who cultivates her own plot of land expressed her happiness at being able to participate in the market. She said that she was delighted by the response from customers, with the three baskets of sohiong she had brought being sold out by the first half of

the day, along with her other produce.

Philisha Mynsong of Mawjam, Mawknrew, East Khasi Hills district, a first-time participant at the Farmers' Market, expressed her happiness at being given an opportunity to showcase her produce. Although initially nervous, she was encouraged by the response from customers who began visiting her stall soon after she set it up, enquiring about and purchasing her produce. Mynsong added that she looks forward to participating in the market again in the future.

Former Assam minister Siddique Ahmed passes away



Guwahati, Sep 13: Former Assam minister and Congress leader Siddique Ahmed passed away at his residence at Baraigram in southern Assam's Karimganj (now renamed Sribhumi) district on Sunday morning following a prolonged battle with cancer. He was 64.

Ahmed, who made his electoral debut in 2001 as a Samata Party candidate,

represented the Karimganj South Assembly constituency for four terms. He contested as an Independent in 2006 before joining the Congress and winning the seat in 2011 and 2021. Ahmed served as a minister in the Tarun Gogoi-led Congress government. In 2011, he was appointed Minister of State with independent charge of Co-operation and Border Areas Develop-

ment. He was later elevated to Cabinet rank in 2015 and handled portfolios including Industries and Commerce.

In his condolence message on X, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma stated, "Deeply pained by the passing away of my dear colleague of many years, Shri Siddique Ahmed Sahab." "As a legislator, he always prioritised his people's welfare, and as a Minister as well, he ran his assigned department with utmost professionalism, but beyond these, he was a great human being who valued relationships and was compassionate towards everyone," the Chief Minister stated.

"We belonged to different political parties, but our bond went beyond politics, we were fellow travellers who navigated through difficult phases of life together. His passing away leaves a void not only in the social life of Sribhumi but also in the administrative circles of Assam," Sarma stated.

Manipur Government urges JFD to call off office shutdown



Imphal, Sep 13: The Manipur government today appealed to the Campaign for Justice and Fair Delimitation (JFD) to withdraw its agitation over the demand for updating the National Register of Citizens (NRC), stating that the closure of government offices and disruption of normal activities are causing hardship to the public.

Speaking at a press conference held at the Chief Minister's Secretariat here, Manipur government spokespersons MLA Th. Radheshyam Singh and MLA Dr Sapam Ranjan Singh urged all concerned not to undertake activities that could further inconvenience the public. Th. Radheshyam said the State government was fully aware of the JFD's demand for updating the National Register of Citizens (NRC)

with 1951 as the base year, and the government has also expressed its position on the matter. He said Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand had already submitted a written communication to the Centre on the issue and that the

Census could be conducted in accordance with the aspirations of the people. He added that several important tasks remain to be undertaken by the government and appealed to the JFD to reconsider its ongoing agitation.

Radheshyam said the continued closure of government offices was affecting development activities and causing inconvenience to the public, particularly those dependent on government services. On the NRC issue, he said a delegation

led by State Home Minister Govindas Konthoujam, along with another MLA, is currently in New Delhi to take up the matter with the Centre. He expressed hope that the delegation would raise the NRC demand with the appropriate authorities.

"There are many works that need to be carried out in the interest of the people. Considering all these factors, the ongoing agitation should be withdrawn," Radheshyam appealed. Meanwhile, referring to the firing incident in Tamenglong district, Radheshyam said the government had initiated measures to investigate the circumstances surrounding the incident.

He said the security situation had shown some improvement but warned that such incidents could threaten the peace and security in the state if they continued.

Oxford museum set to return 39 Naga ancestral remains after more than a century

Kohima, Sep 13: The University of Oxford's Pitt Rivers Museum is preparing for the historic return of 39 Naga ancestral remains to Nagaland, following years of engagement and consultation between museum authorities and Naga representatives.

The museum is currently coordinating with Naga organisations to finalize the date of a formal handover ceremony. A delegation comprising tribal leaders, elders and representatives of various Naga organisations is expected to travel to the United Kingdom to accompany the remains back to their ancestral homeland. The process reached a major milestone earlier this year when the University of Oxford approved the repatriation of 39 ancestral remains claimed by the Forum for Naga Reconciliation (FNR).



Out of 40 remains sought by the Naga delegation, one was not approved for return because its Naga origin could not be conclusively established.

According to the Pitt Rivers Museum, discussions on the return of the ancestors began in 2020 and involved the Forum for Naga Reconciliation (FNR), the Recover, Restore and Decolonise (RRaD) team, tribal Hohos,

church leaders, community elders and Naga groups from across the Naga homeland. Museum Director Professor Laura Van Broekhoven described the repatriation effort as a journey of healing, reconciliation and unity. She said the initiative had grown into a shared movement among Nagas seeking to bring their ancestors home with dignity after decades of separation from their home-

land.

A Naga delegation currently engaged with museum officials in the United Kingdom has emphasized that the return of the remains is not only about reclaiming ancestral heritage but also about restoring historical justice. In a declaration issued during their visit, Naga leaders stated that the repatriation symbolizes a process of healing and collective remembrance for future generations. The delegation expressed gratitude to their ancestors and reaffirmed their commitment to ensuring that the remains are returned to the lands from which they were taken during the colonial period. They also stressed that the initiative represents a united effort by the Naga people to establish a monument of healing, peace and shared identity.

Arunachal Pradesh university hosts literary, fine arts contests in Pasighat as part of Vande Mataram@150 celebration

Pasighat, Sep 13: Arunachal Pradesh University (APU), Pasighat on Saturday hosted a series of literary and fine arts competitions as part of the month-long celebration of Vande Mataram@150 (VM150), sponsored by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India.

Organised by the Department of Mass Communication, the competitions mark the prelude to the three-day national celebration to be held from October 7, 2026 on the APU campus, which will be inaugurated by the Union Minister of Culture. As many as 160 students from across East Siang District participated in four competitions – painting and poster making, essay writing, poetry writing and Vande Mataram singing – held in junior and senior categories at the academic



block.

The event witnessed vibrant participation from Jawaharlal Nehru College (JNC), Arunachal Pradesh University, North East Institute of Ayurveda and Folk Medicine Research (NEIAFMR), Daying Ering College of Teacher Education (DECTE), Government Polytechnic College Pasighat, along with school students from GHSS Mebo, IGJHSS Mirbuk, GSS Balek,

Daying Ering School, PM SHRI Gandhi School and Siang Royal Academy. The competitions were designed around themes that connect the national narrative with the frontier's lived experience, including 'Vande Mataram at 150: Legacy and Relevance in Modern India', 'The Unsung Heroes of Arunachal Pradesh's Freedom Struggle', 'What the Motherland Means to Me', 'The Frontier Landscape',

National Integration', and Tribal Identity'. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Prem Taba, convener, Vande Mataram @ 150 (VM150) said that Vande Mataram, composed by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, is not just a song but the soul of India's freedom movement.

He said the objective of VM150 is to provide youth a platform to express their understanding of history, culture, and national identity and to reflect on the idea of the motherland from the perspective of Arunachal Pradesh, the Land of the Rising Sun where Mother India wakes up first. Dr. Taba further informed that all competitions carry attractive cash prizes and certificates, and the results will be declared on October 7, 2026 during the inaugural ceremony of the grand celebration.

Electoral roll observer conducts second review of sir in Tawang district

Tawang, Sep 13: Electoral Roll Observer for Tawang district, Yeshe Wangmu Ringu, Commissioner (Finance), Arunachal Pradesh, conducted the second review of the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Tawang district on Friday.

Addressing the Booth Level Officers (BLOs) of 2-Tawang (ST) Assembly Constituency, the Electoral Roll Observer emphasised

that no eligible citizen should be denied the opportunity to enrol in the electoral roll. She stressed that the entire revision process must remain free, fair and transparent, while also clarifying that enrolment is voluntary and no individual can be compelled to enrol against his or her willingness.

The electoral observer expressed her appreciation to the BLOs and other election officials, un-

der the leadership of the District Election Officer, Tawang, for their sincere and dedicated efforts towards preparation of an accurate and error-free electoral roll. She expressed confidence that the collective efforts of the election machinery would contribute towards publication of a comprehensive and reliable final electoral roll after completion of the hearing and disposal process. Commending the BLOs for

their contribution, the Observer encouraged them to extend similar cooperation to the District Administration in future assignments requiring their services. She reminded them that election duty is an important responsibility towards the nation and urged them to take pride in contributing to the democratic process.

The interaction with the BLOs was followed by a review meeting with the

Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) and Assistant Electoral Registration Officers (AEROs) of the district. During the meeting, the respective EROs presented detailed updates on the progress of the ongoing SIR process in their constituencies. The Electoral Roll Observer reviewed the preparations and discussed with the EROs and AEROs the important dos and don'ts to be observed before final



publication of the electoral roll, stressing due dili-

gence and strict adherence to prescribed procedures.

Tripura HC orders technical fee committee

Agartala, Sep 13: The Tripura High Court has directed the state government to constitute and make functional the Technical Institutions Fee Regulatory Committee in accordance with directions issued by the Supreme Court, while declining to grant remuneration to a retired High Court judge who had sought payment for serving as its chairman.

A division bench comprising Chief Justice M.S. Ramachandra Rao and Justice Biswajit Palit passed the order earlier this month while disposing of a writ appeal filed by Justice (Retired) Alok Baran Pal against a May 16, 2025, judgment of a single judge. Justice Pal had been appointed chairman of a committee constituted by the state government on June 10, 2010, for determination of the fee structure of private technical institutions in Tripura. He contended that he was not provided staff or infrastructure and was not paid remuneration for the post. He had sought remuneration from December 1, 2018, stating that he had held another office until then and was therefore not claiming payment for the earlier period. The government rejected his claim on May 6, 2023. The single judge dismissed his petition, holding, among other things, that the assignment was honorary and that after Justice Jayanta Kumar Biswas gave his willingness to take over as chairman in February 2016, the appellant could not claim remuneration.

Sikkim athlete shines in International trail running event in Malaysia

Gangtok, Sep 13: Bir Bahadur Rai, a professional runner from Sikkim, came first in MY25 category in an impressive 2 hours 25 minutes, becoming the first Indian UTMB Series podium holder in the 25K category at the Malaysia Ultra Trail by UTMB, an international trail-running event in Taiping, Perak, Malaysia on Saturday.

Rai hails from Salgari in Namchi district of Sikkim. Lauding the achievement, Sikkim Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang said, "This is a historic achievement and a proud moment for Sikkim's growing trail-running community." "Bir Bahadur, your victory is not just a personal triumph, it is a proud moment for Sikkim and an inspiration to our young runners," Tamang said.

The Chief Minister also



extended his congratulations to Som Bahadur Thami and Hemant Limboo from Darjeeling, who secured 4th and 5th positions respectively in the 50K category. "Your performances have added further

pride to the region," the Chief Minister said. All three runners participated representing the Gorkha Trail Runners Club, a UTMB-registered club based in Sikkim and Darjeeling.

Boxers from Nepal step up Asian games preparations at SAI Guwahati

Guwahati, Sep 13: In a significant boost to India-Nepal sporting ties, the Sports Authority of India's (SAI) National Centre of Excellence (NCOE) in Guwahati is hosting the Nepal Boxing Team for a training camp ahead of the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games.

The Nepal delegation, comprising seven boxers and two coaches, has been training at SAI NCOE Guwahati since August 10 and will remain at the centre until September 15, before travelling to Japan for the Asian Games, which will begin on September 19. The combined training and friendly competition programme was requested by the Nepal Boxing Federation to train at the SAI NCOE in Guwahati. Speak-

ing about the camp, D.K. Mittal, Executive Director, SAI Regional Centre Guwahati, said, "The Nepal Boxing Team is undergoing structured training and coaching at SAI NCOE Guwahati. Sporting exchanges such as this help strengthen the bonds between India and Nepal and promote friendship, cooperation and mutual understanding. Sport serves as a powerful bridge connecting the people of India and Nepal."

The Nepal team includes Ramisha Shrestha (51kg), Asmita Duwal (54kg), Kusum Tamang (65kg), Chandra Bahadur Thapa (55kg), Khagendra Roka Magar (60kg), Dan Bahadur Darlami (70kg) and Rabin Nepal (90kg), with coaches Raj Shrestha and Deepak

Maharjan accompanying the delegation. They are undergoing training under the guidance of SAI boxing coaches Narendra Rana, Trideep Borah and Pranamika Borah. The programme covers technical development, physical conditioning, tactical preparation and competitive readiness. Speaking about the training camp, SAI NCOE Boxing Coach Narendra Rana said, "The training camp has been a valuable experience for both the Nepalese and Indian boxers. Training and sparring with boxers from the Indian Army and Meghalaya has given the Nepalese team a strong competitive environment and helped them work on different styles and tactical situations. We

are happy to support their final preparations for the Asian Games and hope this exposure contributes to their performance in Aichi-Nagoya."

Nepal boxer Ramisha Shrestha, who is competing in the 51 kg category, said, "Training at SAI NCOE Guwahati has been a great experience for us. The facilities, coaching and quality of sparring have helped us improve technically and physically. The initiative represents a significant step in using India's sports infrastructure to facilitate high-performance preparation not only for Indian athletes but also for athletes from a neighbouring country preparing for one of Asia's biggest sporting events."

Arunachal Congress protests denial of appointment with Vice President



Itanagar, Sep 13: The Arunachal Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) on September 9 protested after it was allegedly denied an appointment with Vice President C P Radhakrishnan during his visit to the state, saying the party was unable to submit a memorandum on several issues concerning Arunachal Pradesh. APCC president Bosiram Siram said the Congress had formally sought an appointment through the chief secretary on September 4 but did not receive a response. He described the denial as “deeply unfortunate” and questioned why the principal opposition party was not given an opportunity to place issues concerning the people of the state before the Vice President. The memorandum that the Congress had proposed to submit included demands related to national security, frontier development, constitutional safeguards, hydropower projects and the protection of indigenous interests. One of the key demands was the creation of a dedicated Arunachal Regiment to increase the recruitment of local youth, particularly from frontier districts and

villages, into the armed forces. The party said greater participation of local youth in the armed forces would strengthen national security while also creating employment opportunities. The APCC also called for an all-party parliamentary and political delegation to visit Taksing and other vulnerable frontier areas. Such a visit, it said, would help assess the situation of border communities and examine issues related to security forces, connectivity and access to essential services. The Congress demanded reliable all-weather road connectivity to Taksing and other strategically important areas. It also sought better healthcare, education, communication, emergency services and other basic infrastructure in frontier regions, arguing that development in these areas was closely connected with national security.

The party further sought uninterrupted logistical support for security personnel deployed along the Himalayan frontier. This included adequate manpower, equipment, specialised clothing, food, fuel, transportation, communication facilities and medical support.

Arunachal Pradesh records strong economic and infrastructure growth over past decade: Pema Khandu

Itanagar, Sep 13: Arunachal Pradesh has recorded significant growth in its economy and infrastructure over the past decade, with the state’s Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) rising by nearly 149 per cent and annual road construction increasing six-fold, Chief Minister Pema Khandu said on Wednesday. Addressing the concluding day of a special session of the Arunachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly in the presence of Vice-President C P Radhakrishnan, Khandu said the state’s GSDP had increased from around Rs 20,373 crore in 2016 to more than Rs 50,651 crore. He said the state budget had grown by more than 238 per cent during the period, while per capita income had more than doubled. The state’s own resources had also increased by more than five-and-a-half times, which, according to the Chief Minister, reflected the strengthening of Arunachal Pradesh’s economy. Khandu also highlighted



the expansion of the state’s road network. Annual road construction, he said, had increased from around 300 km to 1,800 km. The rural road network has expanded from 4,131 km to nearly 14,000 km, while the length of the national highway network has increased from 1,043 km to 2,538 km. Another 4,060 km of roads are currently at various stages of construction, he said. “Better roads, tunnels, railways, air connectivity and digital infrastructure are reducing distances and opening new opportunities for our people,” Khandu said.

