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VISIT: www.thesikhtimes.in Email:sikhtimesindia@gmail.com

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CM Revanth Reddy regrets remarks on BRS leader Kavitha's bail

Hyderabad, August 30: In the wake of Supreme Court taking strong objection to his reported comments related to the bail granted to BRS MLC K Kavitha, Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy on Friday said the remarks have been taken out of context and expressed "unconditional regret" for the statements.

Kolkata horror: Mamata seeks stringent central legislation

Kolkata, August 30: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Friday wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, reiterating her request for stringent central legislation and exemplary punishment on heinous crimes like rape and murder.

Development minister. Maintaining that the letter by the WCD minister "barely attends the gravity of the issue" raised by her, Banerjee wrote, "The seriousness of the subject and its relevance to the society have not been adequately appreciated while sending out this generic reply."

She further mentioned that 88 fast-track special courts and 62 POCSO-designated courts are already functioning in West Bengal on state funding. Banerjee wrote that helpline numbers 112 and 1098 are functioning in the state and additionally, Dial-100 is extensively used in emergency situations.



Sharad Pawar turns down certain measures under Z-plus security cover

New Delhi, August 30: Nationalist Congress Party-SP chief Sharad Pawar, accorded Z-plus protective cover recently, is learnt to have turned down certain measures suggested by security agencies. The Centre accorded him the Z-plus cover of the Central Reserve Police Force's (CRPF) VIP security wing after a threat assessment review by central agencies.

Former Jharkhand CM Champai Soren joins BJP

Ranchi, August 30: Two days after he quit the JMM, former Jharkhand chief minister Champai Soren joined the BJP on Friday. Soren along with a large number of his supporters crossed over to the saffron camp in the presence of Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma at a ceremony here.



saffron fold. The joining of the 67-year-old tribal leader to the BJP was seen as a shot in the arm for the saffron party's efforts to boost its connection with the Scheduled Tribes, a community which has been the main voter base of the JMM.

Bow my head at Shivaji's feet and apologise: PM Modi

Palghar, August 30: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday apologised to Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and those hurt by the collapse of the warrior king's statue in coastal Sindhudurg district of Maharashtra.

Manipur cannot be broken, will not allow separate administration for Kukis: Biren Singh

New Delhi, August 30: Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh has rejected the demand by Kuki groups for a separate administration, presenting himself as a champion of the state's interest and one who would not allow its identity to be diluted.

Era of uninterrupted dialogue with Pakistan is over: Jaishankar

New Delhi, August 30: Almost a week after Ukraine questioned India's economic ties with Russia, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Friday said there is an economic complementarity between India and Russia.

Those who lack love in their lives have ill-will towards red colour: Akhilesh

Lucknow/Kannauj, August 30: Hitting back at Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath over his "cap is red but deeds are black" jibe, SP chief Akhilesh Yadav on Friday said no colour is good or bad, it is about perspective.

Omar Abdullah's divorce plea: Supreme Court pushes for mediation, seeks report by November 4

New Delhi, August 30: The Supreme Court on Friday asked National Conference leader Omar Abdullah and his estranged wife Payal Abdullah to appear for mediation for exploring the possibility of a settlement.

Assam CM seeking 'cheap popularity', Muslims soft target: Tejashwi

New Delhi, Aug 30: The Assam assembly discontinued a two-hour break provided on Fridays to facilitate Muslim legislators to offer 'namaz'. Former Bihar deputy chief minister and Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader Tejashwi Yadav accused Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma of seeking "cheap popularity" after the state assembly scrapped a two-hour break on Friday that allowed Muslim lawmakers to offer namaz (prayers).

Supreme Court protects news anchor from arrest for interviewing jailed gangster Lawrence Bishnoi

New Delhi, August 30: The Supreme Court on Friday protected from arrest a private news channel anchor facing a court-monitored SIT probe in a case related to mobile phone interviews of gangster Lawrence Bishnoi from jail aired in March last year.

Parliament of the public (Janta Ki Sansad). Question: What could be the reasons for getting angry about seeing red and black colour? Mark two points each.

Colours have a deep relation with the mind and psychology. "If a colour is liked by someone in particular, then there are special psychological reasons for it and if someone gets angry on seeing a colour, then there are some negative psychological reasons for that too," he said.

Assam CM seeking 'cheap popularity', Muslims soft target: Tejashwi

discontinued a British-era practice that allowed a two-hour break on Fridays, which had traditionally been used by Muslim legislators to offer Jumma prayers. The assembly amended Rule 11 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business, effectively removing the special provision for Friday sittings.

Supreme Court protects news anchor from arrest for interviewing jailed gangster Lawrence Bishnoi. New Delhi, August 30: The Supreme Court on Friday protected from arrest a private news channel anchor facing a court-monitored SIT probe in a case related to mobile phone interviews of gangster Lawrence Bishnoi from jail aired in March last year.

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## News box

## Heavy rains likely in parts of Andhra for next three days

**VIJAYAWADA:** The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has forecasted heavy rains over coastal districts for the next three days in coastal districts on Friday due to a low-pressure area formed under the influence of a cyclonic circulation over the east-central Bay of Bengal and its vicinity.

The low-pressure system, which developed at 8.30 hours IST on Thursday, is expected to move west-northwestwards and become more marked over the west-central and adjoining northwest Bay of Bengal by Friday. The IMD warns that the system is likely to intensify into a depression over the west-central and northwest Bay of Bengal in the coming days, with heavy to very heavy rainfall expected in isolated places across North and South Coastal Andhra Pradesh on Friday. Thunderstorms with lightning and strong surface winds, reaching speeds of 30-40 kmph, are also forecasted for isolated areas across the State. Several places in coastal Andhra Pradesh and a few in Rayalaseema received light to moderate rainfall. Visakhapatnam city recorded the highest rainfall of 6 cm, followed by 5 cm in Garugubilli of Parvathipuram Manyam district, and 4 cm in various locations such as Cheepurupalle, Pusapatirega, and Denkada. Rainfall of up to 3 cm was observed in parts of coastal Andhra Pradesh and Rayalaseema on Thursday. In related developments, the Nagarjuna Sagar project is experiencing heavy inflows into the Pulichintala Project and subsequently to the Prakasam Barrage.

## Orders reserved on challenge to GO 33 on medical admissions in Telangana

**HYDERABAD:** The High Court reserved orders on Thursday in a batch of writ petitions filed by MBBS course aspirants challenging the constitutionality of GO 33, dated July 19, 2024, amending the Telangana Medical and Dental Colleges (Admission into MBBS and BDS Courses) Rules of 2017. In the course of the hearings that spanned three days, counsel for the petitioners argued that the recent amendments, particularly the insertion of sub-rule (iii), were a deliberate attempt by the respondents to circumvent a binding judgment issued by the High Court in a previous writ petition in 2023. The 2023 judgment had declared certain provisions of the 2017 Rules unconstitutional, counsel for the petitioners told a bench of Chief Justice Alok Aradhe and Justice J Sreenivas Rao. Counsel argued that the court's earlier ruling had specifically addressed Rule 3(III)(B)(b) of the 2017 Rules, finding it misaligned with its intended objectives. The court had ruled that this provision could not be justified solely on the basis of study or residence in the local area. As a result, the rule was modified to ensure that candidates possessing a residence certificate issued by the Telangana government would be treated as local candidates, broadening the eligibility criteria for MBBS admissions.

## Tamil Nadu PTA to create students app, all schools can use it

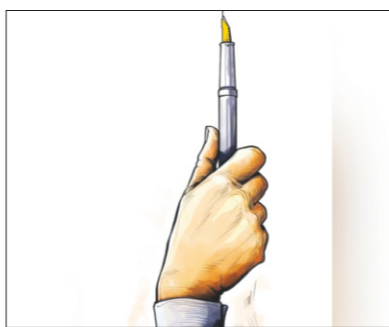
**CHENNAI:** The Tamil Nadu State Parent Teacher Association (PTA), under the Directorate of School Education, is set to launch a mobile application for parents and teachers covering all the schools across the state. The application will allow parents to access comprehensive details about their children's academic performance, attendance records and information about the schools. The decision to develop the software was made during the recent executive committee meeting of the PTA held at the Anna Centenary Library. According to officials, they are planning to design an application that will serve as a one-stop solution for parents to know about the educational information of their children. It is expected to benefit parents of more than 1.3 crore students studying in more than 60,000 schools across the state. Once the application is rolled out, parents will be able to log in and monitor their children's examination performance, stay informed about school activities, and access other relevant updates.

"This application will significantly broaden the reach of the Parent Teacher Association. Additionally, it will streamline the process for lodging complaints regarding issues in schools, both government and private, ensuring that all grievances are promptly addressed and appropriate actions are taken if the complaints are found to be valid," said a school education department official. Teachers will also have access to the application, enabling them to share best practices in teaching. The application will also feature information on donors contributing to schools, particularly government and government-aided institutions, in a bid to encourage further community support and contributions to the improvement of school facilities. The primary objective of the PTA is to create a strong connection between parents and teachers, thereby enhancing the quality of education provided to students.

## Hema committee report: Rape case against Mukesh; Jayasurya, others in dock too

**KOCHI:** The MeToo wave that has rocked Bollywood following the release of the Justice Hema Committee report took a decisive turn on Thursday after the police registered a case against Mukesh for rape. The CPM MLA and actor, however, soon secured interim relief from arrest. In all, the police filed six cases in Kochi and one in Thiruvananthapuram on the day based on the complaint of an actress who worked in Malayalam and Tamil films. Besides Mukesh, actor-producer Maniyanpilla Raju and actor Edavela Babu were charged with rape by the police in Kochi, while the Cantonment police booked actor Jayasurya for the offence of outraging the modesty of a woman. Hours after the case was registered against him in Maradu police

station, Mukesh moved an anticipatory bail plea in the Ernakulam District Principal Sessions Court, which directed the police not to initiate arrest procedure till September 3. Mukesh has been booked under IPC Section 376 (1) for rape; Section 354 for outraging the modesty of a woman; Section 452 for house trespass with the intent to hurt or assault someone and Section 509 for insulting a woman's modesty by using words, gestures, or acts. The allegation is that the complainant was sexually harassed at a villa in Maradu when she reached there to apply for a membership of the Association of Malayalam Movie Artists (AMMA). Mukesh was claimed to be an office-bearer of AMMA at the time. At the sessions



court, advocate Geo Paul, representing Mukesh, submitted that the alleged incident took place in 2010, and that the complainant had sought financial help from the actor. He said no sexual harassment as alleged by the complainant took place. He also produced copies of the WhatsApp chats claiming that the complainant sought Rs 1 lakh as

financial aid and sent her bank account details. There were also chats claiming that the victim had "appreciated" Mukesh's "decency" and volunteered to mediate in the actor's matrimonial issues. Paul said the woman, a law graduate, did not lodge a complaint even 13 years after the alleged incident. He submitted that Mukesh was ready to cooperate with the probe and will appear before the investigation officer. The public prosecutor, meanwhile, sought time to file a report. "Taking note of the situation that there may not be chances to flee away from the clutches of law, the Investigation Officer (is) directed that petitioner shall not be arrested till September 3. Awaiting report and further hearing will be on

September 2," read the court diary entry. The case against Edavela Babu was registered in the Ernakulam North police station under IPC Section 376 (1) for rape and Section 354 for outraging the modesty of the woman. It is alleged the victim was called to Babu's apartment in Kaloor twice to apply for AMMA membership in 2009. In the first incident, Babu allegedly made sexual advances towards her. In the second, he allegedly raped her. Maniyanpilla Raju was booked by the Fort Kochi police for allegedly making sexual advances towards the victim while she was staying at a hotel in Fort Kochi for a film shoot in 2009. In Thiruvananthapuram, the Cantonment police booked Jayasurya for outraging the modesty of a woman.

## Students flock to this 'intelligent robot' to clear doubts in Kerala

**ALAPPUZHA:** With Each passing day, Artificial Intelligence (AI) is making its presence felt in different sectors and education is no exception. Embracing AI with open arms, the Rajagiri St Chavara CMI Public School in Manappuram, Poochakkal, near Cherthala, has installed an AI-powered robot named 'Iris' in the school's office to clear the doubts of students as well as teachers. Principal Fr Jaison Parappilly said Rs 2.5 lakh was spent to develop the Intelligent Robotic Interactive System aka Iris, a humanoid AI teacher-robot. It was constructed using the ChatGPT AI tech platform to primarily help students and teachers with academics.

"It is a ground-breaking innovation that transforms the way our students learn and our teachers teach. In an ever-evolving world, education must adapt to meet the needs of future. Iris is designed to bridge the gap between traditional teaching methods and the innovative possibilities



of tomorrow. Whether simplifying complex subjects or nurturing creativity, Iris brings a new dimension to learning at Rajagiri School," Fr Jaison said. "Iris engages our students with real-time answers to their questions, fostering an environment where curiosity thrives. It brings an AI-powered interactive library into our classrooms, holding knowledge about the entire universe. It can adapt its teaching methods to suit individual needs, ensuring no student is left behind. Iris is equipped to handle a wide range of subjects, making it a versatile tool for our classrooms. The robot encourages our

students to explore their creative sides. It is available at the click of a button, ready to assist our teachers and students whenever they need. Iris is not just a teacher but a companion for learning across various fields, making it a valuable asset beyond our classrooms," Fr Jaison said.

**'Iris will also help students interact with modern tech'**  
"The quality of education would improve through a conglomeration of human knowledge and technology. So Iris will also help students to interact with modern technologies through ChatGPT or other AI platforms, which has gained more popularity in recent days," Fr Jaison said. Makerlabs, a start-up initiative under the Start-up Mission, developed the robot which resembles a female mannequin. "When the student asks questions, Iris converts the voice through Google conversion and searches for answers on the internet and replies to students.

## Centre's aid to help create 54,000 jobs in Andhra's Koppurthi

**KADAPA:** In a significant boost to industrial development in Andhra Pradesh, the Central government has approved the development of industrial smart cities across the State. Koppurthi Mega Industrial Hub in Kadapa district's Kamalapuram constituency is among the key beneficiaries of the initiative. With an investment of Rs 2,137 crore, the project aims to develop 2,596 acres of land and create employment opportunities for around 54,000 people. Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw made the announcement on Wednesday, following a Union Cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. A total of 6,500 acres has been earmarked for Koppurthi as a part of the larger Visakhapatnam - Chennai Industrial Corridor.

The Centre's announcement is expected to bring investments to the tune of Rs 8,860 crore, which can further develop Koppurthi into a full-fledged industrial hub and create numerous job opportunities for the local unemployed youth. Focus will be on sectors such as renewables, automotive spare parts, non-metallic minerals, textiles, chemicals, engineering components, and metallic goods production. The hub will be equipped with essential infrastructure, including roads, administrative buildings, electricity, and sheds for industrial use. A pipeline is also being constructed to supply water from the Brahman Sagar reservoir to Koppurthi, with internal pipeline work already completed. Additionally, APIIC officials have assured all support, including in terms of land and infrastructure, to budding industrialists who are looking to set up businesses in the area. Once companies submit their Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) to APIIC, the proposals will be reviewed, and land allocation will follow. The Koppurthi industrial hub's proximity to key transportation routes will prove to be an advantage for entrepreneurs.

## Hyderabad: Youth lured with promise of jobs

**HYDERABAD:** Many youngsters have fallen prey to fraudsters in the recent past with promises of well-paying jobs in a foreign country and forced to work with cybercriminals in South East Asian countries. While this crime would qualify as job fraud, it would also fall under transnational human trafficking, where an individual is given an illegal entry into another country for the purpose of exploitation. There are several emerging trends in human trafficking cropping up in today's digital age. To discuss these trends and the strategies to combat them, a panel of as many as 15 speakers gathered at the National Level Technical Consultation on Human Trafficking in



Hyderabad on Thursday. The seminar, which will continue on Friday, is an initiative of the Women Safety Wing of the Telangana Police in

partnership with the International Justice Mission. Minister for Women and Child Welfare Dansari Anasuya (Seethakka) presided over the seminar as the chief guest on Thursday where she underlined the importance of sensitising young students on how to respect women.

Panelists, most of whom work in law enforcement agencies, bureaucracy and the justice system, discussed how traffickers are finding new ways of targeting their victims. They opined that strict action needs to be taken by all the authorities concerned. DGP Shikha Goel said that Telangana has rescued 62,000 children from human traffickers in the past decade.

