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Rahul Gandhi after Omar Abdullah sworn in as Jammu & Kashmir CM

Sanjay Kumar

Jammu, Oct 16: Senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday congratulated National Conference (NC) vice president Omar Abdullah on his



swearing-in as chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir, marking the return of an elected government to the Union Territory. Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, Samajwadi Party (SP) chief Akhilesh Yadav, CPI leader D Raja, AAP leader Sanjay Singh and others during the oath-taking ceremony of Jammu and Kashmir chief minister Omar Abdullah, in Srinagar. Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, Samajwadi Party (SP) chief Akhilesh Yadav, CPI leader D Raja, AAP leader

Sanjay Singh and others during the oath-taking ceremony of Jammu and Kashmir chief minister Omar Abdullah, in Srinagar. In his message, Gandhi also reiterated the demand for the restoration of Jammu and Kashmir's statehood, which was revoked in 2019. "Congratulations to CM Omar Abdullah and to the people of Jammu and Kashmir. However, government formation without statehood felt incomplete today," Rahul Gandhi posted on X (formerly Twitter). "Democracy was snatched from the people of Jammu and Kashmir, and today we renew our pledge to continue our fight until statehood is fully restored." Abdullah replied: "Thank you very much Rahul Gandhi & thank you for joining us today. The people of J&K look towards you for your continued support as we work to get our statehood back. Your presence today along with Priyanka Gandhi gave us a lot of encouragement & the family was really happy to get to spend some time with both of you." "Many congratulations to the Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, Mr. Omar Abdullah ji, and all the members of his cabinet.

India stays away from signing on China's OBOR initiative at SCO meet

Simmi Kaur Babbar

Islamabad, Oct 16: India didn't join the other nine members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in backing China's One Belt, One Road (OBOR) connectivity and infrastructure initiative during a key meeting of the bloc in Islamabad on Wednesday. External affairs minister S Jaishankar speaks during the 23rd meeting of the SCO Council of Heads of Government, in Islamabad, Pakistan, on Wednesday. (PTI) The move was in keeping with India's stated position on OBOR, a flagship initiative of Chinese President Xi Jinping, that New Delhi has said doesn't offer a level playing field for Indian firms. In the past too, India has refrained from endorsing the OBOR or the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in joint documents issued after SCO meetings. The joint communique issued at the conclusion of the SCO Council of Heads of Government meeting, hosted by Pakistan, said the other member states backed the OBOR and efforts to link the China-led initiative with the Eurasian Economic Union. The statement said Belarus, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan,

Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan reaffirmed "support for the People's Republic of China's One Belt, One Road (OBOR) initiative",



and "noted ongoing work on joint implementation of the project, including efforts to bridge the Eurasian Economic Union and OBOR". India has for long also opposed the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a key part of the OBOR, as it runs through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK).

India is among a small number of countries in Asia that never signed on for OBOR despite China's invitations to join the initiative. Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, who chaired the meeting, called for creating a SCO connectivity framework by expanding projects the BRI, CPEC and International North-South Corridor (INSC). External affairs minister S Jaishankar, who spoke after Sharif, said cooperation within SCO on connectivity and trade should recognise territorial integrity and sovereignty, and cannot be built on "unilateral agendas". As expected, Jaishankar, the first Indian foreign minister to travel to Islamabad in almost a decade, didn't hold any bilateral meetings with the Pakistani leadership. As at a dinner for the visiting SCO leaders on Tuesday night, Jaishankar was welcomed by Sharif when he arrived at the venue for Wednesday's meeting. Jaishankar briefly shook hands with Sharif, as his Pakistani counterpart Ishaq Dar looked on, and then went into the venue. This was in contrast to the scenes at a SCO foreign ministers' meeting in Goa last year, when Jaishankar greeted his then Pakistani counterpart Bilawal Bhutto Zardari with a namaste, instead of shaking hands.

Omar Abdullah takes oath as first J&K UT chief minister

ST Correspondent

Srinagar, Oct 16: National Conference Vice President and CM-designate Omar Abdullah during his visit to the Hazratbal Shrine ahead of the swearing-in-ceremony of J&K new government, in Srinagar. After taking over as the Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah on Wednesday chose party leader Surender Choudhary from Nowsheera in Jammu as his deputy, saying he did so to give a voice to people of the region and make his government inclusive. "Our endeavour will be to take everyone along," the National Conference leader told reporters after being sworn in. Five ministers - Sakina Masood (Ito), Javed Dar, Javed Rana, Surinder Choudhary and Satish



Sharma - also took the oath of office. He said Choudhary - a former member of the PDP and the BJP who emerged a giant killer when he defeated BJP's J-K president Ravinder Raina from Nowsheera by 7,819 votes - was chosen as deputy chief minister so people of Jammu do not feel left out from the government. "I had said that we will not allow Jammu to feel that they do not have a voice or representatives in this government. I have chosen a deputy chief minister from Jammu so that the people of Jammu feel that this government is as much theirs as it is of the rest," he said. In the 2014 assembly elections, Raina won the Nowsheera seat by defeating Choudhary, who was then fighting on a PDP ticket, by a margin of over 10,000 votes. Choudhary resigned from the PDP in 2022 to join the BJP before ending his over a year-long association with the party to join the NC in July last year. This is the first elected government since 2019 when Article 370 was abrogated from Jammu and Kashmir and the state was bifurcated into the union territories of Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh. In the assembly elections held recently, the National Conference won 42 out of the 90 seats while alliance partner Congress bagged six. Together, the two pre-poll allies hold a majority in the 95-member assembly - five members are to be nominated by the LG.