The Chief Minister pointed to the Trans-Arunachal Highway, Sela Tunnel, Donyi Polo Airport, advanced landing grounds and the Frontier Highway as some of the major infrastructure projects that have contributed to the state’s changing connectivity and economic landscape. Khandu credited Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s leadership and the Centre’s continued focus on the Northeast for the progress. He said Modi had visited Arunachal Pradesh several times since 2014 and added that frequent visits by Union ministers

had strengthened the Centre’s engagement with the state and the wider region. Looking ahead, Khandu said Arunachal Pradesh had considerable potential in sectors such as hydropower, tourism, agriculture and horticulture. These sectors, he said, could contribute to economic growth while creating more employment and livelihood opportunities for the people.

At the same time, the Chief Minister stressed that development should remain in harmony with the environment. He described the state’s forests, rivers and mountains as an integral part of its identity and way of life. He also underlined the importance of protecting indigenous culture and traditions amid rapid modernisation. Under the government’s vision of “Vikas, Sewa and Virasat”, Khandu said economic development would have to be balanced with social responsibility and the preservation of the state’s indigenous heritage.

Food habits and faith are personal choices: CM Suvendu



Kolkata, Sep 13: West Bengal Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari said people have the constitutional freedom to choose their food habits and religious practices, in an apparent response to godman Dharendra Shastri, popularly known as Bageshwar Baba, over his purported remarks on Bengalis eating non-vegetarian food during Durga Puja. Speaking at a summit organised by a private news channel on Saturday, Adhikari said people were free to follow the religious practices of their choice, and nobody should be subjected to abuse over such personal decisions.

“Dharma gurus (Religious leaders) of different faiths express their views. It’s for people to decide whether they want to accept them or not. Our great Constitution, written by Babasaheb Ambedkar, has given you the freedom,” he said. Referring to his own food habits, Adhikari said he had offered prayers at the Kalighat temple here on the occasion of Kaushiki Amavasya on Thursday and subsequently had ‘prasad’ comprising fish head and Basanti pulao. “On the day of Kaushiki Amavasya, I offered prayers

to Maa Kali at Kalighat. After that, I had Basanti pulao with fish, including its head, which had been offered to the goddess,” he said. The chief minister also said he would visit the Baghbazar Gaudiya Math on September 19 on the occasion of Radha Ashtami, where he would have ‘satvik’ (pure vegetarian) food. “On Radh Ashtami, I have been invited to Baghbazar Gaudiya Math, where I will go and accept ‘satvik’ food,” he said.

Adhikari said people had the right to follow different religious traditions and questioned the practice of targeting or abusing individuals over their food choices. “We have the right to follow Vaishnav traditions or other traditions. This right has been given to us by our religion and also by the Constitution. But what kind of right or freedom of speech is it to target someone, make videos around them and hurl obscene abuses at them?” he asked. The chief minister’s remarks came amid a controversy over comments by Bageshwar Baba, who had described non-vegetarian food as “dirty” and called for restrictions on its consumption during Durga Puja.

Mizoram seeks ESIC hospital and higher Khelo India funding for sports infrastructure

Aizawl, Sep 13: Mizoram has sought the establishment of an Employees’ State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) hospital in the state and higher Central funding for sports infrastructure under the Khelo India programme, according to an official statement issued on September 9. State Labour Minister Lalnghinglova Hmar raised the demands during a meeting with Union Labour and Employment and Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya in New Delhi on Tuesday. Hmar sought an ESIC hospital for Mizoram, pointing out that the state’s relatively small population makes it difficult to meet the prescribed criteria for setting up such a facility. He said the number

of ESIC beneficiaries in the state has been increasing and urged the Centre to consider Mizoram’s specific requirements as well as the progress made in ESIC registrations. According to the statement, Mandaviya assured Hmar that the demand would be examined and could be considered at the next ESIC meeting. The Union minister also acknowledged the progress made by Mizoram in labour welfare initiatives. Hmar, who also holds the Sports and Youth Services portfolio, raised a separate demand for increased Central assistance under the Khelo India programme. He submitted proposals seeking enhanced funding to strengthen sports infrastruc-

ture in Mizoram. The proposals are aimed at supporting the development of facilities needed by athletes and sports communities across the state. Mandaviya assured the minister that Mizoram’s proposals would be considered during the allocation of Khelo India funds, the statement said. The two demands cover healthcare support for workers covered under the ESIC system as well as investment in sports infrastructure. For Mizoram, the proposed ESIC facility would address the challenges created by the state’s demographic profile, while additional Khelo India funding could support the expansion and improvement of sports facilities.

Arunachal Congress demonstrates against refusal of meeting with Vice President

Shillong, Sep 13: On September 9, the Arunachal Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) held a protest against the refusal of a meeting with Vice President C P Radhakrishnan during his state visit, asserting that this prevented them from presenting a memorandum on important state-related matters. Bosiram Siram, the president of APCC, stated that the party had formally requested an appointment via the chief secretary on September 4, but had not received a response. He described the denial as “deeply unfortunate” and raised the question of why the principal opposition party was not permitted to present the people’s concerns



to the Vice President. In a proposed memorandum, Congress aimed to establish an Arunachal Regiment to enhance local youth recruitment into the armed forces, asserting this would boost national security and employment opportunities. They called for an all-party delegation to assess the

situation in vulnerable frontier areas like Taksing, emphasizing the need for reliable all-weather roads and improved infrastructure, linking development to national security. Congress demanded ample logistical support for security forces in the Himalayan frontier and sought amendments to Article 371H for stronger protections of indigenous resources and rights. The party opposed large dam projects, particularly the Siang Upper Multipurpose Project, citing risks of displacement and ecological damage, urging a halt to its advancement and calling for a comprehensive, independent assessment of its impacts.

Burning questions that the Mallikarjun Kharge saga raises regarding Dalit rights and the law

New Delhi, Sep 13: Under Indian law, is it considered a crime to perform a shuddhikaran at a location where a Dalit leader has recently conducted a rally? Is it necessary to file an FIR? Is it true that the shuddhikaran organisers can assert that they were only reacting to slogans they considered inappropriate, rather than to Mallikarjun Kharge? What about the FIR against Rahul Gandhi, which accuses him of promoting enmity and outraging religious feelings? Is it warranted? Or absurd? Finally, what does all of this reveal about the Uttarakhand government’s stance on crimes against Dalits and its enforcement of the law that it has pledged to uphold? These are some of the questions underlying the shuddhikaran saga that have not been adequately addressed. They may not have been asked of the right people. Today, I want to concentrate on what I believe are the correct answers. Justice Madan Lokur, a distinguished former Supreme Court judge, states that a shuddhikaran at the Haldwani Ramlila Maidan, occurring days after Kharge’s rally, constitutes a crime under Indian law. It is an offence that can be punished. Justice Lokur further states that according to the relevant Act, any public servant, including police officers, who does not respond will also be considered complicit in the crime. So, then, what should we make of the refusal of the Uttarakhand government to register an FIR for almost a month?



Of course, they were wrong not to. But consider the explanations given. The organisers of the shuddhikaran, the Shri Ram Sena Dharmarth Seva Nyas Sangathan, claim it wasn’t targeted at Kharge but to counter-slogans raised by Congress members during the rally and a previous statement by Kharge comparing the BJP and RSS to a poisonous snake.

Does that argument carry weight? Even if true, Kharge is still the target. He stands at the core of these explanations. Mahendra Bhatt, the BJP Uttarakhand chief, defends the shuddhikaran on the grounds that the venue had been polluted by slogans that were not appropriate for a religious place. But the Ramlila Maidan is not a religious place. It’s a public venue. Surely, this

defence has little value unless, of course, it was a hint to the police how to respond.

The chief minister of Uttarakhand claims the people of his state are not aware of Kharge’s caste. In other words, they don’t know he’s a Dalit and can’t be accused of untouchability. Can we really believe that? And is ignorance a defence? Let’s now come to the bizarre twist this story has taken. Whilst delaying registering an FIR against those who conducted the shuddhikaran, an FIR was registered against Rahul, on the complaint of a certain Amit Kumar, a Scheduled Caste member, who’s claimed his sentiments were hurt by the Congress leader’s characterisation of the shuddhikaran as an act of untouchability.

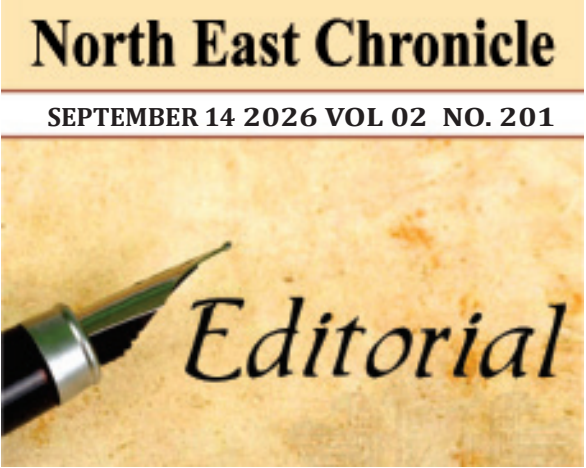
It is probable that a bilateral meeting between PM and Xi Jinping will occur at BRICS

New Delhi, Sep 13: It is probable that Prime Minister Narendra Modi will meet with Chinese President Xi Jinping for a bilateral discussion during the BRICS Summit in New Delhi on September 12. This will be the first in-person bilateral talks between the two leaders since the fatal Galwan Valley clash in 2020. The anticipated meeting is likely to attract significant attention as India and China aim to solidify a careful warming of relations after years of military tensions, diplomatic distance, and strained economic interactions. On Saturday, Xi is set to arrive in New Delhi for the 18th BRICS Leaders’ Summit, hosted by India on September 12 and 13. His visit will be his first trip to India in seven years and the first since the 2020 border crisis. New Delhi and Beijing have not yet released a formal statement confirming the proposed bilateral. Recently, the two leaders appeared together at the SCO Summit in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, where they shook hands but did not engage in a formal bilateral meeting. In preparation for Xi’s trip to India, National Security Adviser (NSA) Ajit Doval made a trip to China for top-level talks, aiming to maintain diplomatic engagement between the two nations. Additionally, the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination (WMCC) regarding India-China border matters has convened, and discussions took place be-



tween the Special Representatives of both nations concerning the boundary issue. The reestablishment of diplomatic contact occurs as ties gradually stabilize after troops have withdrawn from multiple points of tension along the Line of Actual Control (LAC). Since June 2020, when soldiers from both nations clashed violently in the Galwan Valley of eastern Ladakh, the relationship between India and China has been under intense pressure. In the confrontation, twenty Indian soldiers lost their lives, and China subsequently confirmed that four of its soldiers had died. The confrontation triggered a prolonged military standoff along the LAC and resulted in a sharp deterioration in political, economic and diplomatic relations. Since then, the two sides have held multi-

ple rounds of military and diplomatic negotiations aimed at disengaging troops and easing tensions at friction points along the border. While the disengagement process has reduced the immediate risk of military confrontation, the broader boundary dispute remains unresolved. The PM Modi-Xi meeting would therefore carry considerable political significance, coming after years of limited high-level engagement between the two countries. The two sides have increasingly relied on military and diplomatic channels to manage differences, prevent further escalation and create conditions for a gradual stabilisation of ties. The proposed summit-level engagement could provide an opportunity to build on that process.



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Editorial

Beyond gender: men excel at gold-digging too

Gold diggers, please stay away from me. The modern man feels compelled to add this disclaimer to his dating profile. It is a grave fear among dudes with extremely light wallets. Without a single glass in their kitchen and only two T-shirts to rotate between, they seem worried about being robbed of the gold they don't have. But we all must listen to them and stay far, far away. It's because they are exactly what they fear. Gold diggers who dug so deep that they haven't been caught in centuries.

Contrary to the popular understanding, this kind of greedy dating isn't a female-only sport. All genders dabble in it and only one gets the bad name. The Hinge man who cries about paying for dinner dates comes from a long line of opportunists. What happened is that once upon a time, his people (men) won the ultimate lottery. They got beautiful women to cook, clean, and think for them. Generations passed, turning ordinary men into lucky lords: rich or broke, they entered the world with one guarantee a woman's lifelong service. Housekeeper, life coach, mommy, ghostwriter, she could be anything all day, every day. The husbands struck gold. And whatever he asked for in dowry. The modern man has hit the patriarchal jackpot. He swipes through an app and finds himself a rich, successful baddie who does everything his unpaid mother did for his father and then clocks out to bring home an enviable paycheck. Now, the uber-cool guy also wants to date older women; they come with wisdom, cash, and connections. But nobody calls him a gold digger. It is a label reserved for the second sex. These days, she is often an independent woman who won't wash her partner's undergarments and expects him to have a stable job and a healthy investment portfolio. Haw, right? How could she be so demanding? I could barely hold back a chuckle when a 27-year-old London-returned girlboss at American Express told me she pays for her boyfriend's cigarettes. Then she told me about the time he bought an iPhone and made her pay the EMI. "At the end of the day, he picked me because I am capable of taking care of him, so I don't get to complain," she said, without sarcasm. Then she spent the next hour doing exactly that, complaining. "I have a

feeling he doesn't love me." Well, he doesn't need to.

Each item at her guy's rented apartment in Gurugram is hand-picked and paid for by her. Even the car he drives was bought by her. I'm not such a hater that I cannot applaud the man's hustle. But I won't. What pisses me off is that he has everything up for taking in a man's world and a rich woman to pay his bills. He has too much gold, and he didn't even do much digging. This Gurugram stud, who, by the way, is a drummer of a failed band, is worse than my millennial mausaji. He at least gives half the rent, half his kid's school fees, probably 10 per cent expressions of his emotions, and then expects my full-time working mausi to be food-giver and caregiver seven days a week. The riches that he landed on were given to him in exchange for something tangible, not "good morning baby" messages. As a gold digger trained in Brahmanical gender roles, he at least pays for stuff (half of the stuff) while exploiting my sweet aunt. The Gen Z variety shamelessly pillages through the fat wallets of their significant others without offering a Rs 10 toffee. They are not always straight men. A study conducted this year by the Behavioral and Social Sciences Institute in Austria confirmed that non-heterosexual, Left-leaning men are the best at gold-digging. They scored higher than Right-wingers and Centrists. It also linked this greedy behaviour to dark personality traits like narcissism, sadism, psychopathy and wagara, wagara. But I won't get into that because the researchers surveyed only 351 people. My gossip channel is considerably larger, and it hardly matters that all of us are a little gone in the head. The larger point of the paper is this: gold-digging is not a female-only sport. It is, in fact, gender-neutral.

All the closeted gold diggers can learn a thing or two from sugar babies. They openly put it out there that they are looking for a sugar mommy or sugar daddy. There is no pretence of loving and only the intention of taking. When I met one of them and asked him what he wanted from me, he didn't feel shy about saying "an internship". In return, he said he would give me everything I wanted. Is it even possible? I haven't seen a woman be quite so lucky.

The cost of ignoring uncomfortable feedback

Feedback is easiest to accept when it confirms what people already believe. Compliments are welcomed; criticism is often explained away. Yet uncomfortable feedback can be more useful than praise. It may reveal a weakness that is invisible to those working inside a system. A customer may identify a confusing process. An employee may notice an unrealistic workload. A student may point out a difficulty that administrators never encounter themselves. Not every

criticism is correct, of course. Feedback needs to be examined rather than accepted automatically. But dismissing it simply because it is inconvenient wastes an opportunity to learn.

Organisations that genuinely improve need ways to hear criticism without turning every disagreement into a personal conflict. There is also a difference between listening and agreeing. A person can take a complaint seriously even when the final decision remains unchanged.

Pragmatic diplomacy: finding common ground with China

The BRICS summit comes at a particularly important time for India. Even as there is turmoil around the world, its fast-paced economic growth and stability provide a reassurance of sorts not just in its neighbourhood, but in the larger Global South. The somewhat belated announcement that President Xi Jinping will lead his country's delegation to the 18th BRICS summit was widely welcomed. This has given the BRICS meet a certain heft. Equally importantly, it marks the first visit of the Chinese leader to this country since 2019, at a time when there is an uptick in ties between the two countries after a downturn arising from Chinese actions in eastern Ladakh in 2020.