## Durgam Cheruvu assets of Telangana CM's brother put on notice

**Besides Tirupathi Reddy, 240 other residents in colonies surrounding Durgam Cheruvu issued notices, given 30 days to remove encroachments**

**HYDERABAD:** A day after Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy declared that he would himself demolish the any structure belonging to his family members if it was found to be within the full tank level (FTL) and buffer zone of any water body, Revenue officials on Thursday issued notices to A Tirupathi Reddy, the chief minister's brother, as his house and office were reportedly found to be within the FTL of Durgam Cheruvu. Responding to the notice, Tirupathi clarified that he had purchased the 600 sq yd property in 1995 with a sanctioned layout and



building permission, and was unaware that it was within the buffer zone of Durgam Cheruvu. He added that the property which he purchased belonged to a person named Koteswar Rao. Tirupathi Reddy also stated that the layout was approved before the

APWALTA Act came into existence and that he would comply with any corrective action deemed necessary by the authorities. In addition to Tirupathi Reddy, notices were also issued to 240 other residents in colonies surrounding Durgam Cheruvu, also known as the Secret Lake, including prominent neighbourhoods like Amar Cooperative Society, Kavuri Hills, Nectar's Colony, Doctor's Colony and a few others. These areas, known for their luxurious constructions, are home to many influential individuals, including

politicians, film stars and high-ranking bureaucrats. Building and flat owners are already tense following notices from the deputy collector of Serilingampally mandal, demanding the removal of structures falling within the FTL/buffer zone of Durgam Cheruvu. Residents argue that this enforcement is unfair as they were not aware of the violations until now. The notices, issued under Section 23 (1) of the Telangana Water, Land and Trees Act, 2002 (WALTA), specify that properties in these colonies fall within the FTL/buffer zone.

## 426 dengue cases in Krishnagiri so far, highest in five years

**KRISHNAGIRI:** A total of 426 dengue cases has been reported in Krishnagiri district till Wednesday since January, which is the highest in the last five years. A total of 322 cases was reported in 2017.

"The maximum number of cases are from Hosur City Municipal Corporation limits (83) followed by Shoolagiri (65), Kelamangalam (42). Mathur recorded just 11 cases. For the whole of 2017, 322 cases were reported. It reduced to 288 cases in 2023," a health department source told TNIE. Sources added that over 69 hot spots were identified and dengue prevention measures are carried out for three continuous days in a week. The District Health Officer G Ramesh Kumar told TNIE, "565 domestic breeding checking (DBC) workers were deployed in ten blocks, Hosur City Municipal Corporation, Krishnagiri Municipality and town panchayats.

Workers are conducting daily fogging operations, chlorination in water tanks to reduce leptospirosis, fever camps in hot spots and mass cleaning at companies and educational institutions to remove abandoned stored materials, which becomes a breeding ground for mosquitoes." He added, "People should refrain from taking self medication and should approach the nearby government healthcare institutions in case of fever. Also few weeks ago, Krishnagiri district administration conducted inter-department meeting with health, school education, anganwadis to prevent dengue in their places and raise awareness." Since Krishnagiri is situated close to Bengaluru, there is a high chance of infection spreading as dengue cases are high in the neighbouring state. Since it is a vector borne illness, people who travel to Bengaluru for work coming to vegetable markets in Rayakottai or Hosur from may spread the infection, sources said.

## Hyderabad: Stalker kills woman, stabs three in Gachibowli

**HYDERABAD:** A man allegedly attacked and killed a woman on Wednesday night within Gachibowli police station limits. Three others who tried to defend the woman were also injured in the incident. The accused, identified as Bihar native Rakesh, was reportedly in a relationship with victim Deepan Tamang (26) from West Bengal. Rakesh allegedly went to meet Deepan at her house in Gachibowli on Wednesday at around 11 pm and attacked her. Witnessing this, Deepan's three female friends tried to defend her but Rajesh attacked them, killed Deepan and stabbed one woman in the back.

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Editor-in-Chief  
Gurcharan Singh Babbar  
Mob : 9654077232, 9971359517  
Website : www.thesikhimes.in  
Email : sikhimesindia@gmail.com  
RNI No. DELENG/2008/25465  
Legal Advisors:  
Advocate Mohd. Sajid  
Advocate Dr. A.P. Singh  
Advocate Manish Sharma  
Advocate Pooja Bhaskar Sharma

NEWS BOX

New substation to help curb outages in Old Gurgaon

GURGAON. Residents of Old Gurgaon are expected to get relief from power outages during summer, when electricity supply is often cut to counter overloading...

To meet power demands, HVPNL and DHBVN had planned to upgrade the existing 66kV power house to a 220kV facility. HVPNL has been constructing a GIS substation in Sector 15 and laying transmission lines on multi-circuit towers from Sector 72.

This project is expected to benefit residents of sectors 2, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 23, 30, 31 and 32, and areas around Old Railway Road, New Railway Road, Civil Lines, Friends Colony, Patel Nagar, Mini Secretariat and surrounding regions. It will help mitigate overloading of the power system and reduce load shedding, especially during the summer season.

HVPNL officials said that since 2021, a 220kV substation has been under construction in Sector 15, which will be connected to the 400kV substation in Sector 72 and the 220kV substation in Sector 72.

"The construction of this new substation is a much-needed relief for the residents of Old Gurgaon who have been facing frequent power cuts and load shedding during the summer months when the demand for electricity is at its peak.

7mm rainfall, but city comes to a crawl

Gurgaon: Overnight rain in NCR left the Delhi-Gurgaon border at Kapashera submerged once again on Thursday, bringing traffic to a crawl for hundreds of officegoers and marooning residents living in its vicinity...

Man held for stealing 50L jewellery from ex-employer's store

Gurgaon. A 26-year-old driver was arrested on Thursday for allegedly stealing jewellery worth Rs 50 lakh from the store of his former employer in Sector 66 on Wednesday. Police registered a case against the accused, and recovered the stolen items from his possession.

According to Gurgaon police spokesperson Sandeep Kumar, the accused had started working as a driver for the jewellery store owner in July and was recently sacked.

Showers in Gurgaon bring maximum temp down by 2°C in 24 hours, more expected

GURGAON. The city's maximum temperature dropped by over 2 degrees Celsius due to the overnight showers on Thursday. At 30 degrees Celsius, it was 3.7 degrees below normal. The city received intermittent rain till 8.30am on Thursday, followed by cloudy skies and drizzle throughout the day.



On Thursday, Manesar saw the maximum rainfall at 25mm, followed by Wazirabad (22mm), Kadipur and Harsaru (11mm), Sohna (10mm), Badshapur (7mm), Pataudi (5mm) and Farukhnagar (4mm).

The city has received the third-highest rainfall in Haryana so far this monsoon at 492.8mm, after Nuh (608mm) and Chandigarh (536mm). Between June 1

and August 29, Gurgaon recorded 492.8mm of rainfall against the normal of 402.2mm, a 23% increase. The state's average rain is 295.7mm this season - a 15% decline from the normal of 348.2mm, which is 15% less than the anticipated amount.

expected on Friday, no weather alert has been issued. The cloud cover is expected to diminish over the weekend, which could result in a rise in temperatures.

"Scattered light to moderate rainfall is very likely over Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi and west Rajasthan during the weekend. Heavy rain is likely on Sept 2," said an IMD official.

The maximum temperature during this period will range between 34 and 35 degrees Celsius, while the minimum temperature is expected to settle between 25 and 26 degrees.

Meanwhile, the city's air quality index (AQI) was 'satisfactory' at 80 on Thursday, the same as the day before. On Tuesday, the city had seen its first 'good' air day in nearly two years with an overall AQI of 35. Streets in Delhi also got waterlogged after heavy rainfall on Thursday.

In Kosli & Ateli seats, poll battle likely to turn into a family affair

GURGAON. Kosli and Ateli assembly seats are set to be among the most closely watched contests in Haryana polls, with at least three members of a family vying to get tickets from rival parties that could pit them against each other.



Yadavendra's race for Congress ticket from Kosli is not without its challenges. His candidacy is

complicated by the possibility that Rao Inderjit Singh is pitching for his daughter Aarti Rao to be fielded by BJP from the constituency.

Rao Inderjit Singh, who was with Congress for most of his political career till he switched to BJP ahead of 2014 Lok Sabha elections, is the most prominent Ahir face from the region. Kosli and Ateli are part of the Ahirwal belt in Haryana.

For two consecutive terms from 2005 till 2014, but political fortunes took a downturn after Inderjit left the party for BJP. Since then, the younger sibling lost the seat as a Congress candidate consecutively in 2014 and 2019.

Tiger, tiger, hunting right! 1 days gone, ST-2303 at home in Jhabua

GURGAON. An abundant prey base of nilgai, wild boar and chinkara, and no competitors to hunt them down - ST-2303 seems to have found a home, 125km away from home. It's been 11 days since the adult male tiger wandered out of the Sariska reserve and entered the dense jungles of Jhabua in Rewari, making an arduous trek of 125km along the Sahibi river.

"The tiger is making its presence felt every other day with its pugmarks. So, it's very much here," he told TOI. Deepak Patil, the Rewari divisional forest officer, is certain the tiger will hunt again in a few days.

"I almost lost my balance because of the uneven surface. You can't see what's beneath the water, and that makes it very dangerous," said Anil Arora, who travels on his motorcycle from Delhi's Dwarka to Udyog Vihar for work.

In order to clear extra rush of passengers during forthcoming festival season, Railways have Decided to extend/continue the services of earlier notified special trains as per details given below:-

Table with 2 columns: Train No. and STATIONS. Includes details for 02391/02392 Patna Jn. - Anand Vihar Terminal and 03255 Patna Jn. - Anand Vihar Terminal.

DAYS OF RUN: 02391 from Patna Jn. on every Saturday from 05.10.2024 to 09.11.2024 & 02392 from Anand Vihar Terminal on every Sunday from 06.10.2024 to 10.11.2024.

Table with 2 columns: Train No. and STATIONS. Includes details for 03255/03256 Patna Jn. - Anand Vihar Terminal.

DAYS OF RUN: 03255 from Patna Jn. on every Sunday & Thursday from 03.10.2024 to 14.11.2024 & 03256 from Anand Vihar Terminal on every Monday & Friday from 04.10.2024 to 15.11.2024.

Table with 2 columns: Train No. and STATIONS. Includes details for 03257/03258 Danapur - Anand Vihar Terminal.

DAYS OF RUN: 03257 from Danapur on every Sunday from 06.10.2024 to 10.11.2024 & 03258 from Anand Vihar Terminal on every Monday from 07.10.2024 to 11.11.2024.

For detailed information, please call RailMadad Helpline No. 139 or visit enquiry website www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in

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Name Change I, Manjula W/o Ramesh Chandra Dobriyal R/o Flat No-470, Shree Awas Apartment Sector-18 B Dwarka South West Delhi, Delhi-110078, Have Changed My Name To Manjula Dobriyal For Future Purpose.

Name Change I, NO-16113521L Rank-SPR, Name-MANIKANTHA ISHWAR CHACHADI residing at VILL-HITTANAGI, PO-SUTAGATTI, TEH-SAVADATTI, DIST-BELGAUM, KARNATAKA-591126 have changed my mother's name from BASAVVA TO BASAVVA ISHWAR CHACHADI for all future purposes vide affidavit dated 30/08/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

Name Change I, NO.16118510F Rank-NK, Name-A OMKAR residing at H NO-1-90/A, MADUR MANDALAM, NIDJINTA, MAHABUB NAGAR, ANDHRA PRADESH 500041 have changed my father's name from A NARAYANA TO ALIMMA CHINNA NARAYANA for all future purposes and in my service records my father's date of birth wrongly mentioned as 22/01/1960 instead of this correct date of birth as 01/08/1964 vide Affidavit dated 30/08/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

Name Change I, HITHERTO KNOWN AS ROOPA MOHAN WIFE OF S R MOHAN RESIDENT OF 44 PRASHANT APARTMENTS 10 EXTENSION DELHI 110092 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME AND SHALL HEREFTER BE KNOWN AS SEKHIRPURAM ANANTHARAMAN ROOPA. IT IS CERTIFIED THAT I HAVE COMPLIED WITH OTHER LEGAL REQUIREMENTS IN THIS CONNECTION

PUBLIC NOTICE It is for general information that I, SUNNY DEVOL PASWAN S/O CHANNU PASWAN R/O H.NO. 2-66, BAGDOLA SECTOR-8, DWARKA BAGDOLA PO RAJ NAGAR-II, DIST SOUTH WEST DELHI-110077 declare that name of mine and my father have been wrongly written as SUNNY DEVOL PASWAN and CHUNNU PASWAN in my 12th class educational records. The actual name of mine and my father are SUNNY DEVOL PASWAN and CHANNU PASWAN respectively which may be amended accordingly

PUBLIC NOTICE I hitherto known as FIRDOSI W/O JAUDIN KHAN R/O H.NO-79, SARAI KALA KHAN, HAZARAT NIZAMUD-DIN, SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110013 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as FIRDOSI KHATOON

Name Change I, MAHAVEER SINGH F/0 14827660Y Rank- HAV/MT, Name- RAJVEER SINGH R/o VPO-JATOLI RATHWAN, DIST-BHARATPUR PIN-321025 (RAJASTHAN), have changed my name from MAHAVEERI TO MAHAVIRI and date of birth from 01/07/1959 to 01/01/1960 for all future purposes. Vide affidavit No IN-DL45362592647247W dated 29.08.2024 before Public Notary Delhi.

Lost & Found I, Daljit Singh, S/o Late. S. Pritam Singh, R/O H-376, 3rd floor palam vihar Gurugram-122017, have Lost my Re-claimment document of factory No: 1789, M.I.E Part B bahadurgarh Haryana. In this regard already lodge FIR NO. 13257/2017/071 Dated 30/08/2024 if anybody find document of above said property contact above mentioned address & M.No. 9999866787

Name Change I, NIKITESH S/O PARAS NATH residing at HOUSE NO- B E-377, GALI NO-8, HARI NAGAR, MAYA PURI, DELHI-110064 have changed my name to NIKITESH KUMAR for all future purpose.

Name Change I, MAHAVEERI M/o 14827660Y Rank- HAV/MT, Name- RAJVEER SINGH R/o VPOJATOLI RATHWAN, DIST-BHARATPUR PIN-321025 (RAJASTHAN), have changed my name from MAHAVEERI TO MAHAVIRI and date of birth from 01/07/1959 to 01/01/1960 for all future purposes. Vide affidavit No IN-DL45362592647247W dated 29.08.2024 before Public Notary Delhi.

Name Change I, Neha Dass D/o Sri Charan Dass, Address:- 102, Sea Court Tower 2, Jaypee Greens, Greater Noida 201310 Have changed my name to Neha Gupta for all future purpose.

Name Change I, USHA KUMARI Wife of No. 15713043M Rank-HAV Name-RAM-BABU SAH R/o VILL-ALIVASPU, PO-SADHPUR, PS-GARKHA, DIST-SARAN, BIHAR-841415, have changed my name from USHA KUMARI TO USHA DEVI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 30/08/2024 before Notary Public,

Name Change I, NO-16113521L Rank-SPR, Name-MANIKANTHA ISHWAR CHACHADI residing at VILL-HITTANAGI, PO-SUTAGATTI, TEH-SAVADATTI, DIST-BELGAUM, KARNATAKA-591126 have changed my father's name from ISHWAR TO ISHWAR BASAPPA CHACHADI for all future purposes vide affidavit dated 30/08/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

Name Change I, Neha Dass D/o Sri Charan Dass, Address:- 102, Sea Court Tower 2, Jaypee Greens, Greater Noida 201310 Have changed my name to Neha Gupta for all future purpose.

Name Change I, USHA KUMARI Wife of No. 15713043M Rank-HAV Name-RAM-BABU SAH R/o VILL-ALIVASPU, PO-SADHPUR, PS-GARKHA, DIST-SARAN, BIHAR-841415, have changed my name from USHA KUMARI TO USHA DEVI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 30/08/2024 before Notary Public,

## News box

## Barry Stanton X account suspended for racist posts on Indians, users call out Musk

**World** The X handle of an anonymous social media user, Barry Stanton (@barrystantonGBP), who went viral for his racist posts and rants in which he criticised Indians and Indian immigrants, was suspended on Friday. The action came after Stanton's posts were flagged by hundreds of irate Indians, with several even calling out X owner Elon Musk for not suspending the account. The suspension of the account became a subject of intense debate and memes on X. The hashtag "suspended" was among the top trends on X on Friday morning. Stanton, who has a verified handle with over 1.8 lakh followers, has shared several cartoons and memes depicting Indians defecating in the open. He also praised a post on X on how to drive Indians away from "white neighbourhoods". Several hateful and abusive posts against Jews and Africans have also been tweeted from the handle.

barrystanton

An X user, Akshit Singh, tweeted that he had flagged the Barry Stanton account to Minister of Information and Broadcasting Ashwini Vaishnaw and the UK High Commission in India. He sought an investigation into the activities of the 'Barry Stanton' X account. "This account has been engaging in the propagation of hate speech and offensive remarks that target individuals based on race and nationality," he said in his complaint. "Musk has opened the gates of hell. It's been proven, in fact, that the current Twitter algorithm is pushing racist tweets up against Indians," another user commented.