Bahraich violence: Internet remains suspended for third day in a row

Lucknow, Oct 16: Mobile internet and broadband services remained suspended for the third day in a row on Wednesday after communal violence in Maharajganj town of UP's Bahraich district. Bahraich: Security personnel deployed to maintain law & order in a violence-affected area in Bahraich on October 15. However, no untoward incident has been reported since Tuesday, and the situation is returning to normalcy amid heavy police deployment, according. The violence broke in the district broke after Ram Gopal Mishra, 22, a resident of Rehua Mansoor village, was shot dead and about half a dozen people were injured in stone pelting and firing during a Durga idol immersion procession on Sunday. Tension gripped the town as thousands of people gathered near Bahraich Medical College and blocked roads demanding justice for the youth. Several houses were set on fire and vehicles were vandalized by the angry mob on Monday, prompting heavy security deployment in the area. About 52 people involved in the arson were arrested by the police. Of these, 26 were sent to jail on Monday and 26 on Tuesday. "No untoward incident has been reported since Tuesday.

Yogi meets victim's kin, says culprits won't be spared

Navdeep Singh Sahni

Lucknow, Oct. 16: Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Tuesday met the family of 22-year-old Ram Gopal Mishra, who was killed in the recent violence in Bahraich. The victim's family, accompanied by local MLA Sureshvar Singh, expressed their demand for strict action against the culprits, detailing the brutality inflicted upon Ram Gopal. His wife stated that "blood will be avenged with blood", emphasising the need for justice. Ram Gopal's father was seen crying and pleading for justice with folded hands in front of the chief minister. During the 30-minute meeting in Lucknow, Ram Gopal's wife, mother, and father were visibly distressed. Yogi reassured them, stating that justice would be served. He instructed officials to provide assistance to the family and ensured they would not face any hardships. The CM also inquired

about the full details of the incident from the family. He conveyed his condolences, describing the event as unfortunate



and reaffirmed that providing justice to the victim's family is the government's top priority. He promised that the culprits of this grievous incident would face severe consequences. Additionally, the CM announced a compensation package for the family, including Rs 10

lakh, a house under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, an Ayushman card, and a contractual job for the deceased's wife. Meanwhile, police have arrested 26 individuals in connection with the Bahraich violence, which resulted in one death. Bahraich SP Vrinda Shukla's PRO Shivesh Shukla said that the accused had been sent to jail following medical examinations. The police have also reopened shops in areas previously affected by violence. During the unrest, over 50 houses were vandalised, leaving them abandoned. Increased police patrolling is underway in a 20km radius around Hardi and Mahsi, with police vehicles actively monitoring the area. Entry to affected neighbourhoods is restricted and requires identification verification. Sources said that despite a heavy police presence, miscreants vandalised a religious site in Nakwa village late Monday night, attempting to set it on fire.

Efforts were made to erase Indian 'sanskriti', but our culture remains eternal: Gajendra Shekhawat

Tejinder Kaur Babbar

New Delhi, Oct. 16: Union Culture Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat on Wednesday extolled India's ancient civilisations and said efforts were made in the past to "erase" its 'sanskriti' (culture) and Sanatan traditions, but "our culture remains eternal" in flow. In his address at the opening ceremony of the six-day International Festival on Indian Dance, Shekhawat said India is the country of "Ganga and Gita" and rich culture and folk traditions. Classical and folk dances are incredible, and together they make it a kaleidoscope of colours and lend multiple dimensions to it. Culture is such that it even lends colours to arid deserts, the minister said at the event hosted by the Sangeet Natak Akademi in Delhi. This event is taking place at a time when the world is treading the path of "moral downfall" and geopolitical turbulence has

"shaken" the whole world, which is the dark side, he said. "But on the other hand,



it is taking place at a time when India is standing at the threshold of limitless possibilities. At a time, when India's culture, traditional values, art, science, yoga, Ayush and agricultural traditions, their acceptance in the world is growing in a new way," Shekhawat asserted. Without

naming any rulers or dynasties which have ruled India over the centuries, the Union minister said, "We are one of the oldest civilisations, but many efforts were made to erase this Indian culture, these Sanatan traditions, many conspiracies were hatched at the point of a bayonet and they tried to obliterate it. "To ruin our intellectual resources and capabilities, many invaded us, they even tried and conspired to pollute our education system, still our culture

remained eternal in flow," he added. The culture minister lauded the "purveyors of Indian culture" and said, through the old traditions, art exponents kept the Indian culture perennial and relevant using the "soft power" despite the "cultural attacks on Bharat". The event was also attended

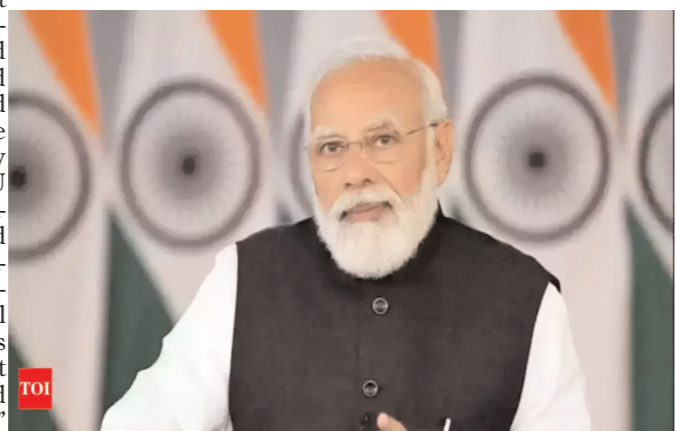
by noted dancer Sonal Mansingh and several other artistes. "When there is a geopolitical turbulence the world over, at that time to maintain the unbroken and all-encompassing 'bhav' of 'ras' and 'anand' (in India), we can take pride in it, and work towards making it more contextual," he said. "Today, when India is carving a place for itself on the world stage, as a Vishwa Bandhu, this cultural strength will give India a new identity globally," he added. The minister in his address also underlined the essence of soft power in making of a superpower nation. "I was reading a book by a Nobel Laureate and he speaks of four things that are essential for a country to become a superpower," Shekhawat said. While economic rise, technological prowess and military strength are key components, a superpower also possess "culture and soft power", and India is "rapidly moving in that direction".