The optics matter more than the agenda items in this instance: A Chinese head of State on Indian soil is itself a data point in the slow, wary normalisation between

the two capitals. As a founder member of the organisation, now expanded to include Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, India sees its role as carrying a special responsibility to advance the interests of the developing world, while safeguarding its own strategic autonomy. For this reason, it is anchoring the summit around four pillars: Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability. It deliberately chose technocratic language to keep the bloc's centre of gravity on delivery rather than rhetoric. BRICS is not a talking shop, but a platform for practical cooperation, and India is pushing an agenda focused on digital public infrastructure (DPI), artificial intelligence (AI), supply chain resilience and global financial reform. It is worth remembering because many in India have forgotten that it was India's 2012 presidency that

led to the establishment of the New Development Bank, also known as the BRICS Bank, and the Contingent Reserve Arrangement, giving members both a development-funding window and a financial safety net for balance-of-payments stress. It was during India's 2021 presidency that the grouping took up the idea of a virtual constellation of remote-sensing satellites for disaster management and climate monitoring.

This year's push on DPI and AI standards is a continuation of that pattern: India using its presidencies to build low-visibility public goods rather than headline-grabbing declarations. Yet each BRICS member has its own agenda, and these need not align with the organisation's stated one. Even as other members supported UN Security Council reform to expand its membership, China resisted the idea, unsurprisingly, since

it already holds a permanent seat. Given its trade and industrial weight, China brings its own institutional shadow to the table: the Belt and Road Initiative, the Digital Silk Road, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and now the World Artificial Intelligence Cooperation Organisation (WAICO) — each shaping how it approaches the global development agenda on its own terms. Beijing also runs a more aggressive line on de-dollarisation and a prospective BRICS currency. It has joined the Bank of Thailand, the UAE, Saudi Arabia and the BIS Innovation Hub in building mBridge, a multi-central-bank digital currency platform enabling instant, low-cost cross-border payments and forex settlement using digital currencies chiefly the digital yuan. It is, in effect, an alternative rail chipping away at the dollar's traditional dominance in trade settlement.

The Chinese agenda here is layered rather than straightforward. On the one hand, Beijing wants BRICS to harden into a genuine counterweight to western-led institutions, accelerating national-currency use and staking out leadership in next-generation industries. On the other, it is simultaneously building an entente with Washington. A week after the summit, Xi travels to Washington for a summit with President Trump and you can safely bet that Beijing's de-dollarisation rhetoric at BRICS will be kept deliberately muted, given Trump's public hostility to the idea. India's posture is narrower: It wants to stay close to BRICS's original development and financial-governance mandate and resists any framing of the bloc as an anti-western project. Like China, it wants IMF and Bretton Woods reform, but its preferred instrument is national-cur-

rency trade settlement, not a parallel BRICS currency. The real test for the expanded grouping will be producing a joint statement at all. Consensus on trade and financial governance is plausible. Political fault lines: the US strikes on Iran, and Tehran's retaliatory attacks on UAE, Saudi Arabia and Persian Gulf shipping are not going to paper over easily, and India's interest lies less in resolving them, than in ensuring the summit's economic architecture survives the argument. This is where India's role becomes important. It cannot make the competing geopolitical interests of China, Russia, Iran and the Gulf States disappear, nor should it try to turn BRICS into an instrument of Indian foreign policy. Its task is more modest: to demonstrate that countries can cooperate on issues of common interest even when they disagree profoundly on geopolitics.

Sinking cities: how corruption undermined India's urban dreams

What is happening to our cities? To my mind, beyond the glitz of skyscrapers, flashy malls and hype of smart cities, the stark truth is that India's urban infrastructure is on the verge of collapse, and nobody seems to care. Roads crumble, drains overflow, flooding is common, unauthorised colonies proliferate, pollution kills, power and water supply is uncertain, and manholes and potholes periodically take innocent lives. This is the nightmare an ordinary citizen has to go through daily in a city.

The recent collapse of a five-storey PG hostel building in Delhi's Satya Niketan is a grim illustration. The building, reportedly around five decades old, collapsed on September 6, killing seven people and injuring others. Preliminary reports establish structural weaknesses, unauthorised alterations, and criminal complicity by supervising authorities. The tragedy is that lakhs of students live in such PGs in Delhi alone. We praise our young, but let them die from neglect. Nor are these failures restricted only to the metropolises. Our second- and third-tier cities are urbanising rapidly, but in the most haphazard manner, without planning institutions, technical personnel or financial resources required to cope with the transformation. This is our pathetic state when, ironically, India has, compared to international standards, a

minimum urban load. According to World Bank data based on UN urbanisation estimates, about 35.7 per cent of India's population lived in urban areas in 2025. China, by comparison, was already at 66.3 per cent. The contrast with developed countries is even more striking: the corresponding figure is around 80 per cent in the United States, 82 per cent in Canada, 78 per cent in Germany, and 85 per cent in the United Kingdom. The basic point is that India is much less urbanised than China and the developed world, but its urban infrastructure even at this level of urbanisation is in shambles. India is, therefore, confronted with a peculiar challenge. We have a relatively low level of urbanisation, but an enormous absolute urban population. Even at roughly 36 per cent urbanisation, this translates into hundreds of millions of people living in towns and cities. And the proportion will continue to rise. Before the country becomes predominantly urban, we can still build institutions capable of managing the transition. If we fail, today's potholes and overflowing drains will become tomorrow's systemic crisis.

China provides an instructive contrast. It crossed the 50 per cent urbanisation mark more than a decade ago and is now about two-thirds urban. India has not yet reached that threshold. But China's experience also demonstrates what happens when urbanisation takes

place on an enormous scale: Cities require massive investment in transport, water, sewage, housing, waste management and municipal governance. Apart from policy neglect, pervasive and persistently unchecked corruption is the root cause of what our cities have become. An entire chain of near-institutionalised bribes — extending from municipal officials, the police, contractors and the political class — is a fact of life. Moreover, there is little incentive for policymakers to change things. Under the system of civic apartheid that we have, the powerful live in meticulously pampered enclaves, like Lutyens' Delhi. Those with money increasingly live in gated communities, luxury apartment complexes and carefully maintained neighbourhoods. They can supplement public infrastructure with private security, generators, water tankers, housekeeping, landscaping and waste management. Essentially, they can purchase protection from municipal failure. It is the vast majority of those outside this privileged circle of power and money who are the real victims. The result is a vicious circle. Those with the power to change the system are insulated from its consequences, while those who suffer have little power to do anything about it. We often speak of the 'Smart Cities Mission', digital governance, artificial intelligence and technology-driven administra-

tion. But there is something faintly absurd about calling a city smart when its most elementary civic systems do not work. What is the intelligence of a city where a child has no safe pavement on which to walk to school? What is the sophistication of a city where a citizen can fall into an uncovered manhole? What is the modernity of a city where a building can be altered, overcrowded and structurally compromised until it becomes a death trap? Technology cannot substitute for municipal competence. A smart city is not one with the largest number of sensors or the most impressive command centre. It is one in which basic services work predictably. It is a city where roads are safe, water is reliable, sewage is properly treated, garbage is collected, buildings are inspected, traffic is manageable, air is breathable and public spaces are accessible.

If we want to make our cities more liveable, we have to start with basic reform. The first reform must be financial. The Reserve Bank of India has documented the financial weakness of municipal corporations, but nothing has been done to remedy this situation. Municipal corporations cannot be expected to provide sophisticated urban services while remaining chronically dependent upon grants and transfers. Municipalities should have greater access to long-term borrowing for infrastructure, subject to stringent

fiscal safeguards. Second, property taxation needs radical modernisation through GIS mapping, transparent valuation and efficient digital collection. Third, we need clear accountability, with independent municipal audits. Every major municipal asset — a road, bridge, drain, manhole, public building — should have a digital identity. The responsible agency, contractor, engineer, date of construction, maintenance history and inspection schedule should be publicly accessible. Fourth, there should be system rationalisation. Too many cities remain caught between municipal corporations, development authorities, water boards, transport agencies, state departments and special-purpose bodies. Responsibility is fragmented; accountability is diluted. Fifth, and most importantly, corruption must be confronted through summary punishment and transparency. Municipal tenders, contracts, completion certificates, inspection reports and maintenance schedules should be available online. But nothing will change unless the apathy of citizens changes. For too long the system has complacently relied on the assumption that for every outrage there will be some public expression of discontent, and then the crisis will blow over. This callous and corrupt system will only change if citizens organise themselves to demand accountability and say: Enough is enough.

Earth's warning signs: adapting to our warming world

Nature has always thrown floods, storms, droughts, landslides and wildfires at us. That part is nothing new. What is new and worrying, is how often these events show up now, and how much harder they hit. Climate change does not cause every single disaster on its own. But a warmer atmosphere and warmer oceans load the dice. They make the extremes more extreme. The numbers back this up.

The World Meteorological Organization has recorded that the years between 2015 and 2025 were the eleven hottest ever measured. Heatwaves, heavy rain, cyclones, one disruption after another, they just keep coming. This past summer made that painfully clear. Europe baked under severe heat as wildfires forced mass evacuations and UN climate officials have started calling it what it is, a climate emergency. In early September, Typhoon Saule dumped torrential rain on China's southern coast, forcing tens of thousands to flee. Add

the WMO's warning of an unusually strong El Nino building through 2026 and the picture grows more uncertain still. El Nino is natural. Warmer oceans can make its effects far more dangerous.

On the morning of August 26, shortly before nine, a chunk of the glacier sitting on Langtang Lirung, one of the Himalayas' most storied peaks, gave way. Children in the valley below were on their way to school at the time. Investigators believe the bedrock holding the ice in place simply crumbled. What followed was a wall of water, mud and rock that thundered nearly 100 kilometres down the Lhende Khola and Trishuli rivers. At some points along the Trishuli, the water rose by nine metres, about thirty feet, in half an hour. The collapse itself was so violent it registered as its own seismic tremor, the kind of reading you would expect from an earthquake, not a landslide. Here is the part that barely made head-

lines outside Nepal. This same stretch of river had already flooded once, just fourteen months earlier, in July 2025, when a glacial lake burst and washed away the bridge at this very border crossing. Scientists at the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development had already flagged it as a river with a pattern and records show dozens of floods have struck this Nepal-China belt since 1900. The mountain kept sending warnings that almost nobody outside the valley was listening. The scale of loss is still being counted. By early September, officials in Nepal and China had confirmed over 1,300 dead, with roughly 5,500 people still missing, bodies later turning up far out on the plains in Chitwan and Nawalparasi, well over a hundred kilometres from where the mountain gave way. Economic damage is estimated between four and seven billion dollars. It is now Nepal's deadliest natural disaster since the 2015 Gorkha earthquake,

which killed around 9,000 people. That earlier quake had also triggered a glacier collapse on the very same peak, burying Langtang village and killing more than 300 people in seconds. Geologists also point to nearby Tsergo Ri, the site of one of the largest known landslides on Earth, a prehistoric event that shaped this same valley long before anyone was counting. The disaster also flattened the Rasuwagadhi border crossing, more important than its remote location suggests. It once carried roughly a third of all trade between Nepal and China, and was a gateway for pilgrims heading to Mount Kailash, sacred across four religions. That crossing is gone for now. A debris dam formed by the initial surge gave way again on August 28, sending a second flood downstream and halting rescue work for hours. Nepal and China kept recovery efforts largely in their own hands, accepting limited outside help from India, Australia and South Korea.

HDFC Bank board recommends 2 names to RBI for next MD & CEO

Mumbai: HDFC Bank's board has submitted names of two candidates to the Reserve Bank of India for appointment as the bank's next managing director and chief executive officer, it said in an exchange notification on Saturday, formally starting the succession process for Sashidhar Jagdishan, who is due to retire later this year. The bank did not disclose the names of the candidates.

Jagdishan, who has led the bank since 2020, is set to step down at the end of his second term in October. The bank will submit the names along with the proposed remuneration for the candidates to RBI for approval for a three-year term. Kaizad Bharucha, the bank's deputy managing director, is rumoured to be the most likely internal candidate to succeed Jagdishan.

Other potential contenders include Anup Bagchi, CEO of ICICI Prudential Life Insurance; Paresh Sukthankar, former deputy managing director at HDFC Bank; Vibha Padalkar, CEO of HDFC Life Insurance; Rajiv Sabharwal, CEO of Tata Capital; and Amitabh Chaudhry,



CEO of Axis Bank. The board also approved the reappointment of V Srinivasa Rangan as whole-time director, designated as executive director, for a one-year period from November 23 to November 22, 2027. He currently oversees human resources, corporate legal, group oversight and secretarial functions, along with investment banking, information security, ethics, and fraud and vigilance. It also approved the appointment of Jimmy Tata as whole-time director, designated as executive director, for three years, subject to

RBI approval.

The board also approved the creation of one additional whole-time director position, taking the number of whole-time directors on the board to four, apart from the MD & CEO. The bank said the additional position is "in order to have sharper synergy and oversight, including on the subsidiaries of the bank as well as to have larger pipeline for succession planning" and will be filled in consultation with the incoming MD & CEO after the successor takes charge.

Hiranandani enters the Goa real estate industry with partnerships worth ₹ 450 crore

Mumbai: Under its Eleva by Hiranandani model, Mumbai-based real estate developer Hiranandani Communities is expanding into the Goa real estate market through project management agreements totaling ₹450 crore. The business will offer project management consulting (PMC) services for two residential projects totaling approximately 0.25 million square feet of development on a five-acre plot of land.

The projects, Cloud Infinity Premium Villas by Shree Yagna Builders and Developers and Aria Residency by Azul Amor LLP, are situated in high-growth corridors in Goa and feature upscale apartments and villas. The regional developers have appointed The Guardians Real Estate Advisory as the

strategic partner for sales and marketing of the two RERA-registered projects. "Goa is evolving into a year-round residential and coastal lifestyle destination, driven by improved connectivity, hybrid living, increasing demand for homes from established branded developers, and customers' growing propensity towards experiential living," said Niranjan Hiranandani, chairman and managing director, Hiranandani Communities.

The Eleva model allows Hiranandani Communities to expand into new markets through partnerships with local developers, without undertaking the entire development cycle itself. Under the Goa partnerships, the company will provide its project management and execution expertise to the



developments. The company said Goa's residential market is being supported by improved connectivity, including the operationalisation of Manohar International Airport at Mopa and the ongoing upgrade of the Mumbai-Goa National Highway.

It also pointed to rising interest from high-net-worth individuals, non-resident Indians and second-home buyers. Hiranandani, in a statement issued on Thurs-

day, noted that the Goa entry marks a step towards building Eleva as a scalable platform for expansion into high-potential real estate markets across India.

Last year, in September, Hiranandani Communities launched a 225-acre integrated coastal township with an investment of around ₹5,000 crore and a revenue potential of ₹17,000 crore in Alibaug, a coastal town in Raigad district of Maharashtra, just south of Mumbai.

Samsung India starts layoffs as expenses climb, affecting about 100 people



New Delhi: As growing costs and declining revenues put strain on its television and home appliance operations, Samsung India has begun laying off employees in batches. So far, between 80 and 100 executives from both companies have been requested to resign. According to the news article, the cuts impact workers at several levels, including branch and area managers, director-level officials, and team heads at the headquarters.

The decision was made at a time when memory chip prices have more than quadrupled, and the company's sales and profit margins are under pressure due to declining smartphone demand and rising raw material costs. According to a July report by news agency Reuters, Samsung Electronics' worldwide semiconductor scarcity may worsen and last until 2028. Although Samsung's television and home appliance businesses are presently the target

of the job losses, the overall number of impacted workers may rise. Up to 25% of the sales and marketing staff in the electronics industry may be affected, an executive told The Economic Times. Off-roll workers employed by manpower agencies fall under this category. With the exception of its larger smartphone sales organization, Samsung's domestic electronics sales force consists of approximately 550-600 executives. According to an impacted employee cited in the news source, the corporation has started sending out termination letters in tiny quantities over the last few days. It has been alleged that some workers were requested to quit before completing their notice periods. Samsung's smartphone division has not been affected by the current layoffs. It is the company's biggest business in India, and a recovery in phone sales could significantly improve its overall financial per-

formance in the country.