## Israel, Hamas agree to 3-day pause in fighting for Gaza polio vaccinations: WHO

**Tel Aviv/Gaza City** Israel's military and Palestinian terror group Hamas have agreed to three separate, zoned three-day pauses in fighting in Gaza to allow for the first round of vaccination of 640,000 children against polio, a senior WHO official said on Thursday. The vaccination campaign is due to start on Sunday, with the pauses scheduled to take place between 6 am and 3 pm (local time), said Rik Peepkorn, the World Health Organisation's senior official for the Palestinian territories. He said the campaign would start in central Gaza with three consecutive daily pauses in fighting, then move to southern Gaza, where there would be another three-day pause, followed by northern Gaza. Peepkorn added there was an agreement to extend the pause in each zone to a fourth day if needed. "From our experience, we know an additional day or two is very often needed to achieve sufficient coverage," Mike Ryan, WHO emergencies director, told the UN Security Council on Thursday during a meeting on the humanitarian situation in Gaza.

A second round of vaccination would be required four weeks after the first round, said. "At least 90 per cent of coverage is needed during each round of the campaign in order to stop the outbreak and prevent international spread of polio," Ryan said. The WHO confirmed on August 23 that one baby had been paralysed by the type 2 polio virus, the first such case in Gaza in 25 years.

"We are ready to cooperate with international organisations to secure this campaign, serving and protecting more than 650,000 Palestinian children in the Gaza Strip," Hamas official Basem Naim told Reuters.

## Pope Francis, 87, Defies Health Concerns With Ambitious 12-Day Journey Across Four Nations

**Vatican City**, By embarking aged 87 on the farthest journey of his papacy, Pope Francis is doing something some believed impossible — and seeking to silence those who doubt his ability to fulfil his role. The pontiff's 12-day trip to Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, East Timor and Singapore starting next week involves 43 hours of flight time and a distance of 32,000 kilometres (almost 20,000 miles), years by health issues, sparking speculation he might step down as head of the Catholic Church. The trip was originally planned for 2020 but postponed due to the Covid pandemic, and now takes place just three months before his 88th birthday.

Weeks ago few observers thought Francis was capable of such a gruelling voyage, with the corridors of the Vatican buzzing with concerns over his health. At Easter, the holiest week in the Christian calendar, Francis withdrew from several events, weakened by a lingering flu. Months earlier, bronchitis caused him to cancel a trip to United Nations climate talks in Dubai in December. In June 2023, he also underwent hernia surgery that left him hospitalised for 10 days. Now some are wondering: is it reasonable for the octogenarian to keep up the frantic pace, with 16 speeches and countless meetings and ceremonies scheduled across four countries? The pope still believes that we need to push a little further," a senior Vatican diplomat told AFP.

## 5 dead as Typhoon Shanshan hits Japan, power lines snapped, flight ops hit

**Tokyo**. Typhoon Shanshan slowly barrelled up the Japanese archipelago Friday, dumping torrential rains and causing transport havoc as its reported death toll reached five. The typhoon, one of the strongest to hit Japan in decades, had weakened by early morning, though gusts were still reaching 126 kilometres (78 miles) per hour. Even before making landfall on the island of Kyushu, a landslide caused by the heavy rains preceding it killed three members of the same family late Tuesday in Aichi prefecture, around 1,000 kilometres (600 miles) away. Two more people were reported to have died including a man last seen on a small boat in Kyushu and another whose two-storey home partially collapsed in Tokushima prefecture on the neighbouring island of Shikoku. At least 81 others have been injured, including many hurt by broken glass after the typhoon smashed windows and ripped tiles off roofs when it slammed into Kyushu on Thursday with gusts up to 252 kph. Authorities issued their highest alert in several areas, with more than five million people advised to evacuate, although it was unclear how many did. As far away as the town of Ninomiya near Tokyo,



authorities urged residents to take "immediate measures" to secure safety such as moving to higher floors after a local river flooded. Some parts of Kyushu saw record rains for August, with the town of Misato recording a staggering 791.5 millimetres (31 inches) in 48 hours, the Japan Meteorological Agency said. Power cuts hit

more than 250,000 Kyushu households but the utility operator said Friday that only 6,500 were still without electricity as engineers repaired damaged transmission lines. Overnight, many motorways were fully or partially closed in Kyushu, as well as others further afield, media reports said. Shinkansen bullet trains remained

suspended in Kyushu and were also halted on the major route between Tokyo and Osaka, with operators warning of disruptions elsewhere. Japan Airlines and ANA had already announced the cancellation of more than 600 flights between them for Friday, having scrapped a similar number the previous day, affecting almost 50,000 passengers. Auto giant Toyota suspended production at all 14 of its factories in Japan. Nissan and Honda also halted operations at their Kyushu plants, as did chipmakers including Tokyo Electron, reports said.

Shanshan comes in the wake of Typhoon Ampil, which dumped heavy rain that disrupted hundreds of flights and trains this month but caused only minor injuries and damage. Typhoons in the region have been forming closer to coastlines, intensifying more rapidly and lasting longer over land due to climate change, according to a study released last month.

Another released by World Weather Attribution (WWA) on Thursday said that climate change turbocharged Typhoon Gaemi, which killed dozens of people across the Philippines, Taiwan and China this year.

## Kamala Harris's nod to Republican in cabinet, if elected: Diversity of opinion

**World** The Democratic candidate for the US presidential election, Kamala Harris, on Thursday (US time) said that she might name a Republican to her cabinet if elected, in her first interview since being nominated for the November election. She emphasised "diversity" and serving as President for "all Americans," but said she did not have a particular name in mind. "But I would, I think. I think it's really important. I have spent my career inviting diversity of opinion. I think it's important to have people at the table when some of the most important decisions are being made that have different views, different experiences. And I think it would be to the benefit of the American public to have a member of my Cabinet who was a Republican," Vice President Harris told CNN's Dana Bash. US presidents have previously appointed members of the opposite party to their Cabinet. However,

no such move has been made during the tenure of Joe Biden or former president Donald Trump in the past eight years.

Harris, in her interview, explained her stance on several policy matters and insisted that her "values have not changed," even as she is "seeking consensus".

When specifically asked about reversals of fracking and decriminalising illegal border crossings, she said, "I think the most important and most significant aspect of my policy perspective and decisions is my values have not changed." "I believe it is important to build consensus. It is important to find a common place of understanding where we can actually solve the problem," Harris said. Said further said, if elected, her administration would renew a push for comprehensive border legislation that would tighten migration into the United

States. "We have laws that have to be followed and enforced, that address and deal with people who cross our border illegally, and there should be consequences," she said.

On Israel's war with Hamas in Gaza, Harris said, "I am unequivocal and unwavering in my commitment to Israel's defence and its ability to defend itself." But the vice president also reiterated what she's said for months, that civilian deaths are too high amid the fighting. She also brushed off Republican Donald Trump's questioning of her racial identity after he said she "happened to turn Black." Harris, who is of Black and South Asian heritage, said it was the "same old, tired playbook."

Harris, who was nominated as the Democratic candidate for the presidential race after Joe Biden opted out, is set to debate with rival Donald Trump on September 10.

## Danish court rejects extradition of Purulia arms drop case mastermind to India

**World** A Danish court on Thursday rejected India's request for the extradition of Niels Holck, also known as Kim Peter Davy, who is wanted in connection with the Purulia arms drop case. On the night of December 17, 1995, a Latvian Antonov An-26 aircraft flew over Indian airspace, dropping a cache of weapons over the village of Joupur in West Bengal's Purulia district. The consignment was allegedly meant for a rebel group in West Bengal. For years, New Delhi has sought Davy's extradition to stand trial in an Indian court. However, the Danish court rejected India's request, stating that sending him to India would violate Denmark's extradition act due to a risk that he would be subjected to

treatment in breach of the European Convention on Human Rights. Anders Rechenдорff, the public prosecutor who last year nominated Davy for a handover to stand trial in India, told news agency Reuters that it had yet to be decided whether the decision would be appealed.

According to Davy's lawyer, Jonas Christoffersen, the guarantees provided by India were not valid. "It's been six years of negotiating the conditions between the public prosecutor and India. Now the court says that his safety can't be guaranteed," Christoffersen told Reuters.

Davy previously admitted in a Danish court that he was onboard the cargo plane with six others, smuggling weapons into West

Bengal in December 1995. He also admitted to the fact that the arms were intended for people associated with Ananda Marga, a rebel movement.

**WHAT IS THE PURULIA ARMS DROP CASE?**

On December 17, 1995, an Antonov An-26 aircraft dropped a consignment in Joupur. This included hundreds of AK-47 rifles, anti-tank grenades, rocket launchers, and over 25,000 rounds of ammunition, allegedly meant for Ananda Marga, a socio-spiritual organisation with a history of militancy. The aircraft, piloted by a crew led by Peter Bleach, a former British Army officer turned arms dealer.

## Want more babies: Trump says would fund IVF, then 'backs' abortion rights

**An Israeli tank maneuvers near the border with Gaza, amid the Israel-Hamas conflict, in southern Israel August 29, 2024. (Reuters)**

**Israel has agreed to three-day humanitarian pauses in Gaza for polio vaccination, with over 640,000 children targeted. WHO emphasizes adherence to coverage goals**

**World** In a move likely aimed at appealing to women voters, Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump announced on Thursday that he supports having the government or insurance companies cover the costs of in vitro fertilisation (IVF).

"Under the Trump administration, we are going to be paying for that treatment," Trump said in an interview with NBC News. "Or we're going to be mandating that the insurance company pay." Health insurance companies in the US are not currently

obligated to cover IVF treatments, which can cost tens of thousands of dollars. Trump reiterated that one option would be to have insurance companies pay "under a mandate".

The former president unveiled the policy later at a rally in Michigan, telling the crowd, "Your government will pay for or your insurance company will be mandated to pay for all costs associated with IVF treatment."

Trump also stated his administration would push for new parents to deduct "major newborn expenses" from their taxes. "We want more babies," he added. **TRUMP 'BACKS' ABORTION RIGHTS**

In the NBC News interview, the Republican opposed Florida's six-week abortion ban and indicated support for overturning it. "I'm going to be voting that we need more than six weeks," he said. At the same time, he backed exceptions in abortion laws for cases where the pregnancy poses a threat to the mother's life, or is the result of rape or



incest. However, Trump's campaign quickly moved to clarify his stance on the divisive issue of abortion. "President Trump has not yet said how he will vote on the ballot initiative in Florida," said Karoline Leavitt, Trump's press secretary, in a statement to NPR. "He simply reiterated that he believes six weeks is too short." The issue of reproductive rights has turned into a major point of contention in the 2024 election. Vice President Kamala Harris has repeatedly

attacked Trump's abortion position, accusing him and the Republican Party of threatening women's rights, including access to birth control and fertility treatments. At the Democratic National Convention, Harris claimed that Trump and his party would "limit access to birth control, ban medication abortion, enact a nationwide ban on the procedure, and force states to report on women's miscarriages and abortions." The issue of access to fertility treatments became a political flashpoint earlier this year when the Alabama Supreme Court ruled that frozen embryos were considered children under the law, leading to a temporary pause in IVF treatments in the state. Trump's pledge to support IVF coverage may be seen as an attempt to moderate his stance and appeal to voters concerned about his record on abortion rights. He had urged Alabama lawmakers to preserve IVF access.

## Israel Agrees To Three-Day 'Humanitarian Pauses' In Gaza For Polio Vaccinations

**Jerusalem, Israel** Israel has agreed to a series of three-day "humanitarian pauses" in Gaza to allow health officials to administer polio vaccinations to children in the territory, the World Health Organization said Thursday.

"The way we discussed and agreed, the campaign will start on the first of September, in central Gaza, for three days, and there will be a humanitarian pause during the vaccination," said Rik Peepkorn, the agency's representative for Palestinian territories. The vaccination rollout will also cover southern and northern Gaza, which will each get their own three-day pauses, Peepkorn told reporters, adding that Israel had agreed to allow an additional day if required. The vaccination campaign aims to cover more than 640,000 children under the age of 10. "We stress the critical importance for all parties to adhere to the commitments that have been made," Michael Ryan, WHO deputy director-general, told the UN

Security Council. "At least 90 percent of coverage is needed during each round of the campaign in order to stop the outbreak and prevent international spread of polio," he added.

He said that 1.26 million doses of the NoPV2 vaccine had been delivered in Gaza, with another 400,000 still to arrive. The vaccine is administered orally in two drops. Health workers will need to return in four weeks' time to give two more drops to each child to complete the vaccination, although so far there has been no public discussion of arranging another pause in the fighting.

Oren Marmorstein, Israel's foreign affairs spokesman, said on X that his government has "coordinated a large-scale operation



with WHO and UNICEF to vaccinate children in the Gaza Strip against polio." Hamas said it supports the "UN humanitarian truce." Robert Wood, US deputy ambassador to the United Nations,

said it is "vital that this campaign be implemented without delay." He called on Israel to "facilitate access for agencies carrying out the vaccination campaign, and for it to ensure periods of calm and refrain from military operations during vaccination campaign periods." The United States and European Union have voiced concern over polio in Gaza, after the first case there in 25 years was confirmed this month in an unvaccinated 10-month-old baby. Poliovirus is highly infectious and most often spread through sewage and contaminated water — an increasingly common problem in Gaza with much of the territory's infrastructure destroyed by Israel in its war against Hamas. The disease mainly affects children under the age of five. It can cause deformities and paralysis, and is potentially fatal.

## News box

## Telangana advocates file rejoinder before Brijesh Kumar Tribunal

**HYDERABAD:** Telangana advocates on Thursday filed a rejoinder to the counter filed by Andhra Pradesh before the Brijesh Kumar Tribunal. However, the AP government has sought two weeks to file its rejoinder. On Wednesday, Telangana and AP had filed drafts of the issues they face. Earlier, the Tribunal had framed 40 issues with regard to the notification issued by the Union government under Section 3 of Inter-States River Water Disputes Act, 1956 (ISRWA). The Tribunal posted the further hearing to September 20. AP is likely to put forth two expert witnesses. The subjects and names of witnesses will be submitted by September 10. Telangana was not keen on putting forth witnesses but may do so if AP does. On behalf of Telangana, advocates CS Vaidyanathan, Harish Vaidyanathan and Nikhil Swami, and Irrigation officials S Vijaya Kumar (SE), P Vijaya Kumar (EE) and Anurag Sharma (AEE) attended the hearing.

## Two Indian fishers sentenced to jail in SL for violating IML, seven released

**MADURAI:** A Sri Lankan court sentenced two fishermen, including a boat driver and a second-time IML violator, to jail on Thursday. The court also ordered the release of seven fishermen, who were later handed over to the Indian Embassy officials. On July 23, the Sri Lankan Navy caught two fishing boats and arrested nine Indian fishermen from Rameswaram for alleged violation of the IML near Delft Island. The arrested fishermen were taken to the Kankesanthurai Harbour and handed over to the Mailadi Fisheries Inspector for further legal proceedings. After over a month of legal custody, the fishermen were produced before a Lankan court on Thursday. Judge Nalini Subashkaran released seven fishermen under the condition of not violating the IML in the future. Sahaya Robert (49) of Rameswaram, the driver of the first boat, was sentenced to one year imprisonment, while the second boat's driver, Hari Krishnan (50) of Rameswaram, was sentenced to 18 months imprisonment as he was caught violating the IML for second time. They were sent back to prison on Thursday. Meanwhile, fishermen's associations condemned the continuous action of jailing Indian fishermen. Considering the welfare of the fishermen, the union government should take immediate action to secure the release of jailed Indian fishers in Sri Lanka, they said.

## Fisherfolk stages protest as one man still missing at sea

Demanding the state government to intensify the search for a fisherman, who went missing after their boat capsized at sea on Tuesday, fishermen and CITU cadre staged a protest in Rameswaram. Two fishermen, who swam to Katchatheevu and were rescued by SL Navy, reached India by flight on Thursday. While one remains missing, the body of another was recovered on Wednesday.

## Give time limit for finishing Madurai AIIMS: Madras HC to centre

**MADURAI:** The Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court on Thursday directed the secretary of the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to file a report setting out a time limit within which the construction of AIIMS Madurai will be completed. A division bench of Justices R Subramanian and L Victoria Gowri was hearing a petition filed by RK Basker of Madurai. The petitioner stated that the union government had proposed to set up AIIMS in Tamil Nadu in 2015 and finalised Madurai as the location in 2018. The union government is duty-bound to complete the construction of the same within a stipulated time. The hospital will benefit hundreds of persons if it is set up soon, the petitioner said, adding that through various court orders, the construction of AIIMS Madurai was directed to be completed soon.