Union Cabinet approves Rs 2,642-crore Varanasi-DDU multi-tracking project

Naresh Malhotra

New Delhi, Oct. 16: Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved the Varanasi-Pt Deen Dayal Upadhyaya (DDU) multi-tracking project with an estimated cost of Rs 2,642 crore. The proposed project includes a new rail-cum-road bridge across the Ganga river and the addition of third and fourth railway lines between Varanasi and DDU Junction route, among other infrastructural upgrades. "The proposed multi-tracking project will ease operations and reduce congestion, providing the much-required infrastructural development on the busiest sections across Indian Railways. The project traverses through Varanasi and Chandauli districts in Uttar Pradesh," a government statement said. It added, "Varanasi Railway Station, a crucial hub in Indian Railways, connects key zones and serves as a gateway for pilgrims, tourists and the local population." According to the state-

ment, the Varanasi-DDU Junction route, vital for both passenger and freight traffic, faces heavy congestion due to its role in transporting goods like coal, cement, and food grains, as



well as serving growing tourism and industrial demands. "To address this issue, infrastructure upgrades are needed, including a new rail-cum-road bridge over the Ganga River and the addition of 3rd and 4th railway lines. These

enhancements aim to improve capacity, efficiency and support the region's socio-economic growth," the statement said. "Apart from relief in congestion in the stretch, 27.83

MTPA (million tonnes per annum) freight is anticipated on the proposed stretch," it added. Highlighting the enhancement of employment/self-employment opportunities, the official release stated that the project is result of PM-Gati Shakti National Master Plan for multi-modal connectivity which has been possible through integrated planning and will provide seamless connectivity for movement of people, goods and services. According to the government, the project, covering two districts in Uttar Pradesh, will increase the existing network of Indian Railways by about 30 kilometres. "The Railways being an environmentally friendly and energy efficient mode of transportation, will help both in achieving climate goals and minimizing logistics cost of the country and lower CO2 emissions (149 crore kg) which is equivalent to plantation of six crore trees," the statement said.

Nayab Saini elected BJP legislature party leader in Haryana

Chandigarh, Oct 16 Nayab Singh Saini was unanimously elected as the leader of the BJP legislature party in Haryana on Wednesday. Saini would take oath as Chief Minister in Panchkula on Thursday. Newly

Ambala Cantt MLA Anil Vij in favour of Saini," Amit Shah said declaring Saini as the BJP legislature party leader in Haryana. Saini, the OBC face of the saffron party, who was declared as the party's chief ministerial candidate in the run-up to the October 5 assembly polls, was elected as the leader in view of the non-Jats, especially the OBCs, consolidating in BJP's favour in the polls. Saini took over as the state chief minister from Manohar Lal Khattar on March 12, 2024, and the entire assembly poll campaign was centred around him with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Amit Shah showcasing him as the CM face. With Amit Shah, BJP's chief poll strategist, who



elected Haryana 48 BJP MLAs elected Saini in a meeting, which was also attended by Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav as central observers. "There was only one proposal moved by Narwana MLA Krishan Bedi and it was seconded by

'micro-managed' the entire assembly polls along with his band of trusted lieutenants, being appointed as central observer, the party wanted a 'smooth transition' of power in Haryana. Amit Shah was first to declare Saini as the CM face at a rally in Panchkula on June 29 this year.

News box

Firm asked to recover 5L from staffer who quit without notice

Ahmedabad. A local court here ordered the recovery of Rs 5 lakh from an employee by her employer towards damages for quitting the job without notice and for her unexplained absenteeism. The court allowed the company to recover the amount in an order passed in an ex-parte hearing as the employee did not participate in the court proceedings.

This case involved Mariya Rajput, who was appointed as trainee associate (finance) by Jensen Kobain Solutions Pvt Ltd in Feb 2021 on a probation of six months. After the completion of the probation period, her appointment was confirmed on certain service conditions. The terms of her employment contract required her to submit a written resignation notice 30 days prior to her intended last day of work.

According to the suit filed by the company, after her appointment, Rajput's attendance was irregular, and she used to remain absent from work without obtaining prior approval. When the firm issued an absconding notice to her in Nov 2022, she sent her resignation through an email. The firm told her that her resignation was not in accordance with the employment agreement and advised her to withdraw it and requested her to work at least until her notice period was over.

However, the employee continued to remain absent. The firm then issued a notice to her through an advocate, asking her to pay Rs 5 lakh for quitting the job in violation of employment terms, but the notice was not replied to. The company filed a suit for breach of contract, specifically citing employment agreement violations, which led to the claimed monetary loss and harm to the company's reputation.