Smartphones account for about three-fourths of Samsung India's revenue. However, smartphone sales in India have weakened, with industry estimates putting the decline at 11-12 per cent year-on-year, the news report said. Samsung has also struggled to expand its presence in India's high-value air conditioner market despite increasing its efforts this year.

At the same time, higher raw material costs have weighed on its consumer electronics business. The company is also consolidating its branch network to lower expenses, with some offices being merged, the news report said. Samsung India reported revenue of about ₹1.1 trillion in FY25, up 12 per cent from the previous year, according to filings with the Registrar of Companies. Home appliances contributed around 11 per cent of total sales, making them the company's second-largest category after smartphones. Net profit rose 38 per cent to ₹11,287 crore in FY25. Its rival Apple India reported an 18 per cent rise in total revenue to ₹79,378 crore in FY25. Another South Korean rival, LG Electronics, posted a 14.25 per cent year-on-year increase in total income to ₹24,630.63 crore during the same period.

Rosmerta expands manufacturing footprint, eyes up to 35% FY27 revenue growth

Mumbai: Rosemerta Group is targeting 30-35 per cent growth in FY27 after closing FY26 with revenue of around ₹1,200-1,250 crore, as it expands beyond its traditional auto-ancillary business into technology-led and mobility solutions.

The group is betting on businesses such as telematics, connected-vehicle platforms, government-service digitisation and road-safety solutions, while also expanding its manufacturing footprint. "We are not a typical auto ancillary," Karn Nagpal, president of Rosemerta Group, said, highlighting the group's presence across technology platforms, connectivity management, telematics,

government and private services, besides manufacturing. The company plans to add two diesel exhaust fluid (DEF) plants this year, as it expects the business to nearly double during FY27. It is also shifting one of its main plants to a larger facility in Manesar in the next couple of months. The group currently has around 7-8 plants across businesses, including telematics, high-security registration plates (HSRP), DEF and vehicle recycling.

The DEF and vehicle-recycling businesses, which are relatively new for the group, have emerged as key growth areas. The company said it expects to double its DEF business this year, following a similar pace of growth



in the previous year. Nagpal said the group's growth is increasingly linked to the shift towards connected and software-enabled vehicles. Rosemerta has been in the telematics business for nearly a decade and supplies connectivity solutions to both the aftermarket and original equipment manufacturers. As connectivity expands beyond electric vehicles to

internal-combustion engine vehicles, the company expects demand for telematics and connected-vehicle platforms to increase.

The group has nearly 200,000 electric two-wheelers on its platform, following its recent acquisition. The company expects the rising penetration of electric two-wheelers and the increasing need for con-

nected features and software updates to create further opportunities. Rosemerta also expects growth from its new road-safety vertical, which includes fire-suppression and fire-alert systems for buses. The company is currently piloting these systems with electric and internal-combustion engine bus manufacturers, while supplies of fire extinguishers for passenger vehicles have already begun.

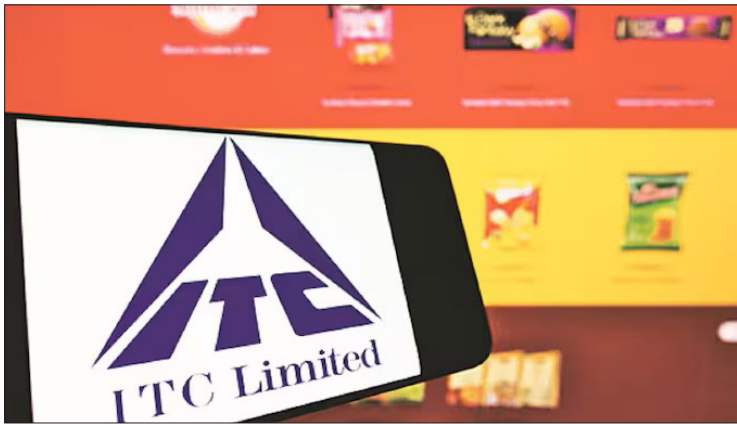
Nagpal further said the company is betting on the growing adoption of connected vehicles, with connectivity increasingly becoming an integral part of both electric and internal-combustion engine vehicles.

ITC targets ₹20,000 crore aashirvaad consumer spend in 5 years

Bengaluru: Diversified conglomerate ITC expects consumer spending on its flagship food brand Aashirvaad to double to ₹20,000 crore over the next five years, from around ₹10,000 crore currently, as it expands into newer food categories and adjacent segments, a senior company official said.

The company is amplifying Aashirvaad's play with a two-pronged strategy for the brand -- strengthening its core atta (wheat flour) business while expanding into adjacent categories such as ready-to-cook foods and frozen snacks, said Hemant Malik, Chief Executive Officer, Foods Division, and Executive Director, ITC Ltd. Aashirvaad started its journey in May 2002 as a whole wheat atta brand and has since grown into one of the country's most trusted kitchen brands, with a portfolio of more than 200 SKUs.

ITC, which aspires to become India's leading FMCG player, has expanded Aashirvaad beyond wheat flour into staples, spices and fresh foods, and even the frozen category, now has consumer spends exceeding ₹10,000 crore, he said. Asked when the brand is expected to double its



consumer spends to ₹20,000 crore, Malik told PTI, "We will double in the next five years." Aashirvaad products are now manufactured across a network of 66 facilities spread across the country, enabling ITC to cater to diverse consumer needs pan-India. This vast network also helps ITC to reach consumers with its products "with the highest freshness," he added.

In FY26, ITC's FMCG products were reaching around 28 crore households with nearly ₹37,000 crore in consumer spending. Consumer spending is the total amount spent by consumers on its products, including net sales turnover, chan-

nel margins and applicable taxes. According to Malik, the atta category itself continues to offer substantial opportunities for growth through segmentation and premiumisation as consumers increasingly seek products catering to specific nutritional, wellness and regional preferences.

The brand has expanded its portfolio beyond regular atta to include multigrain, high-protein, organic and millet-based variants, among others. "Premiumisation is not merely about a higher price point. Consumers today are willing to spend on products that offer tangible value, whether through superior quality,

convenience, health and nutritional benefits built through meaningful innovation," Malik said.

ITC is leveraging Aashirvaad's brand equity to enter new food categories and increase consumption occasions. Through brand Aashirvaad, ITC has also entered the fresh foods space with its ready-to-cook range, including ready-to-cook chapatis targeted at time-pressed, younger households, each pack offering 10 chapatis without added preservatives and a shelf life of 5-6 days. On expansion into adjacencies, Malik said products such as besan, vermicelli, rava, soya chunks, frozen naans and parathas, and fresh chutneys and sambar are part of its strategy to widen consumption occasions under the Aashirvaad mother brand. "The objective is to be present in categories where ITC can meaningfully address consumer pain points through innovation and differentiation," he said, adding, "Today, we have a strong product portfolio in this space. Backed by deep consumer insights and extensive research, we have developed products that are genuinely different and help improve everyday cooking experiences."

RBI denies CIC deregistration; tata sons forced toward mega public listing

Mumbai: The Reserve Bank has rejected Tata Sons' application to surrender its core investment company registration, killing the Tata Group holding company's attempt to avoid a mandatory stock-market listing and setting the stage for it to become publicly traded, sources said on Saturday.

The rejection was conveyed in a letter received by Tata Sons' company secretary and chief financial officer on Saturday, the sources said, closing out an application the company filed in March 2024 seeking to deregister as a non-banking financial company. Tata Sons and the RBI did not

immediately respond to requests for comment.

The decision means Tata Sons will remain classified as an Upper Layer NBFC, a category subject to enhanced regulatory requirements, including mandatory listing. The RBI first classified Tata Sons as an Upper Layer NBFC in September 2022, with such entities required to list within three years. The original deadline for Tata Sons was September 30, 2025. Tata Sons had sought to exit the NBFC framework before that deadline. It repaid more than Rs 21,000 crore of debt in 2024 and applied to surrender its registration, effective-



ly seeking to operate as an unregulated holding company rather than comply with the listing requirement. The RBI kept the application pending and continued to include Tata Sons in its Upper

Layer NBFC lists.

The central bank's rejection now removes the key regulatory route Tata Sons had been pursuing to remain private. The company has assets well above the Rs 1

lakh crore threshold under the RBI's revised framework for automatically qualifying large NBFCs for the Upper Layer, making an exemption increasingly difficult. A public listing would mark a fundamental change for the holding company of one of India's oldest and largest business groups. Tata Sons owns significant stakes in listed and unlisted Tata companies spanning information technology, automobiles, steel, consumer products, aviation, hospitality and financial services.

The move could also bring far greater scrutiny of Tata Sons' finances, capital allocation and investments.

A listed holding company would face regular disclosure requirements and greater pressure from public shareholders for clarity on the value of its investments and returns on capital. The roots of the current issue trace back to October 2021, when the RBI introduced a scale-based regulatory framework for NBFCs, sorting lenders into base, middle, upper and top layers with progressively stricter oversight.

In September 2022, the central bank placed Tata Sons - alongside firms including Bajaj Finance and Shriram Finance in the Upper Layer category, a clas-

sification that carries a hard three-year deadline to list on the stock exchanges, originally due to expire on September 30, 2025. Tata Sons pushed back. It repaid more than Rs 21,000 crore of debt in 2024, becoming debt-free, and filed to surrender its Core Investment Company registration altogether - a move that, if approved, would have let it exit the NBFC framework entirely and remain privately held. The RBI left the application pending through 2025, even as it kept including Tata Sons on successive Upper Layer lists, each time noting the listing did not affect the outcome of the deregistra-

tion review.

That ambiguity narrowed sharply this year. Revised RBI norms effective June 2026 replaced the earlier scoring-based approach with a single bright-line rule: any NBFC with assets of Rs 1 lakh crore or more sits in the Upper Layer. Tata Sons' standalone assets - reported at over Rs 2 lakh crore as of March 2026 - put it well clear of that bar. Tata Sons is the apex holding company for one of India's oldest and largest conglomerates, with stakes spanning IT services, automobiles, steel, consumer goods, aviation, hospitality and financial services.

UK commits £100m to bolster Ukraine’s air defences over winter



Kyiv: The UK has committed £100m to boost Ukraine’s air defences over winter with a package of military equipment including Patriot missiles. Defence interceptors, large-calibre artillery rounds and drones will be supplied to Ukraine through the contribution to Nato’s prioritised Ukraine requirements list. Supplies of Patriot missiles, which are used to stop aircraft, cruise missiles, and tactical ballistic missiles, have dwindled in Ukraine, causing a drop in interceptions of Russian attacks, according to military experts. The UK defence secretary, Wes Streeting, is due to co-chair his first meeting of the Ukraine defence contact group, made up of about 50 nations providing military equipment to Kyiv, with his German counterpart, Boris Pistorius, on Tuesday. The UK recently agreed to declassify blueprints for British-made components for the Scalp missile, a French-produced version of the Storm Shadow, which has already been used to hit targets in Russia. Streeting said: “Both the prime minister and I heard loud and clear on our first visits

to Kyiv the importance of supporting Ukraine through this winter, as Putin prepares to use winter as a weapon by continuing barbaric attacks against civilian and energy targets. “We promised to mobilise allies and provide more support wherever we can. Today, we are delivering on that, strengthening Ukraine’s defences and, alongside 50 allies, converting commitment into capability. “We will stand shoulder to shoulder with Ukraine until they win. Ukraine’s frontline is the frontline for freedom everywhere and our support will not waver.” The prime minister, Andy Burnham, spoke to the US president, Donald Trump, about the war on Monday, with the two agreeing on the need to “continue working towards a ceasefire that prevented more loss of life”. US envoys held talks in Kyiv on Sunday during an official visit to the country as part of an effort to end the conflict with Russia. While the talks were described as encouraging, no breakthrough was made. The Ukrainian president, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, said it appeared the war would continue into winter.

Canada’s retaliatory US tariffs take effect as trade dispute grows



Ottawa: Canada’s retaliatory tariffs on billions of dollars’ worth of American imports have come into effect, escalating a trade fight that has been marked by intensifying tensions between US president Donald Trump and Canadian prime minister Mark Carney. The tariffs took effect at 12.01am on Tuesday, and range from 15% to 50% and apply to products covering \$20bn in imports from the US. The measures target sectors including steel, dairy, appliances, agricultural equipment, pulp and paper, and electronics – industries that have been most affected by US tariffs. The retaliatory tariffs come “as a result of the United States’ decision to impose a 50% tariff on \$20bn of Canadian goods effective August 22”, the Canadian government said. “Canada’s counter-measures do not apply to US goods that are in transit to Canada on the day on which they come into force,” it added. Last month, Trump announced a new 50% tariff

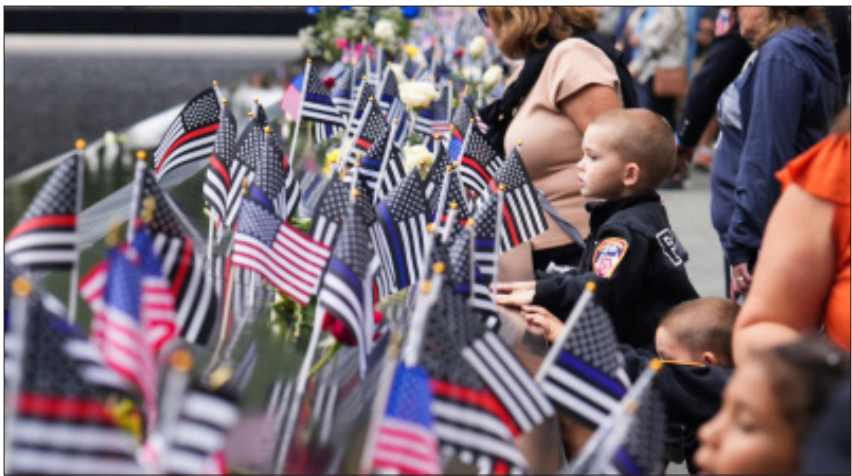
on cars and raw materials from Canada. He accused the country of “ripping off” the US “for years”. The US tariffs hit items such as hockey sticks and cement, affecting about 5.5% of Canadian exports to the US. Since then, tensions between Canada and the US have intensified, with Carney last week urging the Trump administration to “start being serious” as the trade dispute has increasingly spilled into broader diplomatic tensions. Trump and senior US officials have repeatedly criticized Canada and its leadership, while Trump has taken a series of symbolic signs at Canada including signing an executive order renaming Lake Ontario “Lake America” – which Canadians have rejected. On Monday, Trump threatened to block sales of Canada’s Bombardier Aviation in the US, unless the Quebec-based plane maker moves manufacturing to the US. “No more selling Bombardier in the United States!” Trump posted in all caps on his Truth Social platform,

CIA releases dozens of presidential daily briefs on Bin Laden and al-Qaida from before 9/11

Washington, D.C.: Several dozen presidential briefing documents declassified on Friday, the 25th anniversary of the September 11 attacks, detail intelligence that government officials had gathered about Osama bin Laden and al-Qaida leading up to the hijackings that killed nearly 3,000 people and upended American national security. The documents illustrate security analysts’ tracking of Bin Laden’s movements and support system, as well as concerns about possible threats to US targets. They also detail officials’ understanding of his network in the United States and other countries, including how his operations were financed. Proclaiming it “an act of exceptional transparency”, the CIA director, John Ratcliffe, said the documents were the agency’s single largest release of declassified presidential daily briefs – the highly classified briefings prepared by the nation’s intelligence community for the government’s most senior leaders. The documents range from a Febru-

ary 1998 file – prepared for then president Bill Clinton – titled “Terrorists seeking WMD capability” and mentioning Bin Laden and other Islamic extremists – to a 12 September 2001 report in which a source indicated the attacks had been planned for two years and had also targeted the US Capitol. An April 1998 document described the Taliban’s unwillingness to hand over Bin Laden, at the time seen as their “guest” in Afghanistan, noting their “gratitude for his assistance during the Soviet occupation” was making them “reluctant to alienate him by monitoring or controlling his activities”. Briefers in July 1998 called it “plausible that Bin Laden places a high priority on conducting attacks in the United States” and noted his “interest in conducting attacks with chemical and biological agents”. Two months later, a briefer wrote that Bin Laden’s “preferred option is to strike the US on its own soil in Washington”, and that al-Qaida “may fly an explosive-packed airplane

into a US city”. Potential hijackings were also discussed in December 1998, when a briefer described how conspirators “had evaded security checks during a recent trial run at an unidentified New York airport”, and “some members of the Bin Laden network have received hijack training”. Other documents detail Bin Laden’s pursuit of materials for making “dirty bombs”, conventional weapons infused with radioactive material. By June 1999, according to intelligence officials, his operatives had conducted such experiments with explosives to “increase their energy output”. About two years before the attacks, intelligence officials were aware that Bin Laden appeared to be misleading the Taliban about his reluctance to launch an unprovoked attack on the US. Briefs prepared for George W Bush in early 2001 focused in part on Bin Laden’s “experimentation by crude means to make and deploy biological agents”. A report a month before the attacks indicated



Bin Laden’s commitment “to conduct terrorist attacks in the US”, noting that the 1998 al-Qaida attacks on US embassies “demonstrate that he prepares operations years in advance and is not deterred by setbacks”. At that time – August 2001 – officials wrote of “suspicious activity in this country consistent with preparations for hijackings or other types of attacks, including recent surveillance of federal buildings in New York”, adding that the FBI was “conducting approximately 70 full field investigations through-

out the US that it considers Bin Laden-related”. Many of the documents were redacted to conceal sources’ names and other identifying information. They didn’t appear to break any new ground on the planning of the attacks or on US officials’ understanding of how they had unfolded. In the years immediately after the attacks, a bipartisan commission highlighted a lack of information-sharing among agencies such as the CIA and FBI, and issued recommendations that yielded new positions, including a centralized director of na-

tional intelligence, as well as the National Counterterrorism Center, which analyzes domestic and foreign terrorism information across different government branches. Asked for comment on the release, the White House noted the release of another batch of documents by the National Archives, also on Friday. That batch, including interviews with national security officials in the Clinton and Bush administrations, was a product of the commission that investigated the attacks from 2002 to 2004.