The union government had declared that nine AIIMS will be established in 2014, including the one in Madurai. However, except in Madurai, AIIMS has been established at all other locations and are functional, the petitioner submitted. Further, the petitioner submitted that no funds had been allocated for the construction of AIIMS Madurai in the 2024-25 Union Budget. Establishment of the AIIMS here at the earliest is necessary, the petitioner said, adding that people of the state have lost faith regarding the establishment of the hospital. Hearing the arguments, the court issued the directions and adjourned the case.

## AIADMK flays TNUSRB chairman appointment

**Chennai:** The legal wing secretary of AIADMK IS Inbadurai has moved a petition in the high court challenging the appointment of retired DGP Sunil Kumar as chairman of the Tamil Nadu Uniformed Services Recruitment Board saying appointment of retired officers to the post is only an exception and not a rule, given the availability of serving officers in the rank of DGP. He alleged that the appointment was made without following the mandatory law laid down by the Supreme Court. Inbadurai said the retired officer was given the post as a quid pro quo for his affinito Chief Minister MK Stalin.

## Kerala: Jaggery from tribal hamlets of Marayur to hit the market under new brand name

Marayur Kanthalloor Tribal Farmers Producer Company Limited will bring the produce to the markets.

**IDUKKI:** For Malayalees, one of the quintessential ingredients in preparing Onam delicacies is jaggery. However, don't get deceived by fake jaggery this festive season. Go for the genuine jaggery from the hills of Marayur made available in markets by the tribal farmers of Kanthalloor and Marayur under the brand name 'Marayur Madhuram'. Though the cost may be a bit high compared to the Marayur jaggery that can be bought in the local markets, this new brand comes in premium quality, nitrogen-filled packets and as always contains a treasure house of nutrients. Marayur Kanthalloor Tribal Farmers Producer Company Limited will bring the produce to the markets. To cater to the Onam demand, this new jaggery brand will be sold through special stalls at Thodupuzha and Thiruvananthapuram initially. Soon, the Marayur undasharkkara (jaggery balls) will be sold through other retail shops in the state. Though the tribal farmers in Kanthalloor and Marayur had earlier owned vast acres of sugarcane fields and produced jaggery, the low price for the produce as a result of the huge influx of fake jaggery into the market resulted in many farmers withdrawing from sugarcane cultivation. As part of the



Sub Scheme (SCA-TSS) through the Kerala Scheduled Tribes Development Department. Speaking to TNIE, CMD programme coordinator and associate professor P G Anil said, "Although the tribal farmers were initially sceptical about the project, constant awareness and the formation of the Marayur Kanthalloor Tribal Farmers Producer Company Limited, with tribal farmers only as shareholders, resulted in more cultivators joining the initiative. Now, a

total of 150 tribal farmers belonging to three settlements - Missionvayal, Dandukombu and Churakkulam - are part of the project."

A jaggery production plant has been built at the Dandukombu tribal colony in Kanthalloor and a trial run of the project was done in May, he said. Anil explained that the main specialty of the project is that the company is owned and operated by the tribes themselves and the profit also goes to the company and its shareholders. "No outsiders can intervene or exploit the tribal farmers," he said. The product will be sold under the brand name 'Marayur Madhuram' and the company has applied for the Geographical Indication Tag received for Marayur Jaggery to be included in the product cover. Anil said they have had discussions with some of the top retail dealers in Kerala to sell the product through their units.

"We have also plans to make value-added products and jaggery balls with diverse flavours in the future," he said. Tribal Minister O R Kelu will inaugurate the jaggery production plant at Dandukombu on Friday. He will also inaugurate the sale of 'Marayur Madhuram' during the event. Those who need this premium brand of jaggery can place orders via phone: 6238528801.

## Devadula irrigation project to be completed by December 2025

In the first phase of the project, three reservoirs and four pump houses were constructed and irrigation water was provided to 1.24 lakh acres.

**HYDERABAD:** The state government has decided to complete the Devadula irrigation project by December 2025. Irrigation Minister N Uttam Kumar Reddy, Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy and Endowments Minister Konda Surekha are scheduled to visit the Devadula project in Warangal on Friday and inspect the ongoing works. They will also be holding a review meeting. The Irrigation department accorded top priority for Devadula and expedited the works after the Congress formed the government in the state. The project was planned to be constructed in three phases.



Land acquisition and around 91 per cent project works have already been completed.

## Nod for land acquisition

The Congress government started the Devadula works with an estimated cost of Rs

6,016 crore in 2004-05. After that the project was expanded into three phases and the cost of the project too was escalated to Rs 17,500 crore. So far, Rs 14,188 crore has been spent on the project and construction works were nearing completion. Of the total 33,224 acres of land required for the project, so far 30,268 acres have been acquired. The present government gave the green signal for the acquisition of 2,956 acres. The project was envisaged to irrigate a total of 5.57 lakh acres. In the first phase of the project, three reservoirs and four pump houses were constructed and irrigation water was

provided to 1.24 lakh acres. In the second phase, nine reservoirs and seven pump houses were constructed and water was provided to 1.93 lakh acres. In the third and final phase, the government proposes to irrigate 2.40 lakh acres through 10 pump houses. For the multi-lift irrigation Devadula project, 39.16 tmcft water will be lifted from Godavari for 170 days every year. The water would be lifted from Godavari river to a height of 469 metres. It is estimated that 499 MW power is required to lift water for three phases of the project, which would irrigate lands in eight districts.

## Evolve plan to develop Amaravati as City of AI: CM Chandrababu Naidu

**VIJAYAWADA:** Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu has suggested Municipal Administration and Urban Development Minister P Narayana and the APCRDA to come up with an action plan to develop Amaravati as a City of Artificial Intelligence. During a review meeting with the MAUD Minister and the CRDA officials on Thursday, he asked them to design the logo of the capital with capital A and small I -- Ai -- which will project the futuristic look of Amaravati, which once was the capital of Gods. "Every aspect and every part of the Capital City should reflect modern technology accessibility," he asserted. Taking potshots at the previous dispensation headed by YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, Naidu said Amaravati was completely neglected and ruined with sinister intentions. "Now, once again the Capital City construction works should be taken up expeditiously," he



stressed. Taking stock of the construction of various buildings in the capital meant for government offices, he observed that there was no progress under the previous government, and even the G+7 building meant for the CRDA office was not completed. The officials should complete the building in the next 90 days and they should maintain high quality standards in the construction, besides using the latest technology, he said. The previous YSRC regime had also ignored the Happy Nest

project, which was taken up in 14 acres for those who want to live in the capital area. Recalling that the plots in the Happy Nest project were sold out in just one hour during the TDP regime, the officials informed the Chief Minister that since the previous government neglected it, the buyers went back. The Chief Minister directed them to immediately initiate steps to revive the project. Maintaining that 3,558 acres still need to be acquired in the capital area, the Chief Minister said the farmers are coming forward to give their lands voluntarily. When the officials brought to the notice of Chief Minister certain hurdles in allotting developed plots to the farmers, he told them to address those issues on priority. He was informed that 60% of the forest clearance works were completed. Naidu advised them to use drones for assessing and supervising the forest clearance works.

## Solution to a 'stinking' issue: Kochi corporation to get 15 refuse compactor trucks

**KOCHI:** For long, Kochiites have been forced to put up with a 'stinking' issue as the Kochi corporation is depending on hired open lorries for collection of waste from various parts of the city to be taken to the Brahmapuram waste treatment facility. The trail of stench left by these open vehicles as they pass is nauseating to both motorists and pedestrians. Finally, respite is in sight with the Cochin Smart City Ltd (CSML) set to hand over 15 refuse garbage compactor trucks for waste collection in two weeks. "The CSML is purchasing the modern fully-covered, hydraulic waste collection vehicles using its own funds and will hand over the same to us. They have informed us that the process to hand over the vehicles is in the final stage," said Mayor Adv M Anilkumar. When contacted, a senior CSML official said they were awaiting the delivery of the 10-tonne garbage compactor trucks from the company, and the same will be



handed over to the civic body soon after Onam. The corporation owns 13 refuse compactor trucks, but often a majority of vehicles of the ageing fleet, procured from a foreign firm over 10 years ago, would lie idle. Though it had 24 covered tippers too for waste collection, they too are now over 15 years old and have been taken off the roads. "The problem with our refuse compactor trucks was that they were procured from a foreign company. So upon developing technical snags, the company personnel had to come from Bengaluru as there were no local units here. This often caused

much delay. Now seven such vehicles are under repair," said a senior corporation official. The same has forced the civic body to collect waste by hiring lorries. "Since each lorry handles only 5-tonnes of waste, we're forced to hire around 20 to 25 trucks per day. The maximum waste collected per day is around 250 tonnes," he added.

The maintenance of the old compactor truck fleet and the cost of hiring lorries for transportation of waste have burnt a hole in the corporation's pocket. The civic body coughed up Rs 96 lakh between April 2020 and December 2022 alone for waste collection. The corporation aims to save a substantial amount once the CSML hands over the 15 refuse compactor trucks. "We've already shelved our plan to purchase modern trucks. Also, we can cut the lorries needed to be hired to just five or below. The same would save us a substantial amount," the official pointed out.

## Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Biotechnology to lead BioE3 policy in Kerala

**KOCHI:** With the new BioE3 policy aiming to position India at the forefront of the next industrial revolution, the scientific community anticipates significant investments in innovation to help the bio-



economic sector achieve growth of Rs 25 lakh crore by 2030. The Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Biotechnology (RGCBI) has initiated efforts to transition Kerala from chemical-based industries to bio-manufacturing hubs. These hubs are intended to drive the country's economy while addressing challenges related to food, energy, and climate. Dr Chandrabhas Narayana, director of the Thiruvananthapuram-based RGCBI, praised the proposed shift to bio-

manufacturing hubs. The institution plans to conduct awareness programmes across Kerala to educate various stakeholders about BioE3, he revealed. Using a panel discussion with top officials of the

Department of Science and Technology (DST) on Thursday, RGCBI expressed its commitment to leading Kerala towards the implementation of the path-breaking policy. Approved last weekend, the policy aims to leverage bio-manufacturing for a cleaner and greener India. Kicking off a state-wide drive featuring workshops and discussions on BioE3, experts highlighted the policy's potential to contribute significantly to the country's efforts.

## KSRTC unit heads were told to propose ideas to achieve Rs 9 crore daily target

**KOCHI:** The cash-strapped Kerala State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) has issued strict instructions to all unit heads to come out with 'feasible' proposals to achieve a collective daily collection of Rs 9 crore, a 33 per cent rise from the current operational earnings of Rs six to seven crore.

As part of this, the Chairman and Managing Director is convening an online review meeting at 4 pm on August 31, when all the unit heads and the Regional Chief Traffic Officers have to submit feasible proposals to increase the collection of their respective units. "The same has to be first sent to the Traffic Department and the Executive Director (Operations), and they need to be explained how the same will result in increased earnings. The unit heads should demand additional buses and crew only after conducting a proper study of the feasibility of the new routes. A circular has been sent to all the unit heads," said a senior KSRTC officer.

Also, daily, weekly and monthly review meetings will be held to assess the progress towards achieving the target collection and the additional measures being taken from time to time to achieve the Rs 9 crore target. Currently, the daily earnings of the corporation are in the range of Rs 6 to 7 crore. For instance, the total collection of all units on August 26 is Rs 6,08,60,578, with an Earnings Per Kilometre (EPM) of Rs 46.06.

Meanwhile, the Chief Office has fixed the new revenue targets to be achieved by each unit. The highest target of Rs 40.21 lakh is for Thiruvananthapuram Central unit, which operates the maximum number of buses.

## Thinking straight, not laterally, the way forward

The manner in which the recruitment of 45 officers of the Joint Secretary/Director level laterally was questioned and withdrawn suddenly is a good example. The withdrawal was surprising on three counts. One, lateral induction had been resorted to in the past, including by this government without getting mired in debilitating controversies. Second, as the Opposition fired its precision-guided 'reservation' missile, some ministers launched a counterattack, not aware of the swift, embarrassing retreat being planned. Third, a government known to be tough buckled under a smoking gun. The irony was that ministers who should have known better were brandishing their swords even as the retreat was being sounded. Before coming to the issues involved in the non-political endeavour of lateral recruitment, one cannot help but pity the language of the 'instrument of surrender', which could have been a straightforward official communication instead of a demi-official letter from the minister giving the impression that his ministry made a mistake, which the Prime Minister (who is in charge of the ministry) stepped in to correct. He even traduced the Opposition for overlooking the principle of 'social justice' it advocated while making lateral recruitment when in power.

Much has been written about previous governments inducing experts from the market into the bureaucratic system, the recommendations of the Administrative Reform Commission and the Group of Secretaries, the examination of the proposal by the Department of Personnel from various angles, and the peaceful induction earlier. This was not the first attempt by the government, and hopefully it will not be the last, to draft outside talent to shore up its skill set. It would be unfair to endorse lateral entry or dismiss it without understanding the context and the motivation for such a move. Let us look at some fundamental issues. The Government of India (GOI) runs the affairs of the Central Government and other national-level bodies by recruiting officers to services such as income tax, Railways and Posts through the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC), following the reservation policy. It also takes on deputation All India Services (AIS) officers borne on state cadres recruited through the same process. The GOI has no cadre of AIS officers; the states maintain a deputation reserve as part of their sanctioned cadre strength. The GOI draws upon this reserve to fill positions at different levels in the ministries and other apex organisations through an empanelment process for joint secretaries and above.

Many GOI ministries have their specialised services to deal with their allotted subjects, as in the case of agriculture, commerce, civil and cost accounts, etc. In addition, the government has fruitfully drawn upon the expertise of outside talent occasionally without being bound by its reservation policy. While earlier governments selected eminent experts through an informal system, this government tried to institutionalise the selection through the UPSC. Also, there has never been an attempt at such large-scale lateral induction. It would be interesting to understand how effectively is the expertise of the existing specialised cadres utilised by the government, especially when professional advice conflicts with short-term objectives of the government or the political interests of the ruling party.

If the government wishes a sprinkling of external experts in the bureaucratic system and treat it as quasi deputation, it must identify ministries needing such 'market borrowing' and simultaneously rationalise and redraw existing cadres. Further, it should be clear whether such induction is routine recruitment or contextual. In case it is contextual and need-based, experts could be hired as consultants who can give their opinion and make recommendations freely without being burdened with bureaucratic decision-making.

## 50 years of India's steady outperformance

The country has become the third-largest contributor to global growth

IT may not have seemed so at the time, but 50 years ago India reached a turning point. There was an economic crisis and political turmoil. The decisive action a year later was the imposition of Emergency rule by Indira Gandhi. But that was overturned in less than two years. What proved more long-lasting was something barely noticed at the time: A new direction in economic policy, away from Mrs Gandhi's overtly Leftist phase. There followed in due course an end to India's long-term underperformance as an economy, and over time the birth of a new 'India story'. Until the mid-1970s, India had been growing more slowly than the world economy. The transition in the second half of the 1970s followed some 15 years of crises in the form of wars, failed harvests and even famine, a traumatic rupee devaluation and two oil shocks. Many of these events had contributed to a loss of national self-belief after the early optimism under Jawaharlal Nehru. But once the economy stabilised, what followed was a half century of steady outperformance. Growth outpaced both low-income and middle-income countries, as well as the world economy. The country consequently has an international heft today that it never enjoyed before. Yet, it has not been a 'shining' record, because of continuing poor socioeconomic metrics and rising inequality. Prior to the transition, India's share of the global economy had been on the decline — from 2.7 per cent in 1960 to 1.9 per cent in 1975 before the decline slowed, stabilised and eventually improved. Even in 2013, India's share of the world GDP was slightly smaller than in 1960. Now, in 2024, it is 3.5 per cent of the global GDP. And since the economy is growing at twice the global average, India is the third-largest contributor to global growth.