'State poised to become fibre-to-fashion hub'

Ahmedabad. The industry believes the new policy will help the state become an integrated textile hub, covering the entire spectrum from raw materials to finished garments. Rahul Shah, co-chairman of the Gujarat Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCCI) textile taskforce, said, "Capital subsidy is a welcome move. Other states started offering capital subsidies to the textile industry, and due to that, Gujarat was not competitive in getting new investments. But now, that will change. It will serve as a booster for Gujarat to set up a garment ecosystem and become a fibre-to-fashion hub."

Chintan Thaker, chairman of Assocham Gujarat State Council, said, "Capital subsidy has been included for the first time. It will offer much-needed handholding to a new unit during its critical five-year gestation period." He believes this will attract fresh investments and support MSMEs looking to expand. The PM Mitra Park, Thaker says, will further draw global giants and create thousands of jobs, with special incentives for companies with over 4,000 workers.

A senior official in the industries department said, "The policy aims to make Gujarat the hub of the entire textile value chain. Expansion, modernisation and diversification will get a boost."

Gaurang Bhagat, secretary of the GCCCI, said, "Standalone cotton spinning units will not benefit out of the policy as the state already has a huge capacity in the sector, but polyester and viscose are included in the new policy. However, cotton spinning activity in the integrated projects will be benefited."

Mevani moves privilege motion against senior cop

Gandhinagar. Congress MLA from Vadgam constituency, Jignesh Mevani, moved a motion for breach of privilege against additional director general of police (SC-ST Cell) Rajkumar Pandian. Mevani wrote to the assembly speaker, seeking action against the police officer, who he claimed was "rude and arrogant with him when he visited his office on Tuesday". Mevani said in the letter addressed to the speaker, Shankar Chaudhary, that he and state Congress SC cell chairman Hitendra Pithadiya visited Pandian's office on Tuesday afternoon to make a representation about issues concerning Dalits in the state.

"Pandian directed us to deposit our mobile phones outside his chamber, and when we sought to know under what rule this direction was issued, Pandian got enraged and asked his staff to take our phones, saying that we might be recording the conversation," Mevani alleged in the letter.

The MLA mentioned in the letter that he told Pandian he was "not behaving in a courteous manner with an MLA" and added that there is a protocol that officers have to courteously receive and see off elected representatives like MPs and MLAs who visit their offices.

"In response, Pandian retorted by saying that the meeting was over and that we should leave. He added that he will not give us another opportunity to visit his office. I told the police officer that I will keep coming here to make representations about issues concerning Dalits. If you refuse to hear me, I will have to approach the DGP, govt, and even approach the HC with a petition," Mevani said. Mevani added that Pandian commented on his attire, saying that "despite being an MLA, I was wearing a T-shirt." Arjun Modhwadia, who joined the BJP this March, too had moved a privilege motion against Pandian about 20 years ago.

Chocked Ennore wetland leaves North Chennai residents in fear of flooding

In 2022, the National Green Tribunal (NGT) ordered the state government to notify the wetland and to remove 56.7 lakh metric tonnes of fly ash choking the Kosasthalaiyar river.

CHENNAI. Members of the fishing community in Ennore have raised an alarm about the growing flood risk in North Chennai as a vigorous northeast monsoon is on cards. In an open letter to the state government, fishers alleged the degradation of the Ennore wetland and tidal sections of the Kosasthalaiyar river has led to environmental decline, thereby increasing the frequency of flood in the Chennai metropolitan area.

The community traces the roots of the problem to unchecked industrial activity that began in the 1960s with the establishment of the first

thermal power plant in Ennore. In 2022, the National Green Tribunal (NGT) ordered the state government to notify the wetland and to remove 56.7 lakh metric tonnes of fly ash choking the Kosasthalaiyar river. The tribunal also directed the government to prepare a restoration plan for the wetland. However, the fishing community notes that no significant restoration efforts have been made on the ground.

On October 3, responding to a petition filed by an Ennore fisherman, the water resources department assured the NGT that it will begin removal of

Kaaka Aazhi (the invasive mussel) from three sections of the river - Kattupalli, Athipattu and Puzhuthivakkam.

Environmental activist Durga Moorthy told the removal was carried only in one location, which is not enough. She said foreign ships docking at Kamarajar and L&T Ports have introduced invasive mussel species, which has infested local waters and further obstructed tidal flows. This, combined with industrial waste, has restricted boat movements and water flow, exacerbating the risk of floods.



SEI eyes Hyderabad for new global capability centre

HYDERABAD. The Telangana IT ministry on Tuesday announced ongoing discussions with US-based SEI (NASDAQ:SEIC), a leading global provider of technology and investment solutions, regarding the establishment of a Global Capability Centre (GCC) in Hyderabad. This announcement followed a meeting between IT and Industries Minister D Sridhar Babu and SEI's senior leadership, on Tuesday, where the potential for collaboration was explored. The proposed GCC aims to create high-skill engineering and financial jobs over the next three years, aligning with the state's ambition to become a global hub for the Banking, Financial Services and Insurance (BFSI) sector. SEI is considering Hyderabad as a strategic operations hub, building on its existing regional presence with approximately 5,000 employees across



technology, operations, and asset management.

Sridhar Babu emphasised the government's commitment through its Young India Skill University's (YISU) BFSI programme, which aims to enhance the local talent pool and provide global opportunities, further strengthening the ecosystem. "Telangana's exceptional talent in the financial sector is crucial for attracting global BFSI GCCs to

Hyderabad. The city has established itself as a premier destination, hosting global capability centres for major players like Bank of America, JP Morgan, Goldman Sachs, Morgan Stanley, Wells Fargo, among others. We are grateful for the company's interest in Telangana and our future-ready workforce," the minister said. In a joint statement, SEI's Global Chief Technology Officer Zachary Womack and Global Head of Operations David Langdale stated:

"Hyderabad is becoming an attractive location for a Global Capability Centre, thanks to its rich talent pool, advanced infrastructure, and business-friendly environment fostered by the Telangana government. This centre could play a vital role in supporting our global digital engineering strategy and enhancing our capabilities in key markets."