Court case brought by Zionist federation against journalist Mary Kostakidis ended ‘by consent’

Canberra: Federal court proceedings brought by the Zionist Federation of Australia (ZFA) against journalist Mary Kostakidis have been discontinued “by consent” with “no order as to costs”. The former SBS newsreader had been accused by the federation of breaching the Racial Discrimination Act (RDA) by sharing two X posts about a speech by the late Hezbollah secretary general Hassan Nasrallah in January 2024. Last year, Kostakidis had asked the court to strike the proceedings out, arguing the claim failed to identify which race, ethnicity or nationality was offended by her social media posts about Israel. The chief executive of the ZFA, Alon Cassuto, had alleged the breach came when Kostakidis shared a video of a speech by Nasrallah on X and added: “The Israeli govt getting some of its own medicine. Israel has started something it can’t finish with this

genocide.” A second post sharing the same video was also part of the claim. The complaint was first raised with the Australian Human Rights Commission but escalated to the federal court. The court said on Friday that the case had been dismissed with the agreement of both parties. Kostakidis said in a statement she had spent “two years doing nothing but preparing my defence in a case aimed at silencing me” and the discontinuation was a “win for every Australian who values our democratic right to freedom of political expression”. “I want to thank my fellow Australians who recognised the significance of what we stand to lose, stood with me and stepped up to assist me to launch my defence,” she said. “The purpose of journalism is to get to the truth – fearlessly – and to hold power to account. This is a win for press freedom,

which has prevailed. “Watching a people livestream their own genocide while the international community responsible for creating this mess offers the victims sympathy and the perpetrators bombs, diplomatic cover and impunity, has been disgusting.” In a statement published on Friday, Cassuto said his objectives in bringing the proceedings had been “substantially satisfied” after a public apology by Kostakidis in 2025 for the “hurt, distress and pain” felt by Jews and Israelis in Australia who took her posts “as an endorsement”. “The issues that motivated me to bring this proceeding are being examined in the royal commission on antisemitism and social cohesion. The commissioner’s report will be handed down in December following a national examination of how antisemitism became so normalised in Australia.”

Barnaby Joyce declares he is not "Jesus Christ" and acknowledges that One Nation has not modeled great policies

Canberra: Barnaby Joyce, One Nation’s Treasury spokesperson, says his party has not modelled the potential impact on retirement incomes and inflation from his party’s plan to give millions of households early access to their super savings in his second combative interview in two days. The morning after telling the ABC’s 7.30 program that he “was not Jesus Christ” and so could not be expected to know everything, Joyce on Tuesday ridiculed any suggestion that One Nation’s proposal should have included the economic analysis that typically accompanies major policy proposals. “Is there an implication beyond it being their money? Do you model the money you get paid at the end of the week?” he asked rhetorically. Under One Nation’s proposal, Australians who pay rent or a mortgage – so roughly 9 million households – would be given a choice to divert a portion of their superannuation to their take-home pay for up to three years. The full 12% compulsory super contribution would still be paid by employers but 3% could be paid directly to the account holder by their super fund, and still taxed at the lower 15% rate. The New England MP’s comments came as it emerged the Liberal party, under former leader Sussan Ley, had progressed a very similar policy proposal to allow workers to reduce their rate of compulsory super to 9%, and take the balancing 3% as extra wages from their employer, taxed at the marginal rate.



The draft Liberal policy was not limited to three years, or to those paying mortgages or rent. Joyce told ABC Radio National on Tuesday that the lack of any further guardrails around who could access their super early and for what purpose was not an issue as “people are not stupid” and would not take their money out of super unless it made financial sense. “If they believe ... that the alternative of getting their money to pay for their rental, to pay for their house payment, would be to leave it where they’re getting a spectacular return in their super ... then most people who have a brain between their ears will do precisely the latter and leave it in the investment of superannuation,” he said. Modelling by the Super Members Council, which represents the not-for-profit super sector,

suggested the average worker would be \$25,000 poorer by retirement were One Nation’s scheme implemented. The prime minister, Anthony Albanese, has savaged One Nation’s plans, telling a meeting of Labor’s caucus that the plan was a threat to the compulsory super rules. “Once you lose the principle of universality, the policy starts to disappear,” he said. “If you watch [the Joyce interview], it’s clear that the policy has not been thought through.” Jim Chalmers, the treasurer, attacked the super policy as “an absolute shambles”. “They haven’t been able to tell us: what does this mean for pension spending? They haven’t been able to tell us: what are the broader economic implications of this superannuation advice from One Nation? This is a shambles from beginning to end.”

Nearly 50,000 Yemeni civilians flee as Houthis advance along Red Sea coast

Sanaa: Nearly 50,000 people have fled due to a rapid advance by Houthi forces in western Yemen, exacerbating a humanitarian crisis as families face food shortages amid frontline fighting. The Iran-backed Houthis have seized key towns along the Red Sea coast, raising fears of a return to full-scale civil war, which previously claimed 150,000 lives. The International Orga-

nization for Migration reported significant displacement, with urgent needs for shelter, food, and healthcare. Analysts criticize the US and allies for overlooking diplomatic solutions, as the Houthis control strategic areas affecting vital trade routes. The UN warns of a “new and more dangerous phase of war,” potentially dragging Yemen into broader regional conflicts with severe

global implications. Instability in Yemen has been exploited by regional powers such as Saudi Arabia, Iran and the United Arab Emirates to fight proxy battles, and the failure to end the violence has led to the growth of powerful militias. The US-Israeli war on Iran has only heightened the tensions, with regional animosity at an all-time high. This has compounded one of

the world’s worst humanitarian crises. The most recent UN humanitarian report, released last month, warned that the country of 40 million was facing a deepening malnutrition crisis, with roughly half the population facing acute food insecurity nationwide. On the Red Sea coast, those who escaped the latest wave of fighting had their lives, but were left in shock.

5 Simple Tests That Can Detect Hidden Kidney Disease

Tests like an ECG, echo-profile, and blood pres-ly become part of rou-son is diagnosed with ever, the kidneys are that merits equal. The kidneys and orate closely. control blood fluid, and lytes while pumps blood to one is damaged, experience more to the World Health (WHO), diseases like tension might raise the vascular disease and kid-that chronic kidney disease undetected. Significant kidney damage can occur in a person without any pain, altered urine patterns, or other.The document outlines key methods for assessing chronic kidney disease (CKD) and its implications for cardiovascular health.

1. Serum Creatinine and eGFR: A blood test for serum creatinine helps calculate the estimated glomerular filtration rate (eGFR), indicating kidney filtering efficiency. An eGFR below 60 mL/min/1.73 m² for three months may suggest CKD, but a single abnormal result must be interpreted clinically.

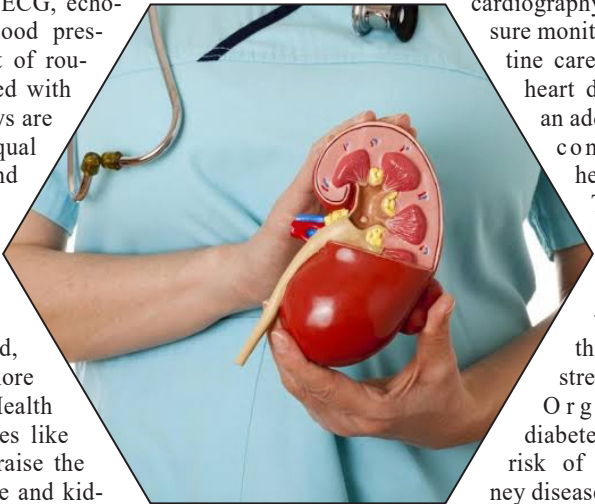
2. Urine Albumin-to-Creatinine Ratio (uACR): The uACR assesses early kidney damage, with values above 30 mg/g indicating potential harm, even if eGFR is normal. Both eGFR and uACR are important as per the 2024 KDIGO CKD guideline for risk assessment.

3. Blood Pressure: High blood pressure can damage kidney blood vessels, complicating control. Persistent hypertension should prompt kidney evaluation, along with monitoring kidney function and urine albumin to support cardiovascular health.

4. Blood Glucose or HbA1c: Diabetes significantly increases CKD risk. The American Diabetes Association advises annual assessments of eGFR and uACR for those with type 2 diabetes, as elevated blood glucose may lead to kidney damage.

5. Routine Urinalysis: A basic urine test can reveal signs of kidney issues such as blood or protein. While it cannot replace uACR and eGFR, it aids in determining the need for further evaluation.

The document emphasizes that kidney disease detection is crucial for heart patients due to the association with heightened cardiovascular risks, including heart attack and stroke. Following the 2026 American Heart Association guidelines, it encourages frequent checks of eGFR and uACR, along with management of blood pressure and glucose levels, to safeguard both kidney and heart health. For individuals with heart conditions or diabetes, proactive kidney screening is highly recommended.



Why this three-step eating plan can dramatically improve your blood sugar levels

Strict diets, eliminating favorite foods, or making significant lifestyle adjustments are frequently linked to blood sugar management. However, new research indicates that minor, doable changes to regular eating patterns can also have a significant impact. Dr. Alessia Roehnelt, an endocrinologist in New Jersey, recently wrote about a frequent dietary pattern that many people follow without realizing its effects. People usually eat carbohydrates first, she pointed out, which might result in sharp blood sugar rises. The majority of people begin their meals with bread, yet this habit causes their blood sugar levels to rise rapidly. Rather, begin with the vegetables, followed by the fat and protein, and last your carbohydrates, she said. According to her, this simple change works because of basic physiological processes.

“Vegetables and protein slow gastric emptying, so glucose enters your bloodstream more gradually. And that means less insulin is needed for that meal,” Dr Roehnelt said, outlining how the sequence of foods can influence the body’s glucose response. The idea is that eating fibre-rich vegetables and protein first slows and controls carbohydrate absorption. Since insulin also plays a role in fat storage, reducing sharp spikes may have broader effects on weight management and metabolic health. Dr Palleti Siva Karthik Reddy, MBBS, MD, general medicine, FAIG, Consultant physician at Elite Care Clinic, tells indianexpress.com, “From a physiological perspective, the impact

is both real and clinically meaningful. When you begin a meal with fibre-rich vegetables and protein, it creates a buffering effect in the digestive system. This slows down the rate at which carbohydrates are broken down into glucose and absorbed into the



blood-stream.” For the average person, Dr Reddy states, this translates into a lower, more gradual rise in post-meal blood sugar levels rather than a sharp spike. “Over time, even modest reductions in these glucose excursions can improve overall glycaemic stability, reduce stress on insulin secretion, and support better metabolic regulation. While it is not a substitute for balanced nutrition, it is a simple behavioural modification with measurable benefits.”

On long-term metabolic health
Slower gastric emptying plays a central role in metabolic health. Dr Reddy states, “When glucose enters the bloodstream gradually, the body requires a more controlled and propor-

tionate insulin response. This reduces the likelihood of repeated insulin surges, which over time are associated with the development of insulin resistance.” In the long term, he mentions that stabilising post-meal glucose and insulin levels helps preserve insulin sensitivity and reduces metabolic strain. “It can also influence appetite regulation. Rapid spikes followed by drops in blood sugar often trigger hunger and cravings, particularly for refined carbohydrates. By preventing these fluctuations, individuals may experience better satiety and more consistent energy levels, which indirectly supports weight management and reduces the risk of overeating.”

Specific groups of people who should be more cautious

“Yes, while the approach is broadly safe, certain groups should adopt it with some degree of guidance,” states Dr Reddy, adding that individuals with diabetes or prediabetes can benefit significantly from this strategy, but it should ideally be integrated into a broader plan that includes portion control, carbohydrate quality, and regular monitoring of blood glucose levels.For people on glucose-lowering medications, particularly insulin or sulfonylureas, changes in meal patterns can alter glucose responses, so monitoring is important to avoid unintended hypoglycaemia. Dr Reddy stresses that those with “digestive conditions such as gastroparesis, irritable bowel syndrome, or certain gastric sensitivities” may not tolerate large amounts of fibre or protein at the start of a meal and should personalise the approach. Ultimately, while food sequencing is a useful tool, it works best when tailored to an individual’s metabolic profile, medical history, and overall dietary pattern.

Poland's Tatras: An affordable alternative to the Alps



“The wind is in from Africa / Last night I couldn’t sleep.” Joni Mitchell has ear-wormed her way into my head as my wife and I step out from Zahara de la Sierra into the mountains of Sierra de Grazalema natural park. The Africa bit probably comes from yesterday’s visit to Zahara’s castle museum. Here, high above the tiled terracotta mosaic of village rooftops, we learned how the recapture of this picturesque hill town was a turning point in the Reconquista – the military campaign of the 1400s that saw the Catholics retake southern Spain after seven centuries of Moorish control. As for sleep deprivation, I may just have overdone it on last night’s tapas.

Either way, Africa feels present as we tramp through the countryside of Andalucia, if only in the wildlife. The painted lady butterflies drifting over the flower-spangled verges, the turtle doves purring from the olive groves and the booted eagle drifting overhead: all are summer visitors recently blown in from the great continent to our south. It’s day two of our White Villages of the Ronda Mountains walking tour, a self-guided seven-day route from On Foot Holidays that explores this alluring corner of southern Spain. We arrived yesterday by bus from Málaga, winding up through the mountains until the whitewashed dwellings of Zahara appeared like teeth in the hillside ahead. This was the first of the week’s four pueblos blancos, all tucked picturesquely into the natural park’s rugged 51,695 hectares (127,740 acres) of limestone peaks and serpentine river valleys.