Per capita income similarly improved. From 8.4 per cent of the global average in 1960, India's per capita income dipped to 6.4 per cent in 1974. The numbers improved to 13.5 per cent in 2011, and further to 18.1 per cent in 2023. That is a near-trebling over five decades. Yet people in most countries enjoy a much better standard of living. Indeed, there are hardly any countries outside of Africa and in India's own South Asian neighbourhood where per capita

incomes are lower. A long road lies ahead. What transforms the India story is the size of its population. Per capita income is modest, but when multiplied 1,400 million times it makes the Indian economy the fifth largest. Already, India is the second-largest market for mobile phones and motorcycles/scooters, and the third- or fourth-largest for aviation and cars. Growth in these product and service markets has been underpinned by a burgeoning middle class. Businesses catering to it have generated great wealth for investors, leading to the rise of dollar-billionaires (at 200, the world's third-largest tally), while the stock market



ranks fourth by market capitalisation. Up to the mid-1970s, close to half the population lived below a bare-bones poverty line. Today, less than 10 per cent of the people are officially poor. International mention of India is now more likely to refer to it as a rising power rather than as a country of poor people. Yet, India continues to feature as only a 'medium development' country in its human development, while countries like Vietnam have attained 'high development' status. India is unlikely to make it to the 'high development' category for another decade or more — beyond which lies the 'very high development' category comprising the developed economies, to which the country aspires.

Even here, though, the numbers are improving. The mean years of schooling have improved from 4.4 years in 2010 to 6.57 years now. India also has more than the WHO-prescribed ratio of a doctor per 1,000

population, and life expectancy has finally crossed the 70 threshold. Higher incomes find reflection in a more varied and richer diet. Milk consumption has multiplied 10-fold. So has fish consumption, while the consumption of eggs has increased more than 20-fold. Add to this the rapid growth of horticulture — fruits and vegetables. Meanwhile, household savings as a share of the income have gone up 70 per cent, even as average incomes have multiplied six-fold in real terms. More important than all these may be a change in mindset. India in the mid-1970s was still committed to socialist rhetoric. Apart from large-scale nationalisation of several industries,

there was also price and production control on everything, from paper to steel, and sugar to cement, even bathing soaps and cars! The inevitable result was shortages and black markets. State governments routinely sided with trade unions in industrial disputes. But things have changed. Indian politics is now more populist than socialist, the Communist parties are in the ICU, and governments want to change labour laws to facilitate business. Tax rates have become reasonable. Rs 12 crore (about Rs 350 crore in today's money). In comparison, in the last couple of years, several companies have done

public issues of Rs 15,000-21,000 crore (LIC, Adani, Vodafone, etc). As recently as a decade ago, mutual fund companies managed sums equal to less than an eighth of bank deposits; that share has doubled to more than a quarter. The next five years could see India add more to its GDP, in absolute numbers, than it has done in the last 10. And yet, there is no story in India without a counter-story. The production of consumer durables has not increased at all compared to seven years earlier, and has gone up by an annual average of just 2.8 per cent for non-durables. Clearly, consumers are financially stressed, especially in the lower rungs of the income ladder — probably reflecting the lack of enough work on good wages. Only when that changes will the economy be able to get to the 7-plus per cent rate that once marked out the truly high-growth economies.

## Ahead of the curve

HP raises girls' marriage age before Central verdict

HIMACHAL Pradesh's move to raise the legal age of marriage for girls from 18 to 21 years through the Prohibition of Child Marriage (Himachal Pradesh Amendment) Bill 2024 has sparked a debate, particularly given the ongoing national discussions on this issue. With the Central Government's Prohibition of Child Marriage (Amendment) Bill still under review by a parliamentary panel, HP's law raises questions about the implications of pre-empting the panel's findings. The panel, tasked with examining the Central Bill that also raised the girls' age for marriage to 21, is deliberating on the matter. Its report is expected to address various concerns, including cultural sensitivities, socioeconomic factors and the potential impact on women's rights and personal freedoms. The HP decision to act independently is both progressive and precipitous. On one hand, the state's



proactive stance highlights its commitment to gender equality and empowerment of young women. By aligning the marriage age of women with that of men, the law aims

to provide them equal opportunities for education and personal development, free from the pressures of early marriage. However, this move also risks creating legal and social discrepancies if the parliamentary panel's report suggests a different approach or additional safeguards. The national legislation, once enacted, would supersede state laws, potentially leading to confusion and the need for amendments. The timing of HP's law undermines the broader consultative process that the parliamentary panel is engaged in, which seeks to balance diverse perspectives and ensure that the law is inclusive and well-considered.

While the HP law is a bold step, it underscores the importance of awaiting a comprehensive, nationally consistent approach that takes into account the complexities of implementing such a significant change across India's varied social landscape.

## Farmers need assured prices to withstand market shocks

The only plausible way to pull the farmers out of perpetual poverty is by ensuring a legally binding framework for guaranteeing farm prices.

IT is called the pension reform. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said that the Unified Pension Scheme (UPS) ensures dignity and financial security for government employees. "We are proud of the hard work of all government employees who contribute significantly to national progress," he said. In reality, the UPS — which assures a pension equivalent to 50 per cent of the last drawn salary — is an acknowledgement that the earlier market-linked New Pension Scheme had not worked for government employees. To assure a 'defined benefit' for government employees, the Union Cabinet tweaked the pension scheme to ensure that the retirees do not have to face the tyranny of the markets. While the PM has also applauded the country's farmers on a number of occasions and has often admired the resilience demonstrated by the farming community, there have been no takers for their long-pending demand for guaranteed prices. If markets have failed for retired employees, let me make it clear that markets have also failed for farmers. If employees need an assured pension, farmers also need an assured price. Nowhere in the world have markets ensured a higher income for farmers. In the major economies, either the subsidy fills the income gap (China has emerged at the top in providing agricultural subsidies) or agriculture is conveniently left at the mercy of market forces, like in India. The result, as some studies have shown, is not only that Indian farmers are at the bottom of the pyramid but also that they have been incurring losses year after year for nearly 25 years now.

The only plausible way to pull the farmers out of perpetual poverty is by ensuring a legally binding framework for guaranteeing farm prices. Regardless, the NDA government had sworn in an affidavit before the Supreme Court some years back that a law

to guarantee a minimum support price (MSP) would distort the markets. Strangely, when it comes to farmers, policymakers raise the bogey of assured prices distorting markets. For employees, everyone is fine with an assured pension; the fear of distorting markets suddenly disappears.

While mainline economists believe that a legal MSP will jack up consumer prices and thereby distort markets, in reality, it will squeeze corporate profits, and hence the outcry. Strangely, the same breed of free-market economists remain quiet when corporates in America go in for 'price gouging' — jacking up prices to rip off the consumers. This actually is price distortion. Already, 38 states, including California, Florida and New York, have brought in laws that prohibit the practice. For instance, the state of New York went against companies that had hiked the prices of hand sanitisers by 400 per cent during the pandemic. And yet, many market economists have called such checks on visible market distortions a return to Soviet-style price controls. The bias in favour of markets crops up when farmers have to be provided with economic security, but not when corporates jack up prices to extract their pound of flesh. This double speak on market distortion is coming in the way of providing farmers with a living income. As I have said before, markets will automatically adjust to the assured prices for farmers. It is only the ideology that is coming in the way. US Vice-President Kamala Harris has called for a ban on corporate price gouging, which alone is responsible for a 53 per cent increase in the prices of food and grocery items since the pandemic. Republicans have called her position on it



'communist'. Whatever the right wing may say, there is no denying, as some economists have acknowledged, that a ban on price gouging is good economics as well as good politics. Harris has promised action against companies that are keeping food prices artificially high.

Returning to the employees' pension, it is interesting to see the Department of Expenditure make an all-out effort to justify the decision, terming it 'fiscally prudent' and claiming that "it will be preventing fiscal hardship to future generations of citizens." Certainly, there is no one against an assured pension for employees. But if the employees can be assured of social security, there is no reason why economic security cannot be assured for farmers. They also contribute significantly to the national progress, and it is because of their relentless hard work that the country has food security. When Kamlesh Patidar a

farmer from Madhya Pradesh's Mandsaur district, re-ploughed his standing soybean crop on 10 acres, he did not realise that it would trigger a chain reaction. Just few days after a video of the incident went viral, reports of several anguished farmers uprooting the crop poured in. The crash in soybean prices — and that too, a month and a half before the harvesting season — has negated another economic belief that suggests farmers should hold on to harvest till the time they can realise a better price. Patidar had saved his last year's harvest in the hope of getting a higher price later. But even that did not work.

While the ruling soybean prices have dropped to a level that existed 12 years back, the destruction of farm livelihoods leaves hundreds of thousands of soybean farmers seething with anger. The prices, which are much lower than the MSP, are not even enough to cover the production costs. I wonder when we will have an assured price policy for farmers that will prevent fiscal hardship for not only future generations of farmers but also the present one. Soon thereafter, reports about tomato prices crashing by 60 per cent to a low of Rs 300 per crate of 25 kg poured in. And then came news reports about basmati prices falling by 28 per cent to Rs 2,500 per quintal. It is not something unique happening this year; it has emerged as a painful annual trend that the nation does not feel concerned about. Providing a legally guaranteed MSP to farmers who have marketable surplus and providing direct income support to marginal farmers is the big reform that agriculture awaits.



# Make your Kitchen a sleek and stylish Space

**Your kitchen should be a sleek and stylish space. Here are some simple tips you need to keep in mind when you are choosing a modular kitchen.**

Yet stylish - that is what modular kitchens are all about. These kitchens not only make cooking convenient and efficient, they also make your kitchen look like a happier and fun place to be in. Modern modular kitchen furniture include various units of cabinets, each designed for a unique purpose, so it increases your efficiency. Pick one that has the most appropriate design to suit your particular needs. Here are some simple tips you need to keep in mind when you are choosing a modular kitchen...

**Know your Budget**

With the variety available these days, you could easily tend to overspend. So, it is best to decide on a budget before you go out shopping for your modular kitchen. There are small-budget kitchens also available that do not compromise on functionality. And of course, there are very high-budget kitchens that are glamorous.

**You need to plan well**

Measure the exact area and also keep in mind the layout and kind of space you have in your kitchen before you go out looking for a modular kitchen set-up. An important thing that you need to bear in mind is what your specific needs are - do you need a built-in hob, or would just a simple oven work? Do you need a microwave oven or grill? What kind of chimney do you want and how much space are you allocating for it? Would you opt for an L-shaped kitchen counter or would you need a kitchen island?

**Wood you?**



What would you choose - there is a variety of designs and materials available right from the more contemporary steel and glass, to the classic wood and stone. It would be wise to choose something that not just looks nice but is also sturdy and long-lasting. Another thing you need to keep in mind is that it should be easy to clean.

**Size it up**

Keep comfort in mind when you are selecting your modular kitchen. The cabinets that you get installed in your kitchen should be within your reach. You should be able to use them without straining yourself unnecessarily.

**Flashy or functional**

When you are selecting decorations and fixtures for your kitchen, you should ideally look for designs that are functional. The decorations should not obstruct your free movement in the kitchen.

**Does it Cater to your needs?**

Your modular kitchen should have cabinets and drawers that cater to your daily and specific cooking needs in the kitchen. Ideally, separate racks and storage units for your cutlery should be built. You should have your ovens and other electrical appliances fitted in according to your needs.

**Light right**

When you are getting your kitchen installed, make sure you know where you want the lights. If you have a large window in the kitchen, you should install your kitchen in a way that it does not get blocked - a dark kitchen area can hinder energies. It is a good idea to use accent lights, wherever needed. Under-cabinet lighting is also essential for your work area.

1. Anyone with the interest and little space for growing plants, even on a window-sill or balcony can build and enjoy Bonsai collection.
2. The 3 main techniques to grow your own Bonsai plants are growing, pruning and shaping.

**Growing-** select a tree from a nursery which has a thick trunk. take a small ceramic container to plant the bonsai - usually the depth of the pot should be equal to the thickness of the trunk of the plant. Place a plastic net at the base of the container, so that water can drain out. Now add the specially prepared bonsai soil made of garden soil, cow manure, broken brick pieces, sand and organic manure (available in the market). Trim 1/2 to 1/3rd of the existing roots of the plant, leaving most of the thin white roots (known as feeder roots) and some old thick roots. Plant the tree into the pot. NOTE- materials matter, so if the soil good, the bonsai will take few months or even a year to grow, and two years for fruits to flower

**Pruning:** Generally, you have to prune the roots and the foliage. Pruning bonsais is one of the more enjoyable aspects of growing bonsais.

**Pruning roots:** Due to small containers, bonsai roots are stunted in growth. By pruning roots, you will ensure that there is space for the new roots to grow, which is critical for the health and growth of the bonsai. Prune roots twice a year and change the soil when it's done.

**Pruning Foliage:** This is vital for aesthetic purposes. Workout a specific design in the mind for your tree and shape it into the form you desire. Removing dead leaves help keep it healthy and beautiful.

**Shaping:** To create a desired shape, you can use a wire (copper wires are the best) to assist the branches to grow as per your design. Make sure that the wire is of the right thickness and does not break the branches. Hold the branch you are wiring in both hands and carefully wind the wire around it.

3. Select the plants which can be easily trimmed and shaped, and ones with a rough bark.
4. For the flower and fruit bonsais, four to five hours of direct sunlight is essential.
5. Avoid too much of watering. Alternate days are good enough.
6. Ready-made bonsais are available. Plant them into containers with the given steps
7. Bonsais are kept indoors, but a suitable place is on the window sill, balcony, terrace or a garden shelf. Avoid keeping them in an A/C room for long.
8. Although Bonsai trees can be grown from seeds ,

Beginners guide to Bonsai

## Bonsai



**You can make your bonsai into master pieces provided you follow the right techniques. We list down the basics of bonsai.**

more developed material is already available. Seedlings, cuttings or young trees with smaller leaves are usually preferred.



# Acid attack, rain, and a gangrape-murder that shook Bengal 42 years ago

A cold-blooded gangrape and murder on a rainy June night in 1982 left the town of Cooch Behar, in West Bengal, scarred forever.

**New Delhi:** June in Cooch Behar is the month of incessant rain. It was the June of 1982. The Jyoti Basu government had just come to power. CPI(M) was at the peak of prominence in the state of West Bengal. Up north, a young woman had left her Balurghat home and moved to Cooch Behar for a government job. She was employed as the staff nurse at the state-run Maharaja Jitendra Narayan Hospital. She lived on rent with her sister and brother-in-law in a small house off an old post office in the town. The para, or locality, was known by that post office. Like every other workday, she came home in the evening. It was raining cats and dogs, like it is with rain in North Bengal.

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the state of West Bengal. Up north, a young woman had left her Balurghat home and moved to Cooch Behar for a government job. She was employed as the staff nurse at the state-run Maharaja Jitendra Narayan Hospital. She lived on rent with her sister and brother-in-law in a small house off an old post office in the town. The para, or locality, was known by that post office. Like every other workday, she came home in the evening. It was raining cats and dogs, like it is with rain in North Bengal.

It rained all night that June day, and it rained through the next day. The roads of the town were inundated. The nurse's neighbours raised an alarm early in the morning. They found her naked, half-dead, unable to speak, allegedly gangraped. Her throat was scalded. Her private parts burnt. A bottle of acid had been poured into her mouth



through a Ryle's tube to ensure she never identified her rapists. The same acid was used to wipe off all physical marks of the rape. The tin roof of her home swallowed her cries that night. The rain was just too loud. A few good men hailed a cycle-rickshaw and helped her still-alive body on to it. They then pushed the rickshaw for a kilometre, through the knee-deep water of that June day, to MJN Hospital. She was admitted to her workplace. Sometime later, she died. The long arm of law caught hold of

ten men but justice was many miles away. Of these ten, three served a ten-year jail term. They then secured bail from a higher court. The other seven were let go. The main men behind the crime were allegedly very powerful, very close to the ruling government. Their power and the people in power shielded them from the blind eyes of justice. Her screams, once silenced by the rain and a bottle of acid, were silenced again in the courts of justice. Some of the real perpetrators were also interrogated by the police. But the power of the party in power reigned supreme. They had to be let go. No police officer in-charge was allowed to speak on the record. Questions posed to them were met with sad, wistful smiles.

This was a time before mobile phones were mainstream, and social media the mainstay of people. Cooch Behar was not a place that

usually needed many journalists. Nothing really happened in that small town. So, when the story finally made it to a fledgling daily called Uttar Banga Sambad the next day, public rage spilled on to the streets.

Cooch Behar reclaimed the voice of the girl who was gangraped, killed in cold blood, doused in acid. But all of the town's cries fell on the deaf ears of blind justice. A few days later, the nurse's grief-stricken father breathed his last. Her sister and brother-in-law are still waiting for justice for their bright-eyed girl, forty-two years later. The town has seen forty-two Junes, eight governments, three chief ministers, and two political parties in power since then. It has seen inundated roads and government apathy. It still rains cats and dogs every June. Every oldtimer in the town sighs, cries, shakes their head when that June is brought up.