Kerala has not cut down Plan fund: Finance Minister K N Balagopal

He alleged that even when the Centre is destroying constitutional values and federalism, the opposition in the state has taken a rigid political position.

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM. Finance Minister K N Balagopal has dismissed the opposition charge that the state government has cut down Plan fund.

Answering discussions held in the assembly on the adjournment motion of the opposition, he said that in all sectors the plan spending has reached over 50 per cent. "However, the government has brought in some management in the plan fund. According to the change in the fiscal situation, this would also be avoided. It is not the policy of the government to cut down plan spending. The government has not cut down any spend in any sector", he said.



He alleged that even when the Centre is destroying constitutional values and federalism, the opposition in the state has taken a rigid political position.

Presenting the adjournment motion, Mathew Kuzhalmadan told the assembly that the state is going through a severe fiscal crisis. "The government has implemented treasury ban curtailing plan spend. While all the other southern states had made achievements from globalisation and liberalisation started by the Congress government, Kerala could not achieve it," he added.

The leader of opposition V D Sathesnan alleged that the plan size of Kerala has now become like a 'bonsai' tree. "The tax administration is in a poor state. Tax evasion has created a parallel economy in the state", he said.

A stadium in full bloom with words

He had used his lunch break from work to visit the book fair being organised by Thiruvananthapuram District Library Council at the stadium from October 13 to 16.

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM. Pallikkal Rajeev's stride within the Central Stadium premises where the 'Pustakolsavam' is being held seemed heavy. The two huge packets he carried brimmed with books, some of which peeped out to reveal their titles and genres. There were translations, self-help, and some trendy, snappy ones the generation feeds on such as 'Ettavum Priya Petta Ennodu'.

"There is a formidable collection here. I have currently purchased books worth around Rs 5,000," the bibliophile says as he ambles out of a stall at the stadium. He had used his lunch break from work to visit the book fair being organised by Thiruvananthapuram District Library Council at the stadium from October 13 to 16.

Pitted by book reviewers as one of the biggest in Thiruvananthapuram, the fair features over 120



stalls and a diverse variety of books in English, Malayalam and Tamil, by over 67 publishing houses including DC,

Mathrubhumi, Maithri, Chintna, Haritha, the National Book Trust (NBT), State Bhasha Institute, etc. Noted among the books were translations such as the best seller 'Atomic Habits' by James Clear, reflecting a tilt in reading trends towards the self-help genre.

There were several takers for children's books and classics as well. Reshma P M, who works at the Secretariat, was looking for children's genre as she stopped over at the fair during a break. But the rich spread from Marx's writings to the script of the popular flick 'Premulu' fascinated her. There were also classics and commentaries on classics and veterans of Malayalam literature ('Basheerinte Poonkavanam' by MN Karassery). Also up for grabs were books by current writers such as Mohammed Abbas who are making a mark in the literary field with their personal stories.

Heavy rains lash south coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh

The heavy downpour has caused widespread flooding and disruption. In Nellore city, streets were flooded, including vital routes such as GNT Road and Mini Bypass Road, severely affecting vehicle movement.



TIRUPATI. Under the influence of a low-pressure area in the Bay of Bengal which intensified into depression, heavy to very heavy rains are lashing Nellore and Tirupati districts, and parts of Praksam and Bapatla districts since Tuesday night.

Nellore and Tirupati districts recorded an average rainfall of 8 cm and 9 cm, respectively. Sullurupeta in Tirupati district received the highest rainfall at 22 cm, followed by Chittamur with 13 cm, and other mandals like Tada, Varadaihpalem, Doravarisatram, Vadamalapeta, Vakadu, and Narayanavanam seeing significant rainfall between 10 and 12 cm. In Nellore district, Jaladanki recorded 18 cm, Kavali 17 cm, and Nellore urban and rural areas saw 13 and 12 cm of rain, respectively. The heavy downpour has caused

widespread flooding and disruption. In Nellore city, streets were flooded, including vital routes such as GNT Road and Mini Bypass Road, severely affecting vehicle movement.

Low-lying areas on the city's outskirts and various residential zones were inundated. Meanwhile, the urban and coastal mandals have been severely impacted, with residents unable to carry out their daily activities. Tirupati's city life has also been thrown out of gear, with flooding in multiple areas, including the runway at Tirupati Airport, which led to the diversion of a flight (Hyderabad - Tirupati) from Tirupati to Chennai. The district administrations of Nellore, Tirupati, Chittoor, Annamayya, Kurnool, and Nandyal have declared holidays for educational institutions on

Wednesday, considering the situation.