I’ve walked with On Foot before, so the routine is familiar: water bottles and packed lunches stashed in daypacks, laminated map around neck on lanyard and route app open on phone (belt-and-braces navigation). Best of all, our luggage is already

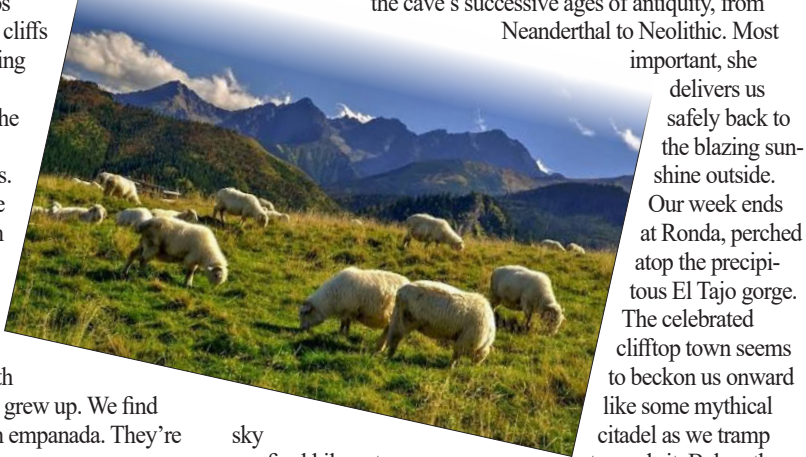
wending its way by taxi to the next destination. The conditions couldn’t be more perfect. The hillsides burst with blossom and birdsong, the May temperature is a pleasant mid-20s (midsummer out here would be punishing), and the peaks stand proud against the clear blue sky. It’s hard to believe February brought such heavy rains that much of our route was then impassable – and some areas of the park were affected by wildfires later in the summer. But each month here has its own character. September/October – also prime walking season – sees the chestnuts and cork oak forests turn russet and gold, and the spring irises and orchids replaced by the post-summer bloom of wild asparagus and autumn crocus. Overhead, those booted eagles will be massing for their return journey – along with bee-eaters, honey buzzards and other winged voyagers – back to Africa. Today’s hike takes us south towards Grazalema: pueblo blanco number two. We skirt a reservoir then wind along a lush river valley, nightingales serenading us from the oleander thickets, and by late morning are rising into the mountains, the vista gaining grandeur as we gain height.Lunch is in a high meadow, where we unwrap our bocadillos while bees buzz and butterflies busy themselves among the blooms. Afternoon brings a long uphill slog, then finally a cool descent through shady pines to sleepy Grazalema. Another 11 miles (18km) under our belts.

We stay two nights in Grazalema at the Hotel la Mejorana, meeting wild ibex on a mountain circuit high above town, and eating at the cosy Cádiz el Chico restaurant, where a menu featuring partridge and wild boar (though, thankfully, not ibex) reflects the region’s hunting traditions. At night, the cobbled streets are quiet beneath a canopy of stars.Benaoján, the third of

our pueblos blancos, lies 16 miles to the south-exit Grazalema early in morning, beneath the Los Peñascos mirador. Roosting griffon vultures line the cliffs like pterodactyls, warming up in the morning sun before, one at a time, flapping off on table-top wings for another day combing the plains. Our route leads down through the oak woods before rising again into the hills. Here we enter a limestone wonderland, the karst formations sculpted by wind and rain into Henry Moore-like statues. Bee-eaters dart overhead, their liquid chirrups audible long before we lay eyes on them. A passing walker greets us with a cheery “Buen camino!” He’s returning with his father to see the farmhouse where they grew up. We find Dad sitting on a nearby rock, devouring an empanada. They’re the only other walkers we meet all day.

Our hideaway at Benaoján is the Molino del Santo hotel, where we dine beside a chuckling stream on a terrace crowded with potted geraniums. From here, it takes us two hours to hike to the Cueva de la Pileta, an immense cave system discovered in 1905 when a local farmer spotted bats streaming from a fissure in the hillside.Local guide Ainhoa Bullón leads us down cool, narrow passages into measureless caverns, her thin torch beam illuminating flowstone formations as enormous and elaborate as a Gaudi cathedral – formed, she explains, by the drip-drip of

about east. We the lime at the rate of 1cm every 400 years. The farthest recesses hold exquisite shamanic rock art, some more than 25,000 years old. Ainhoa overflows with information, talking us through the cave’s successive ages of antiquity, from Neanderthal to Neolithic. Most important, she delivers us safely back to the blazing sunshine outside. Our week ends at Ronda, perched atop the precipitous El Tajo gorge. The celebrated cliff-top town seems to beckon us onward like some mythical citadel as we tramp towards it. Below the tourist land, sharing the steep climb to the top with a gaggle of selfie-snapping day trippers.We make it, slumping at the first available cafe table to lever off boots, fold away the map and order a celebratory cold cerveza. Tomorrow, we catch our bus back to Málaga. For now, a final night lies ahead, with a stirring panorama from our room at the Parador de Ronda and the promise of a slap-up meal down in the old town. Our beers arrive, and any lingering strains of Joni are soon lost to a busker’s volley of flamenco guitar.



ENTERTAINMENT

Akshay Kumar & Saif Ali Khan’s Haiwaan struggles to finding traction, nets Rs 2.5 Cr on day 2

Mumbai : Akshay Kumar and Saif Ali Khan’s Haiwaan is a Hindi remake of the Malayalam film Oppam. On its opening day at the box office, the film had collected Rs 3 crore. It remained steady on the second day too. Haiwaan reunites Akshay and Saif after 17 years. The film is currently facing stiff competition from Mirzapur: The Movie.

Akshay Kumar and Saif Ali Khan’s Haiwaan has managed to cross the Rs 5 crore mark at the domestic box office after two days. However, the film failed to record any improvement in its earnings on Saturday. The Priyadarshan directorial opened at Rs 3 crore on Friday. The film saw



limited audience turnout through the day, beginning with around 5% occupancy in the morning. Footfall improved during the afternoon and evening shows, which recorded over 12% occupancy, while the night shows saw the highest turnout at more than 18%.

Haiwaan earned an es-

timated Rs 2.50 crore on Saturday, according to Sacnilk. With no increase over its opening-day figure, the film’s two-day India collection now stands at Rs 5.50 crore. Its overall occupancy on Saturday was recorded at 12.77%, with the evening shows registering the day’s high-

est occupancy of 16%. The much-anticipated Akshay Kumar-Saif Ali Khan face-off should have been one of the film’s biggest selling points. Instead, it becomes one of its weakest links. With two stars of their stature sharing the screen after 17 years, the audience naturally expects fireworks. What they get, however, is a confrontation that is so tonally misplaced that the most serious moments end up drawing giggles from the audience. And that perfectly sums up Haiwaan: it is less about creating thrills and more about creating convenience. Instead of building genuine tension or suspense, the narrative repeatedly relies on convenient coincidences and easy

resolutions. Characters get what they need precisely when the story requires it.

Haiwaan, meaning “Beast” or “Animal”, is a crime comedy thriller directed and co-written by Priyadarshan. The film is produced by KVN Productions and Thespian Films and is a Hindi remake of Priyadarshan’s 2016 Malayalam thriller Oppam. The film features Saif Ali Khan, Akshay Kumar, Boman Irani, Shriya Pilgaonkar and Saiyami Kher in key roles. Mohanlal makes a cameo appearance in the film. Haiwaan also marks the final screen appearance of veteran actor Asrani, who died in October 2025. The film was released in theatres on September 11, 2026.

Anshuman Jha shares Asha Bhosle’s joy over her final song footage

Mumbai : Anshuman Jha has a special memory of Asha Bhosle from the making of Om Ka Hari, which features the legendary singer’s final playback song, ‘Ae Meri Zindagi, Tu Chhipi Hai Kahan’. In an exclusive conversation with CNN-News18 Showsha, Jha recalled the excitement Bhosle showed when she saw footage from the song and spoke about the remarkable hunger she had to keep experimenting and getting better. Also present during the interview were Raghubir Yadav, Soni Razdan and Ayesha Kapur.

Asha Bhosle’s final playback song was released on September 8, on the occasion of her 93rd birth anniversary. The song was recorded for Om Ka Hari when Bhosle was 90, and its music video features



glimpses from the recording session. For Jha, one of his most memorable interactions with Bhosle came when she happened to see the trailer of his 2023 film Lakkadbaggha. He recalled how she was surprised to see him in an action film.

“What I remember most is that she somehow caught the trailer of Lakkadbaggha. And she said, ‘Tune woh maar-dhaad wali film ki hai, ye toh badi alag film hai.’ And then I said, ‘Haan,

aapne dekhi?’ So she said, ‘Nahi, dekhi toh nahi hai, trailer dekha hai maine,’” he said. Jha then showed Bhosle footage that had already been shot for Om Ka Hari. The song had been recorded multiple times, and although he was not present during the first recording, he was there for the second one. Asha Bhosle passed away on April 12 at the age of 92 in Mumbai. Her last rites were performed the following day at Shivaji Park crematorium.

Ananya Panday, Belmont Cameli’s us open pic goes viral

Mumbai : Bollywood actress Ananya Panday just gave fans an unexpected crossover moment, and the internet can’t stop gushing over it. The ‘Call Me Bae’ star recently attended the US Open Women’s Final in New York, where she crossed paths with Off Campus star Belmont Cameli. Their photo has gone viral on social media, and is an absolute treat for fans of both actors.

Ananya Panday, who is currently in New York, was among the stars who attended the high-profile tennis event. Belmont Cameli, meanwhile, has become a familiar face to a whole new audience following the success of Off Campus, in which he plays the male lead Garrett Graham. The actor’s

appearance at the US Open alongside girlfriend Raina Morris added another celebrity moment to the star-studded event. Meanwhile, a few days ago, Ananya Panday was also spotted at Prime Video’s Obsessed Retreat: Class of ’26 in the Bavarian Alps. Held on September 7 and 8, the two-day event brought together actors and creators from the streaming platform’s growing young-adult lineup from across the globe.

Ananya, known for her role in Call Me Bae, was among the stars attending the retreat, where she was photographed with Maxton Hall — The World Between Us actor Damian Hardung and The Love Hypothesis star Lili Reinhart.

Mahira Khan debuts baby bump on the TIFF 2026 red carpet

Mumbai : Mahira Khan has had a busy week at the Toronto International Film Festival 2026, where she took part in the festival’s Community Impact programming and was also honoured for her contribution to cinema. Amid the international spotlight, the Pakistani actor shared a personal update with her followers.

The actor posted a picture of herself in a white gown, with her baby bump visible in the frame. Keeping the announcement low-key, Mahira captioned the photo, “We make plans and then there is ALLAH’S plan,” signalling that she is preparing to welcome another child. Ma-



hira opted for a full-sleeved, loose-fitting white gown that naturally highlighted her pregnancy without an elaborate setup. She posed with one hand resting on her bump, while keeping her hair, makeup and overall

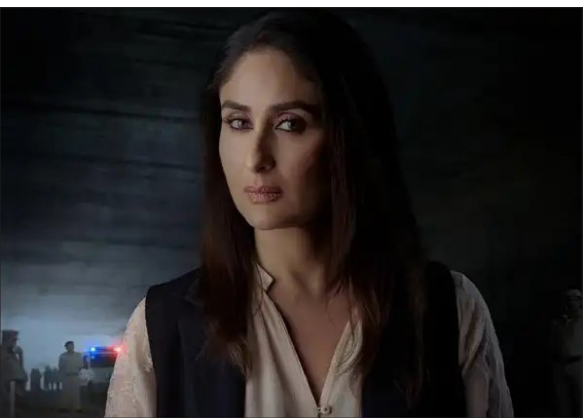
styling simple. The relaxed picture quickly drew congratulatory messages from fans and well-wishers.

This will be Mahira’s second child and her first with businessman Salim Karim. The couple got married in

October 2023, nearly three years before the actor’s pregnancy announcement. Mahira is already a mother to her 17-year-old son, Azlan, whom she shares with her first husband, Ali Askari. Azlan was also part of an important moment in Mahira’s personal life. He walked his mother down the aisle when she married Karim in 2023.

Mahira made her Bollywood debut in 2016 with Raees, opposite Shah Rukh Khan. Her filmography since then has included titles such as Bin Roye, Superstar and The Legend of Maula Jatt, while her television credits include Shehr-e-Zaat and Sadqay Tumhare.

Inside daayra: Kareena Kapoor Khan shares unfiltered moments



Mumbai : Kareena Kapoor Khan has taken viewers behind the making of Daayra with a new BTS video that offers a closer look at Meghna Gulzar’s crime thriller, its principal characters and the people shaping the film. Released on social media on September 12, the video moves between candid moments from the sets, interviews with the key creative voices and glimpses of the film’s intense world.

The video places Kareena’s DCP Ajooni Kohli firmly at its centre. Titled “Inside Ajooni’s Mind”, one of its recurring sections sees the actor reflect on the character while footage from the film and its making plays alongside her. Kareena is seen in both her police uniform and civilian look as cameras capture her working through scenes, conferring with the team and filming emotionally charged sequences. The BTS material provides glimpses of the circumstances surrounding Ajooni’s investigation, without giving away the film’s central mystery. There are sequences involving police personnel, tense exchanges, crowded locations and moments of distress, while other por-

tions show the quieter process of putting those scenes together.

The camera also follows Kareena through rehearsals and takes, offering a sense of how closely the actor and director worked together. Production footage shows crew members setting up shots, monitoring takes and working around the actors, giving the video the feel of an actual set diary rather than a conventional promotional featurette. Meghna Gulzar features in an interview as Director/Writer, speaking about the film, while writers Sima Agarwal and Yash Keswani also appear together to discuss their work. Prithviraj Sukumaran, introduced as Raman, is seen speaking about his character and the film from an outdoor location.

The footage also offers several glimpses of Prithviraj as DCP Raman Kumar, alongside scenes featuring Kareena’s Ajooni and the supporting cast. Police stations, outdoor locations, vehicles, crowds and nighttime setups all contribute to the atmosphere of the thriller, while monitors showing scenes being filmed underline the collaborative process behind the finished product.

Krishnavataram trilogy updates: part 2 eyed for 2028, part 1 set for Navratri re-release

Mumbai : The devotional space in Indian cinema has been drawing plenty of attention lately. Now, the makers of the Krishnavataram franchise are looking to expand too. Krishnavataram Part 1: The Heart (Hridayam), directed by Hardik Gajjar, was released in theatres on May 7. The film featured Siddharth Gupta as Krishna, Sushmita Bhat as Radha, Nivaashyini Krishnan as Rukmini and Sanskruti Jayana as Satyabhama. According to a leading trade portal, the film earned around Rs 37 crore in the domestic Hindi market.

The filmmakers, however, are continuing to build on their larger vision for the



franchise. Producer Shobha Sant has revealed that the scripts for Parts 2 and 3 are being developed at the same time. Given the scale of the VFX work involved, the second instalment is currently expected to reach cinemas in 2028. The team is also

looking at expanding the reach of the first film. Sajan Raj Kurup said that Part 1 is scheduled to receive an English version for overseas audiences in October this year. The film will also return to theatres during Navratri, with the Hindi ver-

sion accompanied by dubbed versions in other Indian languages.

The franchise is eventually expected to be available in Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and English as the makers look to connect the story with audiences across different markets. The decision to bring the first film back to theatres is also tied to the makers’ approach towards its digital future. Kurup said, “We have made a conscious decision to hold onto the OTT/satellite rights,” while expressing confidence that the film can find a fresh audience during its theatrical re-release.

Speaking ahead of its release, Kurup had said, “For

me, Krishna is a way of life. He’s not just God; he’s my very existence. My partner, Shobha, and I feel we were ‘chosen’ to spread his message. And, make films on him.” Kurup has also pointed to the franchise’s appeal among younger audiences while explaining why the makers want to keep expanding its scope. He said, “Krishna is a God the world knows about. Even my 16-year-old daughter loves him. And, she is proud of the fact that I have chosen to make films based on him. If Gen Z says this, I can tell you, we have penetrated deep. But wait, we are not stopping. I’m sure there is so much more we can/will do.”