## Bengal Governor meets Amit Shah, discusses Kolkata rape-murder case

**New Delhi:** West Bengal Governor CV Ananda Bose met Union Home Minister Amit Shah today at his residence to discuss the law and order situation in the state in the light of the rape and murder of a Kolkata trainee doctor at RG Kar hospital in Kolkata. The meeting continued for nearly an hour. According to sources, the Governor provided detailed information on the current situation in West Bengal. Protests erupted nationwide, particularly in Kolkata, over the trainee doctor's rape and murder, with protesters demanding swift action in the case. In Kolkata, protesting university students led the crowds, on August 27, in breaking through barricades set up by security forces to demand the resignation of West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee for her handling of the case.

The governor arrived in Delhi yesterday evening for the scheduled meeting. Last week, Governor CV Ananda Bose also met with President Droupadi Murmu and Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar to brief them on the RG Kar incident and the subsequent events that unfolded in the state.

The body of the woman postgraduate trainee was found in a seminar hall at the hospital on August 9 morning. A civic volunteer, Sanjay Roy, was arrested the next day in connection with the crime. The Kolkata Police and hospital administration were criticised for their handling of the trainee doctor's case, with the Supreme Court highlighting the 14-hour delay in filing of the FIR. The case is now being probed by the Central Bureau of Investigation.

## Revanth Reddy regrets remarks on K Kavitha's bail: Highest regard for judiciary

**New Delhi:** Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy on Friday apologised for his remarks about the bail granted to Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) leader K Kavitha in the Delhi liquor policy case. This comes a day after the Supreme Court reprimanded him for his comments about a 'deal' between the BJP and the BRS for securing bail for Kavitha. In a post on X, Reddy wrote that he has "the highest regard and full faith" in the Indian Judiciary. "I understand that certain press reports dated 29th August, 2024 containing comments attributed to me have given the impression that I am questioning the judicial wisdom of the Hon'ble Court. I reiterate that I am a firm believer of the judicial process. I unconditionally express my regret for the statements reflected in the press reports," the Telangana Chief Minister wrote.

The Congress leader alleged that his comments were "taken out of context" and stressed that he has "unconditional respect and the highest regard for the Judiciary and its independence". The Supreme Court granted bail to K Kavitha in the Delhi excise policy scam case on August 27, observing that prolonged incarceration before being pronounced guilty of an offence should not be permitted to become a punishment without trial. After the court verdict, the Telangana Chief Minister commented, "It is a fact that BRS worked for the victory of the BJP in the 2024 LS polls. There is also talk that Kavitha got bail because of the deal between BRS and BJP". Strongly criticising these comments, the Supreme Court on Thursday observed that such statements might create apprehensions in the minds of people. "Do we pass orders after consultations with political parties?" the court asked angrily, voicing displeasure. "Have you read in the newspaper what he said? Just read what he has stated. What sort of statement is this by a responsible chief minister. That might rightly create apprehension in the minds of people. Is this a kind of statement which should be made by a chief minister? A constitutional functionary is speaking in this manner," a three-judge bench headed by Justice B R Gavai told senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for Reddy. The bench continued, "Why should they drag court in political rivalry? Do we pass orders after consultations with political parties? We are not bothered by politicians or if anybody criticises our orders. We do our duty as per conscience and oath".

## Over a dozen leaders from AAP, BJP join Congress ahead of Delhi Assembly polls

**New Delhi:** More than a dozen leaders from the BJP and AAP joined the Congress in Delhi on Thursday ahead of next year's Assembly polls. At a ceremony held at Rajiv Bhawan, the headquarters of the Congress's Delhi unit, leaders from the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) formally joined the Congress and were welcomed by Delhi Congress chief Devender Yadav.

"Leaders from both BJP and AAP, along with their supporters, are transitioning to the Congress, motivated by the party's progressive

policies and the strong leadership of Mallikarjun Kharge and Rahul Gandhi," Yadav said. During the



event, Yadav specifically welcomed Amarlatha Sangwan, a former councillor and MLA candidate from Timarpur, back to the Congress fold.

"Sangwan will strengthen the party's position. She criticised the BJP's communal politics and lack of focus on public welfare," Yadav said.

Several senior Congress members, including former MLA Anil Bhardwaj, Communication Department Chairman Kunwar Karan Singh and other veteran Delhi Congress leaders, were present at the function. With the upcoming Assembly elections in sight, the Congress is working to regain its voter base by targeting the AAP government. The party plans to soon launch a campaign highlighting its 15-year rule in Delhi.

## Feel nauseous when I sit with Ajit Pawar: Row over Shinde Sena leader's remark

**Dharashiv:** A leader of the Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena said on Thursday that the party's proximity to the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) made him vomit, calling it an "allergic reaction". Shiv Sena leader Tanaji Sawant stirred a controversy when he stated that he had never agreed with the NCP throughout his life. He likened his relationship with the NCP to "sitting on their lap but feeling nauseous as soon as I get up". Tanaji Sawant's remarks sharp reaction from the Nationalist Congress Party. NCP spokesperson and Member of Legislative Council (MLC) Amol Mitkari condemned Sawant's remark and asked whether it was the responsibility of only his party to keep the alliance intact. "We are quite only to maintain the

coalition dharma. It is only the chief minister who can treat his nausea," the NCP leader said. Speaking at an event, Tanaji Sawant had said, "I am a



Shiv Sainik. It is true that in our lives, we have never gotten along with the Congress or the NCP. It's like an allergic reaction, where just the mere presence causes discomfort and nausea. The ideologies are completely different, and therefore, it

is not possible to be in agreement with them". He went on to add, "Even when I sit together in the cabinet with NCP chief Ajit Pawar, as soon as I step outside, I feel nauseous. It is something that cannot be tolerated, and at the age of 60, it is not something that cannot be changed. We are committed to our principles".

Tanaji Sawant's recent remarks have sparked concerns of a significant dispute within the Maha Vikas Aghadi coalition. This isn't the first time Tanaji Sawant has been at the center of controversy. Last year, a video surfaced showing him allegedly pressuring a senior police officer in Dharashiv (Osmanabad) district to transfer a police inspector, causing widespread debate and criticism.

## BJP 'forcing' Chief Secretary to quit, appoint Eknath Shinde aide: Aaditya Thackeray

**Mumbai:** Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Aaditya Thackeray on Thursday slammed the Maharashtra government over reports on removing the state's first woman Chief Secretary with someone with the backing of Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and invoked President Droupadi Murmu's recent statement on women's safety while speaking about the rape-murder of a trainee doctor in Kolkata. Thackeray's reaction came after Maharashtra Congress leader Sachin Sawant shared local reports that claimed that Chief Secretary Sujata Saunik could be replaced with former Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) chief Iqbal Singh Chahal, who was recently appointed Additional Chief Secretary (Home), and facing corruption allegations. "Just as the President of India, Murmuji, speaks about countering the mindset that sees women as 'less powerful, less capable' and reports state that the BJP-Mindhe



government in Maharashtra is working on making Chief Secretary Sujata Saunik ji resign even before her tenure ends, to accommodate one of their favorites who can help BJP loot Maharashtra," Thackeray tweeted. "What a shame! Why should she resign before her tenure ends? Only because the illegal Chief Minister and BJP want their man who can give contracts to their ladka (male) contractors? This is the same mindhe-BJP mindset that tries to lure women votes through Ladki Bahin, but

has cabinet ministers who have been accused of crimes against women," he alleged. Earlier, Sawant alleged that a reported move was being made to appoint Saunik as the state election commissioner and pressure her to make way for Chahal in her place. He questioned whether this was being done to facilitate Chahal's appointment as the Chief Minister with the help of a confidant of Shinde. Notably, Chahal has been embroiled in several scams, including the alleged irregularities in contracts for Covid care centres during the pandemic. His recent appointment as the Additional Chief Secretary (Home) in the state government snowballed into a controversy, with the Opposition slamming the move. Sawant also cited the transfer of IAS officer V Radha from the agriculture department due to alleged disagreements with Agriculture Minister Dhananjay Munde, who belongs to the Ajit Pawar faction of the NCP, which is a part of the Shinde-led government. His

allegations came against the backdrop of the post of the Maharashtra Election Commission that will become vacant following the completion of five years by retired IAS officer UPS Madan. For the new commissioner, the names of retired IAS officers Manoj Saunik (Sujata's husband), Nitin Kareer and Shrikant Deshpande, and serving IAS officers Rajiv Jalota and Rajgopal Deora are doing the rounds. According to sources, Saunik is reportedly not very interested and has not yet applied for the post of state election commissioner.

Saunik, a 1987 IAS officer, became the first woman Chief Secretary of the state on June 30 and her term is till May 31, 2025, when she will turn 60. If she is appointed as the state election commissioner, she will get a term of five years. Born on June 15, 1965, Saunik is a resident of Haryana. Her husband, Manoj Saunik, is a resident of Bihar and both are IAS officers of the same batch. Manoj Saunik earlier served as the Maharashtra Chief Secretary.

## Rights body's notice to Kolkata cops over 'barbaric' action on Nabanna protesters

**New Delhi:** The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) on Friday issued a notice to Kolkata Police seeking a report on the "barbaric" and "brutal" assault on the protesters during the 'Nabanna Abhijan' rallies. In its notice, issued to the Kolkata Police Commissioner, the human rights body has sought an "action taken" report in 14 days. On August 27, the 'Nabanna Abhijan' march was called demanding justice for the 31-year-old trainee doctor, capital punishment for the culprit, and the resignation of West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee.

Large-scale violence was reported in Kolkata



and adjacent Howrah during the 'Nabanna Abhijan' protest march after protesters, aiming to reach the West Bengal state secretariat, Nabanna, fought pitched battles with the police at multiple stoppage points. The violence, which lasted for nearly four hours, led to several injuries on both sides, with senior police officers and women protesters among those who were hurt.

After the protest, more than 200 people were arrested from across the state by the police.

Police resorted to large-scale lathi-charge, unleashed water cannons and lobbed tear gas shells to disperse the aggressive crowd who poured in from multiple converging points at Nabanna. The 'Nabanna Abhijan' call was given by an unregistered student body 'Paschim Banga Chhatra Samaj' and a dissident state government employees' platform 'Sangrami Joutha Mancha' who demanded the resignation of state Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee over the alleged rape-murder of a medic at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital on August 9.



**"add a pop of colours"**  
 Raseel Gujral Ansal, interior designer  
 Festivities and celebration call for a splash of colour. Wallpapers with coordinated textiles and show plates brighten up your home in a jiffy. The aesthetics in wallpapers have evolved from an Occidental vocabulary to strong graphic prints and colours to emote the soul of the space. The right wallpaper can work magic.  
 Muted pastels in furniture can be brightened up with bejewelled photo frames, pop-colour candles, side tables and statement accessories – all adding a touch of elegance. Opt for candles in different shapes and sizes in different corners. Using digitally-printed side tables, bright cushions, quirky lamp shades and colourful crockery adds a new persona to your home. Fresh flowers and the fragrance of lavender is a great way to freshen up ones home. From orange sunsets and Mediterranean blues to the verdant palms and striking pink flamingoes, each shade conveys an emotion as rich as the décor it is set in.  
 "Make sure your home is always well-ventilated"  
 Anu Malhotra, filmmaker and artist  
 I like my home to be fresh, harmonious and positive. For that I use 'dhuna/loban' everyday, using frankincense, benzoin and sandalwood resins. There are crystals in every room for good energy. I use a

# Textiles in the verandah!

homemade room spray with essential oils of lavender, eucalyptus, lemon grass and sandalwood. There are indoor plants and fresh flowers in every room. I also ensure that the entire home is always well-ventilated. Essential oils of lavender is used in the mopping water instead of chemical cleaners. The home is kept mosquito free with home made spray and vaporiser of essential oils (made out of citronella, lavender and lemon grass).  
 "I hang a reversible jamavar in my verandahs"  
 Pranavi Kapur, designer  
 I like to energise and redo my home with textiles that I've collected over the years. For me, festivity is displaying the Jamavar paisely, the 19th century table cover that I cherish. Or, I

use old collectables to create a buzz. For instance, I like to display the Tree of Life embroidered on a woollen namda (felted rugs) – which is my treasure – on a wall. I hang a reversible jamavar in my verandahs... It's my way of celebrating my home with things I love.  
**"I USE A LOT OF MARGOLD AT THE ENTRANCE"**  
 Ramneek Pantal, model  
 For Diwali, it starts with the regular cleaning and putting up door hangings. I fill the house with fresh flowers, candles and lights. I use a lot of marigold at the entrance and throw colourful cushions to make my living space look bright. Incense sticks with scented oils for fresh aroma work wonders.



**"Sight, Smell AND Sound AS IMPORTANT AS SPACE"**  
 Ashiesh Shah, celebrity interior designer  
 I work on the principle of 4S – Space, Sight, Smell and Sound – to re-energise any space. One must unclutter before redoing a space. Do a little festive cleaning. I add some festive colours and innovative lights to my existing

decor. I use local Indian flower fragrances, with mogra and jasmine. Invest in a good pair of speakers and keep your SoundCloud handy.  
**"My personal favourite are soy candles"**  
 Blossom Kochhar, beauty entrepreneur  
 It simply takes a few candles to make my home look cosy and elegant. Using candles can be a stimulating experience – it helps you to get in touch with your emotions better. My personal favourite are soy candles (non-toxic). You can also boost the energy of your space by using Tibetan bowls as bells. Essential oils remove dysfunctional energy from your home. Personally, I like basil oil in a diffuser. It's amazing how it can instantly uplift the feeling in a room or home. Use flowers instead of synthetic fragrances. Orange or rose fragrance are absolutely divine and can be used to create a peaceful, relaxing atmosphere instantly.



## Know the reason behind Diwali card parties

## 5 low-cost home Decor tips



It is that time of the year again when Diwali card parties are being held in most homes celebrating the festival.  
 As per the legend  
 Hindu mythology says that playing dice on the day of Diwali is very auspicious and the legend goes that once Goddess Parvati played dice with her husband Lord Shiva and enjoyed the game thoroughly. She was delighted and thus declared that whosoever plays dice on this day shall stay prosperous throughout the year. With the passing of time, the dice was replaced by cards and people organize card parties on this day, where friends and relatives get together and indulge in friendly gambling matches with limited stakes.  
**Reasons to have card parties**  
 Since the festival is all about getting together with the people you love the most, good food and celebrating life, there is no reason why not to continue with the tradition. Card parties are hosted ahead of Diwali to invite good fortune and prosperity. So try to get lady luck to smile on you and make a small fortune as you play the game of cards. This fun ritual usually takes place on the first night of Diwali, after the Laxmi puja.  
**Changing trends**  
 Nowadays, the trend is to have card parties before Diwali. With elaborate food and music arrangements, the card parties lead up to the main festival. Teen Patti is the most popular Diwali card game that has been played by families and friends together for years. However, instead of going for the usual game, make your card party a hit by playing unconventional variations of it this Diwali.



Not all of us have the luxury of living in an architect-designed home where everything is perfect. And not all of us have deep wallets to fix the many design lacks in our house. Here are some easy, low-cost ways to improve your home without restructuring it.  
 1. If you live in a home with a small living room, make it seem bigger with a striped carpet or a rug. The stripes will elongate  
 2. The best feature a room can have is natural light. If a room seems small, use a transparent curtain to let in as much natural light as possible to give it depth.  
 3. Mirrors are an old trick to make a room look bigger. Go ahead and be bold and fix a large mirror on a wall so that it reflects the entire room.  
 4. If you're living in a house with a low ceiling, furnish it with low furniture. This will immediately add height to a room.  
 5. To take your eyes away from the small dimensions of a room, dress up the ceiling with an exciting colour or wall paper on the ceiling.

## Moody's raises India's growth forecast to 7.2% from 6.8% for 2024

**NEW DELHI.** Moody's Ratings has revised India's growth forecast for 2024, increasing it from the previously projected 6.8% to 7.2%. This adjustment is based on expectations for a stronger rebound in private consumption. Meanwhile, for 2025, growth has been pegged at 6.6% from 6.4% previously. "These forecast changes assume strong broad-based growth and we recognise potentially higher forecasts if the cyclical momentum, especially for private consumption, gains more traction," the ratings agency said. As per Moody's, household consumption is set to rise as headline inflation approaches the RBI's target. It noted that indications of a resurgence in rural demand are already visible, driven by favorable agricultural output prospects due to above-average rainfall during the monsoon season. It highlighted that both the industrial and services sectors have shown robust performance, with the services Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) remaining consistently above 60 since the beginning of the year. Moody's said India's growth potential in the medium to long-term hinges on the country's ability to effectively utilise its large labour force. It believes the economy can achieve growth rates of 6-7% based on current conditions. "Global growth is stabilising and inflation in most markets is close to RBI targets. We expect global growth will slow to 2.7% and 2.5% in 2024 and 2025, respectively, from 3.0% in 2023, though growth trends differ across countries," Moody's said in its report. Meanwhile, Fitch Ratings has affirmed India's long-term foreign-currency issuer default rating (IDR) at BBB- with a stable outlook.