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News box

Week on, no arrest yet in accountant murder case, cops

Gurgaon. It has been a week since the murder of 29-year-old accountant Abhishek Rai in a deserted lane near Basai Road, just 500m away from his home on Wednesday. He was stabbed to death, and his cellphone and Rs 50,000 cash were missing. Rai, who worked for a real estate company in Sector 90, stayed in Krishna Nagar, Sector 10, with his mother. His wife and daughter live in their native place, Ballia in UP. On Oct 9, Abhishek spoke to his mother around 7pm and told her he would return home soon. "He did not return till late in the night. We tried to contact him, but his phone was switched off," Abhishek's brother, Ashish Rai, told police. The next day, locals at Basai Road alerted police about a body near the shed of a bike repair shop in Basai Road. "The victim was stabbed in the left thigh with a sharp-edged weapon," the then Shivaji Nagar inspector Mahender Pathak said after the murder. According to Abhishek's family, he was carrying Rs 50,000 cash and a cell phone. Police, however, did not recover it on the victim when they found the body. "There were no CCTV cameras in the lane where the body was found. We are verifying the footage from nearby cameras. The call data analysis of the victim did not provide any clues. We did not find Rs 50,000 cash with the victim. His phone is missing and it is still switched off," said an official investigating the case. The accused in another case of attempted murder is also absconding. Sandeep, a water purifier seller from Sector 10, was shot multiple times by his former business associate Mandeep and two others in Heera Nagar on Sunday due to a long-standing business feud. Sandeep managed to escape with injuries and is undergoing treatment at a private hospital in city.

Police said he is out of danger now. "Sandeep and Mandeep are from Jind. Our teams raided Mandeep's house in Jind and his Gurgaon residence. The three men are absconding. Our teams have launched a manhunt to nab them," Gurgaon police spokesperson Sandeep Kumar said.

Monsoon gone, 7km drain network will be desilted soon

Gurgaon. To address waterlogging around Subhash Chowk and Sohna Road, GMDA will carry out the desilting of a 6.6 km drainage network. At an estimated cost of Rs 3.3 crore, the project will involve cleaning the drainage network from Tau Devi Lal Stadium to Leg-III (Badshapur drain), covering Subhash Chowk and Marble Market in Sector 34 using super-sucker machines. Though GMDA has set a timeline of 10 months for the completion of the desilting work, the official said they will wrap up the work before the deadline to make the drainage system ready for the next monsoon season. This is the first major cleaning effort for this drain since 2018. "The desilting of the drain along this stretch aims to facilitate the quick discharge of stormwater during heavy rains in the surrounding areas of Subhash Chowk and Sohna Road. Work has been allotted, and we are planning to complete desilting before the next monsoon season. CCTV inspection will also be conducted during the execution to ensure the quality of the work," a senior official of GMDA said. Subhash Chowk has been one of the worst-affected spots in the city, with severe traffic jams and waterlogging after even moderate rains. Commuters have been urging the authorities to find a long-term solution.

MCG takes pvt firm's help to clear Swachh test

Gurgaon: After finishing 140th out of 446 cities in the Swachh Survekshan rankings released in Jan this year—its worst performance since the rankings were introduced by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) in 2016—the MCG is gearing up for the next survey with a series of initiatives. On Tuesday, a special orientation workshop was held at the municipal office to provide detailed information and training for Swachh Survekshan, one of the largest urban sanitation and cleanliness surveys. To raise awareness about source segregation and waste minimisation, the MCG has hired a private agency. Planned initiatives include zero waste events, water plus initiatives, source segregation, interpersonal communication, waste-to-wealth activities, clean ward competitions, and self-reliant wards.

Rakesh Bhatt, an expert from the agency, said his team will provide technical assistance to the MCG, including data collection, fieldwork, document preparation, and information, education, and communication (IEC) activities. "The agency will focus on educating the public and promoting best practices in waste management to reduce overall waste generation in the city. This time, the corporation will ensure maximum citizen participation as part of a public movement," Bhatt added. Under Swachh Survekshan, the MCG has identified 9,500 points in Gurgaon, divided into three categories: 5,705 points for service level progress, 2,500 points for certification, and 1,295 points for public movement activities. "Service level progress includes segregated waste collection, waste processing and disposal, and used water management," said an MCG official.

OTP alerts to resolve power complaints

Noida. An OTP system will now be implemented to ensure the resolution of complaints made by registered consumers of Uttar Pradesh Power Corporation Limited (UPPCL) via the toll-free helpline number 1912. To address consumer harassment and reduce the incidence of fake complaint redressals, the Uttar Pradesh Electricity Regulatory Commission (UPERC) has directed electricity companies to submit their plan for implementing the OTP system within three months. "In this system, a consumer's complaint can only be closed after the consumer provides the OTP following the resolution of the complaint. If complaints are not resolved, consumers will have the right to claim compensation," said an official. Earlier, the Uttar Pradesh Rajya Vidyut Upphokta Parishad (UPRVU) had demanded an OTP SMS alert system for complaints raised on the toll-free helpline. UPERC has also directed that in cases of electricity accidents, information regarding the compensation amount and settlement timeline must be made public on the discom's website. Meanwhile, UPPCL has also expanded its use of social media. After launching its WhatsApp service, the Pashchimanchal Vidyut Vitran Nigam Limited (PVVNL).

On first day of GRAP, Rs 1L fine on pvt firm for road dust in Greater Noida

Noida. On the day stage I of GRAP came into effect in Delhi-NCR, the UP pollution control board slapped a Rs 1 lakh fine on a private contractor for dumping loose soil at the site of two under-construction foot overbridges near Jagat Farm and Kailash Hospital, in violation of rules set by the National Green Tribunal (NGT).

In 2013, Greater Noida Authority officials hired private agencies for the construction of eight overbridges. Lion India Limited, allotted the tender to construct the two overbridges on the busy Surajpur-Kasna Road, started the construction earlier this month.

A complaint submitted by residents said the construction of the two overbridges involved extensive excavation and the contractor had dumped the soil, thus dug up, uncovered by the roadside. This loose soil billowed clouds of dust into the air as vehicles passed by causing significant pollution, they said. Officials from pollution control board inspected the two sites on Monday and slapped penalties worth Rs 50,000 each on the firm for violation of green norms.