Krishnavataram Part 1: The Heart (Hridayam) was adapted from Raam Mori’s 2025 novel Satyabhama. The film presents the story of Lord Krishna through Satyabhama’s perspective, tracing his journey after his separation from Radha and exploring his bond with his consorts Rukmini and Satyabhama. The project was initially announced under the title Shri Radha Ramanam. It was later renamed Krishnavataram Part 1: The Heart (Hridayam) before its worldwide theatrical release on May 7, 2026. The film went on to receive positive reviews from critics following its release. It was also declared tax-free in Uttar Pradesh.

Sonali Kulkarni praises Aamir Khan’s bold choice in Dangal



Mumbai : Sonali Kulkarni played Salman Khan’s mother in Bharat, and the actress is younger than Bollywood’s Bhaijaan. When asked if she feels women tend to get older roles quite early while men continue to play young heroes, she told News18 Showsha that times have changed and now many male actors are shedding the larger-than-life hero image. She cited Aamir Khan and Saif Ali Khan’s examples.

Recalling a time when women used to stop getting heroine roles after marriage, Kulkarni said, “There was a time when we used to discuss how women don’t get heroine roles once they marry. Do you hear that

nowadays? No. Because I think the audience has proved that just like heroes get married, heroines can also get married. They can also have children. They can have families.” She further continued and, while sharing how content from across the world is being viewed in the country and how there are different mediums to show talent, Sonali added, “In this scenario, I don’t think we have room to complain that girls are getting different roles. I feel pity for those people who claim that they just want to be a hero. I don’t think any actor is that narrow-minded today. Whether a male actor or a female actor, they want to explore their talent.”

She then cited her Dil Chahta Hai co-stars, Saif Ali Khan and Aamir Khan, and discussed how they are taking up challenging roles. “We have such versatile actors. I don’t think any actor will say that he wants to look young. If we talk about Saif Ali Khan, he is maturing like a fine

wine; he isn’t fearing taking up the role of a young dad who is in love,” Sonali said. The actress further continued, “Aamir Khan is the epitome of experimenting. I don’t think anyone has the courage to do what he has done in Dangal. Aamir Khan jiske poster lagte hain, ladkiyan bekarar hain, mar rahi hain shaadi karne ke liye. He is presenting himself as the father of 3-4 daughters without any prosthetic; then he is my hero. (Aamir Khan, whose posters are put up everywhere, has girls going crazy for him, dying to marry him. He is presenting himself as the father of three or four daughters without any prosthetics; then he is my hero). He is grinding himself fearlessly.”

Sonali concluded, “I don’t think any good actor is stuck in this competition where they want to look young. They are flaunting their talent. They are flaunting their command over acting. By all means, they don’t fear their age.”

Diljit Dosanjh set to play world’s largest cricket stadium this November

London surprise, Ahmedabad stadium show

Mumbai : Diljit Dosanjh is coming to Ahmedabad now! As part of his ongoing Aura World Tour, the Punjabi singer-actor was entertaining audience with an energetic concert at London’s iconic Wembley Stadium on Saturday, September 12. During the show, Diljit made a rather surprising announcement that left his fans elated. He revealed that he will be performing in Ahmedabad next.

Diljit talked about India’s biggest stadium, the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad. He also recalled Coldplay’s successful concert there. “The biggest stadium is in India- Narendra Modi Stadium. Ek gore group ne waha pe sell out kar diya tha (Coldplay). Respect for



them, bohoh mubarkan. India mein stadium ho, aur Punjabi udhar na ho, yeh toh phir ho nahi sakta,” Diljit said. He later confirmed the date for his Ahmedabad concert, telling the Wembley crowd, “We are doing Narendra Modi Stadium on 21 November 2026,”

as fans erupted in cheers.

The announcement marks Diljit’s return to Ahmedabad after his successful Dil-Luminati India Tour in 2024. Details about tickets, prices and bookings for the November show are yet to be announced. Meanwhile, Dil-

jit Dosanjh made history at London’s Wembley Stadium on Saturday, becoming the first Punjabi singer to headline the iconic venue. Opening his show with “Punjabi Aa Gaye Wembley Oye!”, Diljit told the packed crowd that the moment would “go down in the history books.” He performed hits including G.O.A.T., Lover, Hass Hass and Born to Shine during the over two-hour concert.

The 90,000-seater venue saw fans from different backgrounds singing and dancing along. Diljit also brought fans on stage, including children and an elderly woman, while interacting with the audience. The concert ended with Main Hoon Punjabi and a fireworks display.

India chooses blue home uniforms for the 2026 Asian Games

New Delhi: Satwiksairaj Rankiredy and Chirag Shetty, the Indian men's doubles badminton team, stated that their victory at the China Masters has given them a significant boost in confidence ahead of the forthcoming Asian Games and that they will keep pushing themselves. At the Shenzhen Arena on Sunday, India's top-seeded men's doubles team defeated China's He Ji Ting and Ren Xiang Yu 11-21, 21-13, 21-17 to win their first China Masters championship.

Satwik, who won the men's doubles title at the China Masters, stated that the competition has consistently produced favorable outcomes for the two, particularly following setbacks due to injuries. "It's always fun to play here. After recovering from injuries, we have always played here. We played here after the Olympics in 2024 and made it to the semi-finals. Last year, we played when we weren't feeling well, but we made it to the finals. After winning the China Masters, Satwik told the media, "I think this tournament has given us a lot of confidence after coming back from injury." Satwik noted that the two adhered to their strat-



egy throughout the competition and made no mistakes in the championship game. With the exception of the first round, I believe this week has been the same. One good thing about today's game was that we didn't make any mistakes. We are just sticking to the game plan. We made a plan before coming here and wanted to execute that. If it works, it's good; if not, we will go back and work again," he said.

The Indian shuttler added that the victory helped them end a difficult phase and marked their second title of 2026. "I am really happy that we kind of broke the jinx. This is our second title in 2026, and I am really happy," Satwik said. Chirag Shetty said winning the China Masters title ahead of the Asian Games feels spe-

cial and will provide the defending champions with added confidence. However, he added that the duo will not get complacent and will continue their preparations before the Asian Games.

"We'll go back home, push ourselves to the limit, train for the next 10 days and go all guns blazing at the Asian Games.

We want to go out there and have some fun," he added. The Indian duo, who had twice finished runners-up at the prestigious Super 750 tournament, overcame a slow start and a determined Chinese challenge to seal their second title of the season, as per ESPN. He and Ren came out firing in the opening game, putting Satwik and Chirag under sustained pressure with their pace and attacking play. The Indians struggled to find their rhythm and were comfortably beaten 21-11, leaving themselves with little room for error. Satwik and Chirag raised their intensity in the second game, taking control of the rallies and forcing the Chinese pair into errors. Their improved defence and sharper attacking combinations helped them level the contest with a 21-13 win.

India advances to the semifinals of the Men's Junior Hockey Asia Cup after defeating Chinese Taipei



New Delhi: Defending champion India advanced to the men's semifinals of the Junior Asia Cup hockey tournament in Mogi, Chi-

na, on Wednesday after defeating Chinese Taipei 15-0 in the group stage thanks to six goals from captain Anmol Ekka. South Korea

earned the other semi-final spot from Pool A after defeating Japan 3-2 to finish second with nine points, while the five-time champion ended first with ten points from three victories and a draw.

Chinese Taipei, Japan, and Indonesia will now compete in the classification matches after withdrawing from the championship race. Aryan Xess opened India's account in the

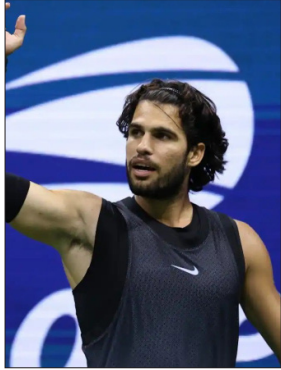
17th minute, before Prabhdeep Singh doubled the advantage a minute later. Gursewak Singh then made it 3-0 in the 22nd minute, giving India three goals in five minutes. Anmol then got into action, converting a penalty corner in the 25th minute. Arjun Santosh Hargude added another in the 28th minute, before Anmol struck again from a

Carlos Alcaraz, the reigning champion, is eliminated from the 2026 US Open after losing to Ben Shelton

New Delhi: five-set loss to Ben Shelton of the United States. The World No. 2's dreams of holding onto his championship in his first tournament back after a four-month injury absence were dashed when the big-hitting Shelton defeated Alcaraz 6-7(5), 6-1, 6-3, 1-6, and 7-6(7). Throughout the game, Alcaraz appeared rusty and was un-

able to reach shots that he would typically cover. Even though he played the entire five sets, the outcome was less shocking because of the lengthy injury layoff that obviously impaired his skill on the court. Massive momentum changes and fast-paced tennis characterized the late-night classic quarterfinal match at Arthur Ashe Stadium. Alcaraz

struck first by edging out a tightly contested opening set in a tiebreak, but Shelton responded furiously. Pushing up his return positioning and landing blistering forehand winners, the American dominated the second set 6-1 before riding that wave of momentum to break early and claim the third set 6-3, putting the Spaniard firmly on the back foot.



Rahul Gandhi criticizes the AAP for a man's suicide death



New Delhi, Sep 13: After claiming that the state was not doing enough to combat the drug problem, Congress MP Rahul Gandhi launched a new attack on the Aam

Aadmi Party (AAP) government in Punjab over the suicide death of a 50-year-old man. Gandhi cited the example of Gulzar Singh, a resident of Sangrur district, when he remarked, "There is a dangerous pattern emerging in Punjab's AAP government: if you question government failures, the response will come in the form of threats and torture." After allegedly being pressured by the authorities to apologize for grilling Punjab Finance Minister Harpal Singh Cheema on the drug

problem in the border state, he ingested pesticide. "Gulzar Singh ji, from the Dalit community, who had to watch his son fall victim to drugs, asked the Finance Minister just this much: why has the government failed so miserably in stopping the drug trade?" Because of this, he was subjected to such severe humiliation and suffering, as well as enormous pressure to apologize, that he ingested poison. Gandhi wrote in a post on X, "He ultimately lost the battle for his life, wandering from one hospital to another without access to treatment."

The case occurred a few days after another guy was allegedly tortured in custody by the police for bringing

up drug misuse by holding a black flag at an event Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann had attended. "Last week, I also spoke with a young Mohan-jeet Singh, who was tortured for protesting against Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann.

The government's job is to answer to the people, not to crush those who ask questions. May Gulzar Singh ji's family get justice as soon as possible.

The Chief Minister should immediately demand the Finance Minister's resignation and ensure an independent and impartial investigation, with his name registered in the FIR," Gandhi said.

The Congress party said the people of Punjab will vote out the AAP in the election scheduled in a few months from now. The latest government data shows a sharp increase in the number of people seeking treatment at state-run deaddiction and rehabilitation centres.

Admissions at government deaddiction centres jumped from 9,577 in 2024 to 25,290 in 2025, an increase of over 164 per cent. More than 14,000 patients had already been admitted till July, indicating that the surge has continued this year.

Kharge "purification" ceremony at Haldwani Ramlila Ground is the subject of a SC/ST Act litigation

New Delhi, Sep 13: Kharge "purification" ritual case filed under the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act Haldwani police on Tuesday filed a case under the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act against unidentified Hindutva workers who had performed "purification rituals" at the town's Ramlila Ground following a rally by Dalit Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on August 8. After receiving multiple complaints, including 19 from residents, the police reported that they had filed a second case for disturbance of peace.

Members of the Sri Ram Sena Dharma Sewa Nyas were accused by the Congress of performing the "purification" rites because they practiced untouchability, which is illegal in India. However, Pushkar Singh Dhama, the chief minister of Uttarakhand, asserted that the Hindutva members held the rites because



anti-national chants were shouted from the Congress platform during Kharge's rally and that they were not members of the BJP. According to the police, Anju Kumar, a Congress employee in Haldwani, filed a written complaint that led to the filing of a new case. Senior Nainital police superintendent Majunath T.C.

told reporters: "The police received 80 complaints, including 19 from locals." We have added Section 3 (1) (R) of the SC/ST deed (intentional insult to a Scheduled Caste person) to Sections 196 (promoting hatred) and 299 (planned malicious deed) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. The case has been sent up to Jagdish Chan-

dra, SP, crime. Earlier, 20 Congress MPs, along with the party's national coordinator for SCs, STs, OBCs and minorities, K. Raju, and SC department head Rajendra Pal Gautam, had spent three hours at Parliament Street police station demanding a zero FIR on the Haldwani purification rituals. A zero FIR is one that is registered at any place other than the police station under which the alleged offence took place. Gautam said on X: "Even with the presence of 20 MPs, we had to wait for 3 hours just to lodge a complaint. Not only that, instead of registering an FIR, we were made to wait for 3 hours just to have it entered in the diary, and the ACP of the police station said we don't have staff — it's an extremely shameful thing! The question is, even with 20 MPs present, does the police not have any officers to register a single complaint or is there such pressure on the police from someone that they're avoiding registering the complaint altogether?"

Amidst a breach with Congress, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Vijay will convene a coalition meeting

Chennai, Sep 13: Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay will lead TVK's second alliance coordination meeting in Chennai, focusing on formalizing the coalition's structure. Key topics include a common minimum program, a joint steering committee, and the alliance's identity centered on secularism and social justice. However, significant allies like the CPI(M) and CPI have chosen to boycott these

talks amid ongoing tensions between TVK and Congress regarding national leadership. This rift includes TVK's speculation about Vijay as a potential prime ministerial candidate for the 2029 elections, which Congress leaders strongly oppose. The meeting is crucial for maintaining the alliance's unity and governance strategy, especially given the TVK's reliance on Congress for its majority in the Assembly.

Alien orangutans rescued from Balasore forest



New Delhi: Five young orangutans were saved by the Odisha Forest Department on Tuesday from a casuarina forest in the Balasore district. Native to Southeast Asia, orangutans are mostly found in Indonesia's Sumatra and Borneo. These two islands' lush rainforests are their native habitat. The foresters believe there was a well-planned international smuggling operation that delivered the animals to Odisha. To find out how the infant orangutans got here, a team from the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) has arrived at Bhogra block in the Balasore district. Ganesh Ram Singh Khuntia, the minister of forestry for Odisha, stated: "The WCCB began an investigation. We believe there is a global smuggling network involved. The villagers saw the five orangutans hanging from a tree in the forest close to Bichitrapur hamlet, according to Bhogra MLA Gautam Buddha Das, who posted the video of the five young orangutans. The Talasari

police station is in charge of it, and it is near the sea. We believe the traffickers transported them from Indonesia by sea. I insist on a high-level investigation to identify the participants in the scam. The villagers had earlier suspected the animals of being different kinds of monkeys. They all rushed to the site and tried to capture the animals. But seeing that their colour and character did not match those of a monkey, the villagers contacted the local forest department officers. The foresters arrived, rescued all five (three males and two females) orangutans and put them in a cage. Balasore divisional forest officer (DFO) Pratik Prakash Indalkar said: "We have brought the baby orangutans to the forest office. The veterinary doctors have examined their health, and their condition is good. The animals have been given food and ORS." After a health check-up, the orangutans were shifted to Nandan Kanan Zoo in Bhubaneswar.

Telangana cracked down on the drug supply chain, inspecting 83 units

Hyderabad, Sep 13: Telangana's EAGLE Force and the Telangana Standards Authority for Food and Essential Drugs (TG-SAFE) conducted a five-day statewide joint operation in a significant crackdown intended to stop the illegal drug supply chain at its source. Precursor chemicals and controlled drugs governed by the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic drugs (NDPS) Act of 1985 were the focus of the drive's possible diversion and abuse. After a high-level strategy discussion on September 1, the enforcement drive was organized. For field operations, ten specialized multi-departmental teams consisting of Deputy Superintendents of Police, Drug Inspectors, Prohibition and Excise officers, and Central Intelligence/NCB personnel were sent out, according to R. Giridhar, SP (East), EAGLE Force. In eight districts—Medchal-Malkajgiri, Yadadri Bhongir, Sangareddy, Rangareddy, Hyderabad, Kamareddy, Medak, and Nalgonda—the joint teams examined 83 URN-affiliated enterprises and industrial facilities over the course of five days, he added. Inspectors looked at procurement records, storage procedures, and transaction information pertaining to hazardous industrial chemicals such as anthranilic acid, acetic anhydride, ephedrine, and pseudoephedrine. Despite their essential pharmaceutical applications, these chemicals are frequently sought after by illicit drug production networks.