Consumption to rise

Moody's says household consumption will rise as headline inflation approaches RBI's target. It said indications of resurgence in rural demand are visible on favorable agricultural output prospects due to above-average rainfall during monsoon season

## SEBI official says discount broking is not future, requires transparent fee structure

**MUMBAI:** Hinting discount broking is not the way forward and that investors have to pay for their services as there can be no free lunches in business, a senior Sebi official has called for adopting an explicit and transparent fee structure. "Since brokers are not scheduled commercial banks, and do not have the full set of capital and other regulatory safeguards that banks have, from a transparency, efficiency, and risk perspective, we would all be better off if the implicit broking revenues from having client float balances were to eventually be replaced by explicit and transparent fees set in a competitive market," Sebi whole-time member Ananth Narayan G said here on Thursday at the ongoing global fintech summit. Stating that the securities ecosystem has come a long way, playing a stellar journey. "But in the medium term, we



still have a distance to go in our journey towards the same capital formation, where there are nearly 12 crore unique investors accessing capital markets via SEBI regulated entities, he said.

From 25% of GDP in March 1993, the BSE market capitalisation has risen to over 150% of GDP as of July 2024. "From less than 1 crore demat account holders as of March 2011, we are nearing 10 crore unique demat holders today. It is impossible to imagine all this happening if the transaction costs, inefficiencies, and risks of three decades ago persisted today," he said. He said "brokers together currently hold about 2 trillion of client funds on their books on a given day."

## Sugar Stocks Surge Up To 16% As Govt Allows Sugarcane Juice, Syrup For Ethanol Production

**NEW DELHI.** Shares of sugar and ethanol production companies on Friday surged up to 13 per cent on BSE after the Union government announced that it will allow sugar mills to use cane juice or syrup to produce ethanol, starting November 1, 2024. So far this year, Balrampur Chini, Bajaj Hindusthan, EID Parry, Rajshree Sugars, Triveni Engineering shares jumped up to 46 per cent, as compared to benchmark Nifty 50's 15 per cent rise.

Shares of Dalmia Bharat Sugar and Industries along with Globus Spirits also made their fresh 52-week highs of Rs 499.20 after rising 13 per cent and Rs 1,019.15 after surging 13.2 per cent respectively.

Other sugar company stocks that witnessed a surge in their share price were Dhampur Sugar Mills, Mawana Sugars, Rajshree Sugars & Chemicals and Dwarikesh Sugar Industries. The shares of these companies were also up by 7-9 per cent in an early trading session on BSE. Nearly all sugar companies saw their shares rise, with Dalmia Bharat Sugar, Shree Renuka Sugar, Triveni Engineering, and Bajaj Hindusthan climbing up to 16 per cent. The policy shift announced in a notification on August 29, 2024, removes the previous cap on sugar diversion for ethanol in addition to cane juice and syrup, the new policy permits the use of B-Heavy molasses and C-Heavy molasses for ethanol production. According to the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, "Sugar mills and distilleries are allowed to produce ethanol from sugarcane juice/sugar syrup, B-Heavy molasses as well as C-Heavy molasses during ESY 2024-25 as per the agreement with OMCS.

# UK's Aviva found guilty in \$26 million fake invoice scandal in India: Report

**New Delhi.** The Income Tax Department has accused British insurer Aviva of breaching local regulations by using a system of fake invoices and clandestine cash payments to bypass commission caps for sales agents, reported news agency Reuters. According to the report, this discovery was made by the Directorate General of GST Intelligence, which is responsible for monitoring indirect tax violations. The report, based on a notice sent to Aviva on August 3rd, revealed that the insurer's India business paid approximately \$26 million between 2017 and 2023 to entities that supposedly provided marketing and training services. However, the tax notice alleged that these vendors did not do any actual work. Instead, they served as a front for transferring funds to Aviva's agents, enabling the company to bypass regulatory limits on agent commissions.

The Directorate General of GST Intelligence described the situation as a "deep-rooted conspiracy," with Aviva and its officials allegedly using fake invoices

to divert funds to insurance distributors. "Aviva and its officials have indulged in a deep-rooted conspiracy and used the modus of fake invoices (without receipt of services) to pass on certain money to... insurance distributors of Aviva," investigators wrote in the notice, Reuters reported. Such "show cause" notices usually require companies to explain why authorities should not impose penalties for their actions. This case is part of a broader investigation involving over a dozen Indian insurers for allegedly evading \$610 million in unpaid taxes, interest, and penalties. The notice indicated that Aviva wrongly claimed tax credits on the \$26 million in fake invoices, thereby evading \$5.2 million in taxes. Aviva has not yet issued any statement on the development. A source familiar with the situation mentioned that the company intends to challenge the allegations but has not yet formally responded, reported Reuters. Alleged fake invoices and cash payments The tax agency's 205-page report included emails



and WhatsApp messages between Aviva executives and insurance distributors, discussing ways to circumvent compensation regulations.

The report also summarised interviews conducted by tax officials, including one with Aviva India's Chief Financial Officer, Sonali Athalye, who explained the process of making the payments.

One significant finding was an email from 2019, in which Trevor Bull, the then-CEO of Aviva India, was copied. The email discussed payments exceeding regulatory limits, indicating that senior management was aware of these practices. Both Bull and Athalye, along with Indian tax and

insurance authorities, did not respond to requests for comment. The tax notice stated that Aviva could face penalties amounting to roughly \$11 million, a sum equivalent to its 2023 profit from life insurance sales in India. Aviva operates in India through a joint venture with Dabur Invest Corp, a well-known local firm. Aviva holds a 74% stake in the business, which it increased from 49% in 2022. Despite being a relatively small market for Aviva, India is considered a growth market by the company, given its status as the world's most populous nation. India's life insurance sector, though competitive, represents a smaller portion of the national GDP compared to the UK. Data from India's insurance regulator shows that life insurance premiums accounted for 3% of the national GDP, whereas the figure in Britain stands at 8.1%. The tax notice suggested that Aviva's actions were part of a broader strategy to increase its market share in this challenging environment.

## Reliance bonus issue: What is it and how will it benefit RIL shareholders

**New Delhi** Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) is gearing up to reward its shareholders with a 1:1 bonus share issue, marking the sixth such gesture in the company's history. The announcement by RIL Chairman Mukesh Ambani during the company's Annual General Meeting (AGM) is seen as a strategic move to enhance liquidity and broaden investor participation in Reliance's stock.

What is a bonus issue?

A bonus issue, also known as a bonus share issue, occurs when a company distributes additional shares to its existing shareholders at no cost to them. These shares are issued out of the company's accumulated reserves or profits, converting a portion of the company's retained earnings into share capital. The process increases the total number of shares held by shareholders but does not change the overall value of their holdings, as the share price adjusts



proportionately. The main purpose of a bonus issue is to make the shares more affordable and liquid, which can attract more investors and enhance marketability.

What does it mean for RIL investors?

For investors, this means that for every share they currently hold, they will

receive an additional share, effectively doubling their holdings without any additional investment. The bonus issue, which will be considered on September 5, is expected to not only boost investor confidence but also improve the stock's liquidity, making it more accessible to a wider base of investors. Historically, Reliance has consistently rewarded its shareholders with bonus shares, with previous issues in 1980, 1983, 1997, 2009, and 2017. The upcoming bonus issue is in line with Reliance's long-standing tradition of sharing its growth and success with its shareholders. While the number of shares an investor holds will increase, the overall value of their investment remains the same as the share price adjusts to account for the additional shares.

## Jio creating one of most advanced 5G networks: Ambani

**NEW DELHI.** Reliance Jio has transformed India from 5G-dark to 5G-bright, creating one of the world's most advanced 5G networks, said Mukesh Ambani, chairman and managing director of Reliance Industries.

Ambani, speaking at its Annual General Meeting, mentioned that the 5G services provided by the company have achieved the world's fastest 5G adoption, and in just two years, over 130 million users have embraced 5G services. Ambani added that India is now the world's largest data market.

"Jio's network carries nearly 8% of global mobile traffic, surpassing even major global operators, including those in developed markets," he said. Over 85% of the 5G radio cells operating in India belong to Jio.

It announced the launch of its AI tool Jio Brain to streamline AI adoption in October. Ambani said Jio Brain will enable it to accelerate AI adoption



across Jio, driving faster decisions, more accurate predictions, and a better understanding of customer needs. The chairman announced Jio AI-Cloud Welcome offer, which will provide up to 100 GB free cloud storage to

consumers. The offer is set to launch starting Diwali this year. "We are thrilled to announce the Jio AI-Cloud Welcome offer. Jio users will get up to 100 GB of free cloud storage to securely store and access their photos, videos, documents, and other content. We plan to launch Jio AI-Cloud Welcome offer starting Diwali this year." RIL has spent over Rs 3,643 crore (\$437 mn) in FY24 towards R&D, taking its total research spend to over Rs 11,000 crore (\$1.5 bn) in the last four years. It has filed over 2,555 patents, mainly in areas such as bio-energy, solar energy, and high-value chemicals. It has filed patents in 6G, 5G, AI large language models, AI deep learning, big data, devices, Internet of Things, and narrowband IoT.

# 'Jan Dhan Yojana pivotal in boosting financial inclusion': PM Modi

**Speaking at the Global Fintech Fest (GFF), he mentioned how the scheme has been a game-changer in ensuring that banking services reach every corner of the country.**

**NEW DELHI.** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday highlighted the crucial role of the Jan Dhan Yojana in boosting financial inclusion across India. Speaking at the Global Fintech Fest (GFF), he mentioned how the scheme has been a game-changer in ensuring that banking services reach every corner of the country. PM Modi mentioned that the Jan Dhan Yojana has not only brought more people into the formal banking system but has also empowered women significantly. He said that over the past decade, more than 29 crore bank accounts have been opened for women under the scheme, which has enabled them to save money and make investments, thereby

giving them more control over their finances. The Prime Minister pointed out that the combination of affordable mobile phones, cheaper data, and zero balance Jan Dhan accounts has been transformative. "Cheaper phones and data, along with zero balance Jan Dhan accounts, have created wonders," he said, underlining the impact these factors have had on financial inclusion. PM Modi also discussed the success of the MUDRA loans, which have played a key role in supporting small businesses across the country.

He shared that Rs 27 trillion in credit has been disbursed through MUDRA loans, with women accounting for 70% of the beneficiaries. This highlights the significant role that financial inclusion schemes like Jan Dhan and MUDRA are playing in empowering women entrepreneurs. The Prime Minister also praised the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) system, calling it a shining example of India's FinTech success. He said that UPI has made digital payments

accessible to everyone, whether they live in a village or a city. "In the whole world, India's UPI has become a great example of FinTech. Today, whether it is a village or a city, whether it is cold or hot, whether



it is raining or snowing, in India, banking service continues for 24 hours, 7 days, and 12 months," he said.

PM Modi further remarked on how the world is amazed by India's fintech diversity, adding that the country's fintech revolution is not only improving financial inclusion but also driving

innovation. He mentioned that the market is currently in a "festive mood," reflecting the positive sentiment around India's fintech achievements. During his speech, PM Modi also shared that the

fintech industry in India has attracted over \$31 billion in investment over the last decade. He highlighted the impressive growth of startups in this sector, noting that they have recorded a growth of over 500%. The availability of cheap data, mobile phones, and the widespread adoption of zero balance Jan Dhan accounts have been instrumental in this rapid growth. Looking ahead, the Prime Minister expressed

optimism about the future of India's fintech sector, stating, "The best is yet to come."

He also urged fintech regulators to focus on key areas such as preventing cyber fraud and increasing digital awareness among the public.



disruption. Rebranding of aircraft: From November 12, 2024, all Vistara aircraft will be operated under the Air India brand, effectively ending Vistara's independent operations.

Seamless transition: Both airlines are committed to ensuring a smooth transition with minimal impact on flight schedules and services during the rebranding process. FAQs and guidance: Comprehensive FAQs will be available on Vistara's website to help customers navigate the changes. Support channels: Both airlines will actively communicate updates through their websites, social media, and emails to keep customers informed and supported throughout the transition. Enhanced service offerings: The merger is expected to provide customers with more travel options, an expanded fleet, and a unified loyalty program.

Continued availability: Vistara will continue to accept bookings and operate flights until November 11, 2024, ensuring no immediate

NEWS BOX

**Sophie Devine to resign as New Zealand T20I skipper after Women's T20 World Cup**



**New Delhi.** Sophie Devine will step down as the New Zealand T20I skipper after the upcoming T20 World Cup in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The 34-year-old all-rounder has led the White Ferns in 56 T20Is with 25 wins, 28 losses and one tied game. She led the national team in a few games from 2014-15 before taking full charge from Amy Satterthwaite in 2020. Devine, who also plays for the Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) in the Women's Premier League (WPL), said that she wanted to take some "additional workload" off her shoulders and also help in the development of future leaders.

"I'm very proud to have had the privilege to captain the White Ferns in both formats. With captaincy comes an additional workload that, while I've enjoyed taking on, can also be challenging at times," Devine said in a statement. "Stepping away from the T20 captaincy will take a bit off my plate so I can focus more of my energy on my playing role and nurturing the future leaders," she said. Not ready to give up ODI captaincy? Devine, however, will continue leading in ODIs with the 50-over World Cup scheduled to take place next year on Indian soil.

"I'm not ready to give up ODI captaincy just yet. But I won't be around forever, so I think stepping away from captaining one format at a time gives the next leaders time to find their feet," Devine added.

Devine recently played for Birmingham Phoenix in the Hundred Women's competition. She played six games in which she scored 117 runs with a top score of 37 and could not pick up a wicket from 13 overs. Devine is currently undergoing rehabilitation for her foot injury. New Zealand's campaign in the T20 World Cup is set to start on Friday, October 4 at Dubai International Cricket Stadium.

**ENG vs SL: Joe Root remembers Graham Thorpe after record-levelling ton at Lord's**

**New Delhi.** Star England batter Joe Root dedicated his record-breaking innings to late Graham Thorpe on Day 1 of the second Test against Sri Lanka at Lord's. Notably, Root scored a phenomenal 143 (206) to rescue England from early trouble after they were at 82/3 after being put in to bat first.

From there on, the 33-year-old stitched crucial partnerships with Harry Brook (33) and Gus Atkinson (74) to help his team reach a good score. Following his innings, Root remembered his long-term batting mentor and former England cricketer Graham Thorpe who died earlier this month. "I've been very lucky to work with a lot of people, whether it be senior players, coaches, mentors, and Thorpe was one of those people that offered me so much," Root was quoted as saying by ESPNcricinfo. Thorpe, who played 100 Tests and 82 ODIs for



England, took his own life earlier this month after a prolonged battle with anxiety. To honour the former batter, Root pointed out to the skies after completing his 33rd Test hundred. Speaking about the moment after the game, the Yorkshire-born cricketer recalled Thorpe's contributions in his career stressing upon the fact that he "wouldn't be here without him". "It was nice to be able to think of him in that moment. He's someone that I'm going to sorely miss. He put a lot into my game, into my career, and without his help I definitely wouldn't be where I am now," he added.

**Joe Root levels with Alastair Cook**

Notably, Thorpe also pushed for Root's selection in the England squad for the India tour in 2012 where he went on to make his debut in the fourth Test in Nagpur and scored a brilliant 73. Meanwhile, Root equaled Alastair Cook's record of scoring most Test hundreds for England levelling the former England captain with 33 centuries. It was also his sixth hundred at Lord's as he got levelled with Graham Gooch and Michael Vaughan who also have six hundreds each to their name at the historic venue. Courtesy of his innings, England finished Day 1 on 358/7 with Gus Atkinson (74\*) and Matthew Potts (20\*) at the crease.

# Tabraiz Shamsi slammed for poking fun at Suryakumar Yadav's T20 WC final catch

**South Africa spinner Tabraiz Shamsi was slammed by fans for poking fun at Suryakumar Yadav's incredible catch from the T20 World Cup 2024 final.**



**New Delhi.** South Africa spinner Tabraiz Shamsi was slammed by fans for poking fun at Suryakumar Yadav's iconic catch from the T20 World Cup 2024 final. Notably, the India cricketer took a phenomenal catch in the last over of the thrilling final to dismiss dangerous David Miller and turn the game in India's favour. However, some section of fans still questioned the legitimacy of the catch after the game using different camera angles. Two months after the nail-biting final in Barbados, Shamsi shared a hilarious video from a local cricket game in India where a fielder takes a close catch on the

boundary. However, the batters quickly run to check its legitimacy and use a rope to check whether he stepped onto the virtual boundary. After a prolonged inspection, it was found out that the catch was not clear hence the batters survived. Giving his take on the hilarious video, Shamsi made a light

remark saying that the method should've been used to check Suryakumar Yadav's catch which may have resulted in the decision in their favour. "If they used this method to check the catch in the world cup final maybe it would have

been given not out," wrote Shamsi on his X account. However, the comment didn't go down well with fans who slammed Shamsi for questioning the legitimacy of Suryakumar's catch. As a result, the wrist spinner had to clarify that he was joking.