"During inspection, it was observed that



the construction of a foot overbridge near Jagat Farm in Gamma-I was underway. The soil excavated for project was kept in an open area without any protective covering. The movement of vehicles on road caused dust to become airborne, which is likely to have a detrimental impact on the surrounding air quality. The contractor also did not take measures such as water sprinkling and green net covering during the construction process, a

violation of the NGT order and Stage I of Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP)," UPPCB regional officer DK Gupta said.

After air quality slipped to the 'poor' category, dust control and mitigation measures under GRAP stage I was imposed across Delhi-NCR from 8am on Tuesday. On Monday, Greater Noida's AQI was recorded at 274, up from 228 on Sunday and 150 (moderate) on Saturday.

CPR-SPR link plan on drawing board, Vatika Chk loop to help cut travel time

Gurgaon. GMDA is set to hire a detailed design consultant for the elevated corridor stretching from Vatika Chowk to the Central Peripheral Road (CPR)-Southern Peripheral Road (SPR) junction on NH-8. According to a GMDA official, the tendering process to engage the consultant is expected to be initiated within a month. The consultant will be responsible for the comprehensive design of the structure, cost estimation, and technical assessments. "Technical aspects will be examined to study the feasibility of connecting the proposed corridor with the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway via an interchange loop at Vatika Chowk," said Arun Dhankhar, chief engineer of GMDA (infra-1).

The state govt approved the elevated corridor project in July this year, aiming at constructing a 5.5km signal-free stretch connecting the Dwarka Expressway with the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway. "The Vatika Chowk

interchange will ease the commute from Dwarka Expressway or Jaipur towards Sohna or Faridabad or Delhi-Mumbai expressway," the official added. At present, those travelling on the mentioned route have to pass through Rajiv Chowk or Subhash Chowk. As per GMDA's proposal, the signal-free route will have a six-lane main carriageway, three-lane service roads on each side, 3-metre-wide footpaths, and 2.5-metre-wide cycle tracks. Additionally, the plan includes the development of green spaces along the corridor. The project, estimated to cost around Rs 750 crore, will see Rs 620 crore allocated for the construction of the elevated section, with an additional Rs 130 crore set aside for land acquisition at Vatika Chowk to ensure seamless connectivity with the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway and Sohna. The GMDA aims for the corridor's completion within two years of the project's commencement. The elevated corridor

was a revision of an earlier plan, where the proposal involved building eight flyovers on the 14 km stretch of SPR from Ghata T-point to NH-8 at an estimated cost of Rs 845.5 crores. However, after concerns over low traffic volume between Vatika Chowk and NH-8, the proposal was revised to elevate the 5.5 km portion, ensuring seamless travel from Shiv Murti in Delhi to the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway. The elevated corridor is expected to offer an alternative route to commuters and ease traffic congestion on critical routes like Golf Course Road and Sohna Road. To fund the project, the GMDA plans to raise Rs 63.9 crore from External Development Charges (EDC), Rs 262.7 crore from developers through the Town and Country Planning Department (T&CP), and Rs 336.2 crore via a cess on property and land. The remaining amount will be sourced through other revenue streams such as advertisement rights, according to officials.

Substation in way, size of Harnandipuram township to shrink 20 hectares

Ghaziabad. The proposed Harnandipuram township will now be developed on 521 hectares, instead of the proposed 541 hectares, to skirt around a power substation and canopy areas of eight high-tension power lines.

GDA secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh said during a recent survey, the Authority found a power substation, spread over 10,000 sqm, at Nangla Ferozpur — one of the eight villages from where land is proposed to be acquired for the project. "Eight high-tension powerlines also pass through the villages earmarked for the township. Canopies of each of these powerlines, about 100 sqm each, must be left intact. Together, the existing power infrastructure accounts for about 20 hectares," Singh said. Though land size will be reduced, the official clarified that the proposed township will not be affected as the substation will also cater to the power needs of the township. GDA will now acquire 521 hectares from eight villages under the Land Acquisition Act 2013. Earlier, GDA has proposed to acquire the highest of 247.8 hectares of land from Nangla Ferozpur and another 124 hectares from Shamsher. The six other villages from which land will be acquired are Shahpur Morta (54.2 ha), Bhowapur (53.3 ha), Champat Nagar (39.2 ha), Bhanera Khurd (11.8 hectares), Mathurapur (8.7 ha), and Morti (2.6 ha).

Godrej Projects ordered to refund 4cr to homebuyers

Gurgaon: Country's apex consumer commission, NCDRC, has ordered realty major Godrej Projects to refund over Rs 4 crore to homebuyers in five separate cases for its failure to deliver its promises, which included a 24-metre-wide road and other essential amenities even seven years after making bookings. The homebuyers had booked flats in the 'Godrej Summit' project in Sector 104 in Gurgaon.

The National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (NCDRC) also directed the builder to pay 9% interest on the refund amount.