Giridhar stated that the emphasis is on spotting odd purchases, inappropriate storage methods, and any potential diversion of controlled substances. Officials said preventing the diversion of raw materials is crucial to tackling the production of synthetic drugs. Instead of waiting for drugs to reach the market, authorities are trying to stop their production by monitoring the supply of raw materials, they said. The EAGLE Force appealed to pharmaceutical and chemical companies to maintain proper records and comply with regulations governing sensitive chemicals. Companies were also urged to report any suspicious orders or activities to the authorities.

The Greater Noida magistrate is questioned by the Supreme Court over the student's notice of the Jantar Mantar protest

The Greater Noida executive magistrate Megha Roopam was given a notice for a student's involvement in the CJP-led Jantar Mantar protest, and the Supreme Court announced on Wednesday that it will ask her to explain. Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India (CJI), questioned how the executive magistrate could issue such a notice given that the top court had previously ordered that students would not face criminal charges. Before a three-judge panel presided over by Chief Justice Kant, an attorney brought up the issue, claiming that pupils were the subjects of a "experiment" and that the notice—which was later withdrawn—was against the ruling of the highest court. You are entirely correct. Taking action against our young people is not an option. The CJI declared, "We have passed a clear order. We're shocked that the magistrate can send such a notification after we've already canceled. No student will be punished. The CJI continued, "It was a clear-cut order." "We will ask for an explanation," CJI Kant remarked, requesting that the attorney document the facts. Allow him to clarify. Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V Mohana were also on



the bench. The remarks from the Supreme Court came a day after the Allahabad High Court was reprimanded Medha Roopam, who is also the daughter of chief election commissioner Gyanesh Kumar.

The Allahabad HC not only quashed the detention order against student activist Aakriti Chaudhary, but also awarded her Rs 5 lakh in compensation. It directed that the amount be recovered from Roopam and other officials involved in the decision, while stating that 'despotic' officers will turn Uttar Pradesh into an 'Orwellian Dystopia'. A student of Gautam Buddha Uni-

versity (GBU), who allegedly participated in a CJP-led protest at Delhi's Jantar Mantar, was served a notice by the Greater Noida Executive Magistrate seeking a personal bond of Rs 5 lakh for maintaining peace, officials said on Tuesday, adding that the order was later revoked. The student, Akshat Tripathi, however, denied the allegations and claimed that he had participated in the protest peacefully and was not attending university classes at the time. The notice was issued on September 4 under Section 130 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS).

India chooses blue home uniforms for the 2026 Asian Games



New Delhi: According to Hockey India (HI), the Indian hockey teams will play in their traditional color, blue, at the forthcoming Asian Games. HI's decision to switch its traditional color from blue to saffron, which the teams wore during the just finished World Cup in the Netherlands and Belgium, caused a lot of controversy. Further controversy arose when HI President Dilip Tirkey questioned the decision-making process, claiming that neither the Executive Board nor the federation's elected leadership were aware of its implementation. HI claims that this choice was made because of the blue jersey's visual resemblance to the same-colored synthetic playing sur-

face, which impacted vision and clarity on the pitch. But as the Indian teams head to Japan for the Asiad, HI has seemingly reversed the decision for its first-choice kit. "Indian Olympic Association (IOA) asked us our preferred choice of kit, and HI has given the first preference as blue, with the secondary colour being saffron," a Hockey India office-bearer told Sportstar. Hockey India president Dilip Tirkey said: "We never said orange jerseys were permanent." The Indian hockey teams had middling outings in the World Cups, with the men's side finishing a disappointing eighth, while the women's team ended fifth, its best ever finish in the tournament.

India defeats Japan to secure a quarterfinal spot in the Women's Junior Hockey Asia Cup

New Delhi: In their third Elite Pool match at the Women's Junior Asia Cup 2026, the Indian junior women's hockey team defeated Japan 7-0 on Tuesday in Moqi, China, extending their winning streak. India advanced to the quarterfinals and kept up its flawless competition record with the victory. After defeating Korea 4-1 to start the campaign and then Malaysia 11-1, India brought its offensive energy into the match against Japan and seized command from the off. Krishna Sharma's goal in the fifth minute gave India a 1-0 lead, rewarding their early pressure. In the ninth minute, a Japanese defender's foul inside the circle led to a penalty stroke, which doubled the lead. India took a 2-0 lead thanks to Supriya's flawless penalty kick. India ended the first quarter with a dominating 3-0 lead thanks to a field goal



from Purnima Yadav in the fourteenth minute. Then, in the third quarter, India scored three goals in five minutes. India's dominant position was further reinforced when Geeta Yadav completed her brace in the 45th minute after smashing a field goal in the 41st to make it 4-0. India continued its dominance and added another goal just a minute later. Purnima found the back of the net in the 46th minute to com-

plete her brace and take India's lead to 6-0 at the end of the third quarter. The rout was completed in the 50th minute when Sanika Chandrakant Mane scored her first goal of the match. India will next face China on September 9 in its final pool match, with the encounter set to determine the top position in the pool. The Sports Authority of India got the better of Punjab & Sind Bank, winning 3-1 on Day 5 of the senior men's

Inter-Department National Championship. Nitesh Sharma, Deepak Singh Fartyal and Patel Shivam were on target for SAI, while Singh Sukhwinder replied for Punjab & Sind Bank. Pool A produced a share of the spoils, with Central Secretariat and Punjab National Bank playing out a 1-1 draw. Aniket Gurav found the net for Central Secretariat, while Gursimran Singh was on target for Punjab Nation-

al Bank. In Pool C, the All India Police Sports Control Board edged past the Central Board of Direct Taxes 3-1. Singh Dharamvir, Vijay Kumar Gond and Singh Shamsheer all scored for AIPSCB, with Machaiah Pa replying for CBDT. Pool D's Railway Sports Promotion Board recorded the day's biggest win, beating Central Industrial Security Force 5-1. Sheshe Gowda BM struck twice, with Arshdeep Singh, Pardeep Singh and Rohit also finding the net. Manoj Yadav scored the consolation goal for CISF. With the pool matches continuing to produce closely fought contests, the standings remain finely poised heading into the closing stages of the group phase. The fourth edition of the Bengaluru Squash Open 2026 is set to take place from September 9-13 at The Bengaluru Club.

The two-Test series schedule under WTC is announced by BCB



New Delhi: The schedule for the forthcoming Test series against the West Indies was released by the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) on Tuesday. As part of the World Test Championship (WTC) cycle, Bangladesh will host two Test matches against the Windies. The first game will commence on October 28 in Mirpur, and the second will start on November 5 in Sylhet. The Bangla Tigers recently achieved their first-ever vic-

tory on Australian territory in a 1-1 series draw away at Australia. With three victories, one draw, and two defeats in its first six Test matches, the team is now ranked fourth in the WTC rankings. Only Pakistan is lower than the West Indies, who are ranked ninth in the rankings. The side has won just two out of 12 Tests this cycle, drawing two and losing eight. There will be a three-day warm-up match ahead of the first Test.

Australia wins for the fifteenth time; India comes in fourth



New Delhi: As the 11-day competition in Glasgow came to an end on August 2, Australia finished first at the Commonwealth Games for a record 15th time. Australia took home 171 medals, comprising 56 bronze, 45 silver, and 70 gold. Canada placed third with 62 medals (19 gold, 20 silver, and 23 bronze), whereas England came in second with 110 medals (29 gold, 45 silver, and 36 bronze). India

placed fourth at the Commonwealth Games for the second time in a row, behind Canada. Thirteen gold, seventeen silver, and nine bronze were among the 39 medals that India took home. With ten medals, including seven gold, the boxing team won the most medals. Scotland also won 39 medals and 13 gold medals but finished behind India due to an inferior silver medal count.

Frances Tiafoe Reaches the US Open Semi-Finals After Making an Amazing Comeback From Two Sets Down

New Delhi: On Tuesday, Frances Tiafoe overcame a two-set deficit and a 3-0 deficit in the fifth set to devastate Alex Michelsen at the US Open. For the third time in five years, Tiafoe advanced to the Flushing Meadows semifinals after defeating Michelsen, 22, 5-7, 3-6, 7-5, 6-3, and 7-6 (10/6). The young countryman, who had advanced to the first Grand Slam quarterfinal of his career without dropping a set, was too much for American 11th seed Tiafoe to handle. When he served for the match at 5-4 in the third, he was on the verge of winning another three-set battle, but two double faults gave Tiafoe the advantage, and the more seasoned player easily won. "I feel like I just handed it to him," said Michelsen, who is currently ranked 46th in the world. "Then after that he started playing really good." After



four hours and thirty-eight minutes, Tiafoe needed two more sets to win the 10-point match tiebreaker. Michelsen sobbed in the

winner's arms as they embraced at the net. Michelsen remarked, "I didn't do a good job of keeping it together. "The game was

really emotionally taxing. He's such a kind guy, Frances, yet he said a lot of intimate things that really touched me." Michelsen had come out swinging on Arthur Ashe Stadium against an uncharacteristically passive Tiafoe, who usually feeds on the energy of the crowd. "They were flat, but I was even more flat than the fans," Tiafoe said. "I was joking about that, but they definitely woke up as I started to pick it up." After surviving the third set, he had a new lease of life, and even when Michelsen responded with an early break in the final set Tiafoe refused to fold. "The moment is huge," said Tiafoe, who next faces either defending champion Carlos Alcaraz or eighth seeded American Ben Shelton. "I've won a lot of great matches here. I've lost a lot of tough matches here as well. It feels amazing to get this done."

At the 2026 Vietnam Open, Tanvi Sharma defeats Rachel Chan in straight games



New Delhi: In the Round of 32 at the Vietnam Open 2026 on Wednesday, top seed Tanvi Sharma upset Canada's Rachel Chan 21-16, 21-17 in straight games to move on to the next round of the BWF World Tour Super 100 competition. Tanvi was

eliminated from the China Masters 2026 earlier this month after losing 17-21, 21-18, and 16-21 in the Round of 16 in Shenzhen to Japan's World No. 9 Tomoka Miyazaki in an exciting 66-minute match. In the first round of the BWF World

Tour Super 750 tournament, the Indian teenager defeated Amalie Schulz of Denmark 21-16, 21-17, securing her spot in the round of sixteen. Tanvi defeated Vietnam's sixth-seeded Nguyen Thuy Linh 21-16, 21-16 in the women's singles final of the Taipei Open Super 300 in Taipei just last month to win her first BWF World Tour championship. Tanvi, who placed second in the U.S. Open Super 300 last year, defeated Nguyen in the summit match in just thirty-six minutes. Tanvi, who was coached by Park Tae-sang, the previous trainer of P.V. Sindhu, became the first Indian to win the Taipei Open women's singles championship since Saina Nehwal did it in 2008. Earlier in the day, Alap Mishra defeated fellow countryman Arya Bhivpathaki 21-8, 21-14 at the Vietnam Open, while Anmol Kharb lost to Sarunrak Vitidsam of Thailand 14-21, 14-21.

Ishan Kishan, who is playing well, moves up in the red-ball line after 270 in the Duleep Trophy final

New Delhi: Ishan Kishan's 270-run innings in the current Duleep Trophy final should significantly boost his aspirations to play red balls internationally. Ishan is currently a key player in India's limited-overs system. If he wants the selectors to give him another chance at Test cricket, he must get runs in this season's Ran-

ji Trophy. His success in the Duleep Trophy should be complemented and the path ahead cleared if he scores well in the nation's top domestic championship. Rishabh Pant and Dhruv Jurel are the favored candidates for the wicketkeeper-batsman positions in the longest format, hence it will be difficult for Ishan to

get in given the current configuration of India's Test team. But this innings is sure to create some pressure on both Pant and Jurel, particularly the former as his reckless cricket often leads to inconsistent performances. "Ishan's inclusion for the New Zealand Tests seems implausible. But yes, if any one of these two fail

in New Zealand, Ishan may well be considered for the Australia Tests," a BCCI insider said on Tuesday. Captaincy, too, has helped Ishan elevate his game. Not just leading Jharkhand, the left-hander captained Sunrisers Hyderabad too in this year's IPL while regular skipper Pat Cummins was recovering from injury.

Rybakina claims first US open and third major title with win over sabalenka

New York: Elena Rybakina came to New York and took everything that had belonged to Aryna Sabalenka.

First, it was the No. 1 ranking in women's tennis, then the U.S. Open trophy. The tournament that for so long was a struggle for Rybakina turned into the site of her coronation. Rybakina won her first U.S. Open title and punctuated her climb to the top of her sport by beating Sabalenka 6-4, 5-7, 6-2 on Saturday.

Rybakina had already been guaranteed to replace Sabalenka at No. 1 in the rankings next week and for good measure took the title that Sabalenka had won the previous two years. "It's tough to find words right now, honestly," Rybakina said. "I don't expect nothing like this coming to this tournament. I've been dealing with a little bit with an injury, but somehow everything aligned together on my side." It was the third Grand Slam title for Rybakina and the second this year — both against Sabalenka on hard courts. She opened the season by beating Sabalenka for the Australian Open title. This time, Rybakina stopped Sabalenka's 19-match winning streak at the U.S. Open, where she hadn't lost since falling to Coco Gauff in the 2023 final. Rybakina earned \$5.5 million, the largest prize in Grand Slam history, and tied Sabalenka and French Open winner Mirra Andreeva with a tour-high three titles this season. Sabalenka falls short of third

straight title in New York Sabalenka took home \$2.8 million but it was clear how little that meant to her, as she smashed her racket after a brief hug with Rybakina at the net. Sabalenka was trying to become the first person since Serena Williams from 2012-14 to win three in a row at Flushing Meadows. "I was just out there competing, trying to do my best with what I had there today," Sabalenka said. "Not good enough." Rybakina dethroned the champ without even having her best stuff. The WTA Tour leader in aces got less than half of her first serves in but instead put Sabalenka under constant pressure with a strong return game, racking up 12 break chances and converting three, which was all she needed. The third meeting of No. 1 vs. No. 2 in a U.S. Open women's final since 2000 was the first to go the way of the challenger. Williams was the top seed for the other two, beating her sister Venus in 2002 and Victoria Azarenka in 2013. The numbers didn't signify much this time, because they are going to flip Monday. Sabalenka has held the top spot for 99 consecutive weeks, but Rybakina gained enough points to unseat her simply by reaching the semifinals.

The 27-year-old who was born in Russia but represents Kazakhstan won her first major title at Wimbledon in 2022 and now needs just the French Open to complete the career Grand Slam. And it's clear her power — and her ability



to absorb her opponent's — was something that unnerved Sabalenka. "Her serve is amazing, the way she's able to step in and overpower you on court, and especially if it's a U.S. Open court where it's super fast, it's definitely a huge advantage for her," Sabalenka said. "A lot of things make her dangerous." A native of Belarus, Sabalenka sometimes swings from her heels, like a golfer trying to unleash a 300-yard drive, grunting "Aaaaahhhhl!" as she takes her mighty cuts. Rybakina's power comes more easily. There is little sound coming from her side of the net besides the squeaking of her sneakers, and she rarely shows any hint of stress.

"I think Elena is probably not nonchalant, I don't want to say that, because she's not nonchalant but just no reaction ever," Gauff said after losing to Rybakina in the semifinals. Rybakina did show

some frustration after pulling a backhand wide with a break point in the opening game of the third set, but soon she had taken charge of the match for good. Sabalenka had won the two other meetings this season, on the hard courts at Indian Wells and Miami, and leads their rivalry 10-8. But her season then took a strange dip after those victories. Sabalenka fell to Naomi Osaka in the fourth round at Wimbledon, then returned to action with consecutive fourth-round exits in Toronto and Cincinnati. Rybakina has learned to love New York. Rybakina had to take a brief break after she was forced to stop playing in her quarterfinal match against Iga Swiatek in Cincinnati because of a foot injury, but she was healthy in time for a tournament where she had never done particularly well, failing to advance past the fourth round until this year.