"In case some people don't understand that it's meant to be a joke and no one is crying... let me explain it to you like a 4 year old child d'ya— It's A Joke," he added.

**India's incredible comeback in T20 World Cup final**

Coming back to the final, South Africa required 16 runs to win off the last six balls with David Miller at the crease. However, the southpaw hit a full toss from Hardik Pandya towards long off where Suryakumar Yadav showed great presence of mind to catch and quickly get rid of the ball before crossing the boundary and coming inside the boundary to catch it again. Courtesy of his fielding brilliance, India managed to see the back of David Miller and eventually win the match by seven runs ending their 11-year-long wait for an ICC Trophy.

**Naomi Osaka devastated after US Open 2024 exit: My heart dies every time I lose**

Naomi Osaka was heartbroken after she made an early exit from the US Open 2024. On Thursday, the 2-time champion crashed out after losing 3-6, 6-7 (5-7) to Karolina Muchova at the Arthur Ashe Stadium in the second round. Earlier on Wednesday, Osaka ended her three-year wait to win a match at Flushing Meadows after she beat 10th seed Jelena Ostapenko, who had beaten Iga Swiatek last year in the quarters. But against Muchova, the 2023 French Open finalist, Osaka could not have the last laugh. Osaka made her comeback this year after missing the previous edition of the tournament due to a maternity break. She admitted that she has found it a "little difficult" since returning from pregnancy. "I feel I'm coming back from pregnancy, but also it wasn't like in 2022 I was the best version of myself. In some way, I had to catch up to that and also I'm trying to pass it as the same time. It's been a little difficult," Osaka told the US Open press. Obviously I can only gauge how I'm doing by results. I feel faster. I feel better.



But I lost in the 2nd round so it's a little rough. But also it's been fun playing a lot of tournaments. It's been a commitment for sure. I've been able to go to different cities that I hadn't been to before," Osaka said. "It's tough because I take these losses personally. This is a dramatic word... but I feel like my heart dies every time I lose. It sucks a lot. But I've been trying to be more mature and learn and talk more about them," Osaka added.

Osaka made her return to Grand Slams earlier this year when she lost to France's Caroline Garcia in the opening round of the Australian Open. In the French Open, she ran Swiatek close and fetched a match point, but the latter won the second-round match to advance. Osaka also faltered at Wimbledon, where she could not go beyond the second round.

## PAK vs BAN: Ramiz Raja comes out in support of Babar Azam amid poor form

**New Delhi.** Former Pakistan cricketer and PCB (Pakistan Cricket Board) Chairman Ramiz Raja has come out in support of star batter Babar Azam who's experiencing poor form in recent times. Notably, Pakistan suffered a shocking 10-wicket loss against Bangladesh in the first Test at Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium, Rawalpindi.

Babar couldn't do much to save his team from a loss registering scores of 0 and 22. The former Pakistan captain was almost dismissed for a duck in the second innings as well but was given a reprieve by Litton Das. However, that didn't help Pakistan's cause as they succumbed to their maiden Test defeat against Bangladesh. Following their loss, there has been widespread criticism of Babar owing to his poor form. Ramiz Raja jumped to his defence and mentioned that his form has drawn scrutiny due to his massive stature in Pakistan cricket. He also highlighted that the emergence of social media has made players more susceptible to criticism which should be discouraged. "It seems the entire nation does not have a



problem with anything except the form of Babar Azam. Unfortunately, what happens is when you lose a match and you have not scored runs and if you are Babar Azam, then you become a headline - How did we lose? What did he do? What was his contribution? And then this is the era of social media. Anybody can criticize and ridicule anyone,

this should be discouraged as much as possible," Ramiz said on his YouTube channel.

Babar has been a big player in all three formats: Ramiz Raja

Further speaking ahead, Raja called Babar a stalwart of all three formats. "Cricket is in our blood but don't know for how long if we continue to lose matches like this in Test cricket. Fan following increases with wins and fans identify themselves with success stories. Babar Azam has had a famous success story. There is no doubt that he has been a big player in all three formats," he said. Babar is without a half-century in the last 14 innings of Test cricket having scored 289 runs in the same time period at an average of 20.64 with a highest score of 41. Courtesy of his prolonged period of low scores, the 29-year-old has slipped down six positions to be at number nine in the latest ICC Test batting rankings. He will be eager to make a comeback in the second Test as Pakistan will be desperate to avoid a series loss against the Bangla Tigers.

## Meet Botic van de Zandschulp, the man who stunned Carlos Alcaraz at US Open 2024

**New Delhi.** Botic van de Zandschulp of the Netherlands had a dream day after he handed World No. 3 Carlos Alcaraz a shock exit from the US Open 2024. Alcaraz, who was one of the strongest contenders to lift the men's singles title, could not go beyond the second round. It also happened to be his earliest exit in Grand Slams since Wimbledon 2021, when Daniil Medvedev beat him in straight sets.

advertisement  
On Thursday, it took Van de Zandschulp an hour and 19 minutes to beat the 21-year-old Alcaraz 6-1, 7-5, 6-4 at Arthur Ashe Stadium. Before their clash in the hard-court major, the Dutchman was 0-2 down against the Spaniard on the head-to-head count. In fact, he had not won a single set, going down in straight sets both times. Quite naturally, van de Zandschulp was "lost for words." "Actually, I'm a little lost for words. It's been an incredible evening. First time for me having a night

session on Arthur Ashe. The crowd was amazing. Thank you for that. Unbelievable night," van de Zandschulp said after the match. "I got a lot of confidence from the



last match. I played really solid the last match. From point I believed I could have a chance. You see how it sometimes turns out," Van de Zandschulp added. Botic van de Zandschulp looking for his maiden singles

title 2021 was the year when Van de Zandschulp started taking baby steps after he qualified for the main draw of a Grand Slam for the first time in the Australian Open. In the same year, he reached the quarters of the US Open where he took a set off Medvedev, although he lost the match 3-6, 0-6, 6-4, 5-7 at the Arthur Ashe Stadium.

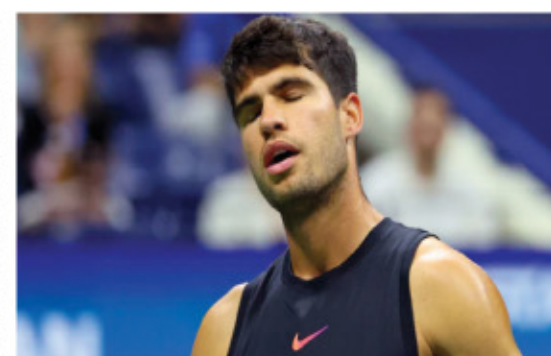
In 2022, van de Zandschulp reached the third rounds of the Australian Open and French Open, where he lost to Medvedev and Rafael Nadal respectively. It goes without saying that the win against Alcaraz was his biggest thus far in his Grand Slam career. In 2022 itself, van de Zandschulp achieved his career-best ranking of No. 22 in the world. He has also played doubles in all four Grand Slams and won the European Open 2022 in Antwerp along with his countryman Tallon Griekspoor.

## Burnt-out Carlos Alcaraz calls out 'tight scheduling' after shock US Open exit

**Carlos Alcaraz highlighted the tight scheduling of the tennis calendar after his shocking second-round exit from the US Open 2024 after loss to Botic van de Zandschulp.**

**New Delhi.** Carlos Alcaraz called out the tight scheduling of the Tennis calendar after his shocking exit from second round of the US Open 2024. Notably, the Spaniard was stunned by Botic van de Zandschulp who beat him in three straight sets on Friday, August 30 at Arthur Ashe Stadium. Van de Zandschulp beat the world number three by 6-1, 7-5, 6-4 knocking out one of the

title favourites in the second round itself. Having won back-to-back Grand Slam titles earlier this year by clinching titles at Roland Garros and Wimbledon, no one expected Alcaraz to bow out this early at Flushing Meadows. Following his loss, the 2022 US Open winner spoke about the tight scheduling of the tournaments one after the other. The 21-year-old mentioned the fact that he wasn't at his best heading into the tournament and highlighting his demands for longer breaks ahead of big events. "Probably, yeah. The tennis schedule is so tight. I've been playing a lot of matches lately. With Roland Garros, Wimbledon, Olympics. I took a little break after Olympics. I thought it was enough. It was really helpful for me. Probably it wasn't enough. I came here without as much energy



as I thought I was going to come with," said Alcaraz after the game. "But I don't want to use that as an excuse. But it's so tight. I'm a player who needs more days or more of a break coming into the big tournaments and important ones. I have to think about it and learn about it. Let's see," he added. I thought

he would give me more free points: Alcaraz. Further speaking ahead, Alcaraz praised Van de Zandschulp for his gameplay and rued not being able to match his level as the game progressed.

"I don't know what to say right now. First of all he played great. He played really good tennis. I thought he would give me more free points. He didn't make a lot of mistakes I thought he was going to make.. it was confusing a bit. I didn't know how to manage or deal with it. I couldn't increase my level. I think my level stayed the same the whole match. It wasn't enough to do it or to give myself the chance to get into the match or try to give myself chances," he further said. Meanwhile, the Dutchman earned the highest-ranked victory of his career. The World No 74 will next face 25th seed Jack Draper in the third round Saturday.

# Karisma Kapoor

Was 1st Choice For Twinkle Khanna's Role In SRK's Baadshah Says Producer: 'She Couldn't...'

Shah Rukh Khan and Twinkle Khanna starrer Baadshah clocked 25 years recently. The film fast-tracked Shah Rukh Khan's journey to superstardom and remains one of Twinkle Khanna's most popular screen appearances. However, producer Ratan Jain has revealed that instead of Twinkle Khanna, Karisma Kapoor was the first choice to play the lead. In an interview with Bollywood Hungama, Ratan Jain said, "Earlier, we had considered Karisma Kapoor. She was almost finalised but then for some reason, she couldn't come on board. Then we looked for a few options. Finally, we locked Twinkle Khanna."

However, in a 2019 interview with the publication, Abbas-Mustan were asked if reports of Shilpa Shetty, Karisma Kapoor, Anupama Verma, Manisha Koirala being approached for the role of Seema (played by Twinkle Khanna) were true. They had said, "Even this is not true. Twinkle and Deepshikha were the only actors approached for their respective parts. Even Johnny Lever, Amrth Puri, Rakhee Gulzar etc were original choices." The director duo had also addressed reports of Akshay Kumar being considered for Shah Rukh Khan's role. "Not at all. Shah Rukh was always the first choice," they had clarified.

They added, "Shah Rukh provided a lot of inputs. Woh kamaal ke actor hain! Whether it's in humour or serious scenes, he's too good. Some of the card tricks were actually done by him, after a magician on the set taught him. No graphics or VFX were used. People still see the film and wonder how he managed to do it!" Producer Ratan Jain also opened up about the lack of technology and said, "There was no VFX like it is now. But we did have some effects. Honestly, in some scenes, we were not very happy with the effects. But we had to compromise. If there was VFX in those times, we could have done a lot more."

Baadshah featured Shah Rukh Khan as a detective, with gadgets and technology like shoes which allowed him to climb walls. The film remains one of Shah Rukh Khan's most popular works. However, when the film was first released, it did not perform well at the box office; but the film managed to amass a cult following much later



# Tara Sutaria

Goes Bold in Chic Oversized Blazer and Mini Skirt on Latest Outing

Tara Sutaria stepped out in style during a recent night out in Bandra, Mumbai, and her fashion choices left quite an impression. Captured by the paparazzi, Tara opted for an effortlessly chic look, donning an oversized beige blazer with puffed sleeves that featured a deep V-neckline, adding a touch of allure to her outfit. She paired the blazer with a black mini skirt, showcasing her toned legs and bringing a contemporary edge to her ensemble. Accessorising the look, Tara carried a sleek black Gucci handbag with bamboo handles, which added a touch of luxury and complemented her outfit perfectly. Her black pointed-toe pumps matched her skirt, tying the entire look together. With her hair pulled back into a sleek bun and her makeup kept minimal with a nude lip shade, Tara's look was all about glamour.



As she exited the restaurant, Tara engaged briefly with her driver, instructing him with a casual, "Shukla ji, thoda aage," as she prepared to leave. The video shared by Voopl on Instagram quickly garnered attention, with fans praising her chic sense of style. This appearance comes amidst buzz about Tara's upcoming projects. There are strong rumours that Tara has been cast in Yash's

much-anticipated film, Toxic. While the actress has previously dismissed reports of playing a significant role in the film, recent hints from her hairstylist's Instagram story suggest otherwise. The story, tagged with "toxic" and "team Tara," was geo-tagged to Bangalore, sparking speculation among fans and media alike. Set in the dark world of the drug mafia, Toxic is expected to be a high-octane thriller with an ensemble cast, including Nayanthara, Kiara Advani, and Huma Qureshi. Tara's association with this film, if confirmed, would add another feather to her cap, marking her foray into a more intense, action-packed genre.

## Parvathy Calls Mohanlal's AMMA Resignation 'Cowardly' Amid Malayalam Cinema Chaos: 'No One Gives a Damn...'



Actor Parvathy Thiruvothu has lashed out at the Association of Malayalam Movie Artists (AMMA) committee for their decision of collective resignation. Parvathy, who is also the founding member of Women in Cinema Collective (WCC), recently questioned AMMA's move and called them cowards. Even though the actress did not name Mohanlal, she criticised the decision and argued that it was an attempt to avoid accountability. "The first reaction I had when I heard the news about this collective resignation was, 'how cowardly.' How cowardly of them to step away from a position where they are accountable to speak to the media. That's an immediate cop-out. With this, the onus has again fallen on women to take the conversations and debates forward. It would have been amazing if they had shown at least the intention to work with the state government and stakeholders to figure a way out," Parvathy told journalist Barkha Dutt on her YouTube channel.

Parvathy further expressed her anger and raised several important questions. "This is the same executive committee that welcomed the prime accused in the 2017 sexual assault case back into its fold when the case was still going on. This is the same executive committee that claimed none of these things actually existed until the allegations against them came out. Also, it was very careless of the government to make statements like, 'If the women have complaints, they should just file an FIR and come up with names.' Again the onus is put on women to name and shame and take the brunt of it after that. My question's always been, what is the proof of justice you can show for you to demand that we must name and shame (the perpetrators)? After that, what happens to us, our careers, lives, legal fees and mental health issues? No one gives a damn about that. Why, again and again, the onus is put on the women to take care of the problems that are not caused by us?" she said.

## Salman Khan Hugs Young Fan Who Touched His Feet at Ganesh Chaturthi Event, Video Goes Viral | Watch



Salman Khan, the beloved superstar known for his immense global fanbase, is set to dazzle audiences with his upcoming film, Sikandar, directed by AR Murugadoss. While Salman's charisma is well-known on-screen, his off-screen interactions also capture hearts. The actor's fondness for children is particularly endearing, and he recently demonstrated this at a Ganesh Chaturthi event in Mumbai. In a heartwarming video that has taken Instagram by storm, Salman Khan is seen on stage at the Ganesh Chaturthi celebration, dressed casually in a blue tee and blue jeans. As a young fan approaches him, Salman opens his arms wide, welcoming the child with a warm hug. The fan, who appears to be holding a sketch of Salman, receives an autograph from the actor. The emotional moment culminates with the young boy touching Salman's feet. The video quickly went viral, with fans pouring in their admiration and praise for Salman's kind gesture. Comments ranged from expressions of awe to heartfelt declarations of appreciation. One fan described the moment as "beautiful" with a red heart emoji, while another praised Salman as a "true inspiration."

Amid the celebrations, Salman Khan was also spotted reuniting with Sonali Bendre, marking a poignant moment as it was their first public appearance together since the release of Hum Saath-Saath Hain 25 years ago. Despite facing discomfort from a rib injury, Salman's enthusiasm was commendable. He even promoted eco-friendly Ganesh idols and energetically performed to the song "Jalwa" from his film Wanted. Produced by Sajid Nadiadwala, Sikandar is set for release on Eid 2025. The film will also feature Rashmika Mandanna, Suniel Shetty, and other notable actors, promising an exciting cinematic experience.