As per the orders, the NCDRC panel, led by presiding member Ram Surat Ram Maurya and member Bharat Kumar Pandya, held the builder accountable for "failing to deliver on its promises", particularly the construction of a 24-metre-wide road and other essential amenities that the builder had promised. The bench observed that even after the offer of possession, seven years have expired, but the promised road has not been constructed on the spot. It said expensive flats were sold representing that the project is connected with Dwarka Expressway through the wide road. Separate entry and exit points were also promised for each of the three parcels — A, B and C — in the society. "The homebuyers agreed for sale price on these prime features. Now the OP (builder) has constructed an alternative entrance and exit gate to parcel A on 10.06 meters wide revenue road, which too is under encroachments. In order to reach the flats in parcel

Gir cage in Jhabua to capture Sariska tiger

Gurgaon. Four weeks after a tiger from Sariska trekked more than 120km to take up residence in a small patch of forest surrounded by wide open farmland at Jhabua in south Haryana's Rewari, the forest department has borrowed a cage from Gir National Park in Gujarat to trap the elusive cat and take him back to the Rajasthan reserve. The cage, a steel enclosure that is roughly the size of a 12x20 feet room, arrived in Rewari on Wednesday on a truck. The Haryana forest department has smaller cages, which are typically used to capture leopards that are commonly sighted here. A tiger, however, is an entirely different proposition. It can be more than two times the size of a leopard, and therefore, needed a cage from Gir, which is home to lions. So far, the forest department has used calves as bait three times to pull the tiger into one of the smaller cages and tranquilise him. But ST-2303 thwarted the attempts made on Aug 21, 29 and Sept 4. It took the bait but swiftly retreated into thick foliage before foresters could shoot the tranquiliser dart. The tiger has made two attempts to return to Sariska, sneaking out of Jhabua at night to cross the border and reach Rajasthan, once on Aug 30 and again on Sept 7. On both occasions, it changed its mind and returned to Jhabua the next morning. With a large cage now available, the bait will be placed inside it, tied to steel bars at the opposite end from the trap door. Once ST-2303 enters, his weight should trigger the cage to snap shut. "A spacious cage has arrived in Jhabua to capture the tiger safely. But it will not be an easy task," said AP Pandey, additional principal chief conservator of forests (south Haryana). Wildlife department officials who have been tracking the tiger in Jhabua told TOI that they haven't caught sight of ST-2303 on cameras set up inside the forest in the last 24 hours.

NAME CHANGE
I, Adarsh S/o Vijaypal Singh R/o Flat No. 4, 2nd Floor, Emilia Floors, Block-HB, Vatika India Next, Sector-82, Gurgaon, Haryana-122004, Have Changed My Name To Adarsh Kumar

NAME CHANGE
I, Sarvar Singh Yadav S/o Banvari Lal Yadav R/o 102, B-Block, Mahavir Vihar, Dwarka Sector-1, Delhi-110075, My Father Name in my Passport Banvari Lal Singh This is Wrong My Correct Father Name is Banvari Lal Yadav in my All Future Documents

NAME CHANGE
I, HARJINDER SINGH NAGI S/O AVTAR SINGH NAGI R/O RZ-54, GALI NO.4, VISHNU GARDEN, NEW DELHI-110018 have changed my minor daughter name from HARSIMRAN JEET KAUR to HARSIMRANJEET KAUR for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE
I, SANGITA Mother of No. 15756971W Rank-SIGMN Name-BANDNGAR SANGITOSH LAXMAN Presently residing at VPO-BUDHGAON, TEH-MIRAJ, DIST-SANGLI, MAHARASHTRA-416304 have changed my name from SANGITA to SANGITA LAXMAN BANDGAR for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 16/10/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, KRISHNA CHANDRA PANT S/O JOGESHWAR PRASAD R/O KANDULI BARI PAURI GARHWAL, U.K. 246276, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME FROM, KRISHNA CHANDRA PANT TO KRISHNA CHANDRA ALL FUTURE PURPOSE.

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NAME CHANGE
I, No-16019607K Rank-HAV Name-SANDEEP KUMAR S/o NARSINGH Residing at VPO-PAHARSAR, TEH-RAJGARH, DIST-CHURU, RAJASTHAN-331023, have changed my minor son's name from DAKSH to DAKSH KUMAR for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 16/10/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is to inform the general public that Mr. Sahil Sehrawal is the owner Plot no. 235, area measuring 353 Sq. Yds. out of Khevali Khata no. 137/138, Khatoni no. 155 mu no. 22, Kila no. 10/6-7), 2/1(1-6), 11/1(1-9), 2/4 (1-19), situated at village Sukhrail, Tehsil & Distt. Gurugram Haryana through Transfer Deed in Blood Relation dated 15/07/2024 regd. as doc. No. 4523 executed by Mrs. Anita Devi in favour of Mr. Sahil Sehrawal in respect of said Plot. Mr. Sahil Sehrawal is in the process of mortgaging the said property with ICICI Home Finance Co. Ltd. Any objections or concerns regarding this transaction should be raised within a period of 07 days from the date of this public notice. Any objections submitted after the completion of this 07-day period will not be considered binding with respect to the said property or the interests of our client. If anyone wishes to raise an objection, please do so within the stipulated 07-days period by contacting: **Law Veritas: North (Advocates & Legal Consultants)** at Office No. 11, 1st Floor, Building No. A-44A, Sector-16, Noida, Uttar Pradesh-201301; Landline(s): +910120-3101683, E-mail: accounts@lvnorth.in

NAME CHANGE
I, POOJA SAINI W/O SUNIL SAINI residing at 3717, MAMAN STREET, PAHARI DHIRAJ SADAR BAZAR, DELHI 110006 have changed my minor son name from YUVRAJ SAINI to YUVANSH SAINI all future purposes.

PUBLIC NOTICE
The general public is hereby informed that Mrs. Sunita intends to purchase a residential plot measuring 150 square yards (125.41 square meters) out of Kharsa No. 715A and 715B, situated in Village Casag Pargana, Tehsil, and Distt Meerut, U.P., from Mrs. Savita. Mr. Ajit was the initial owner and transferred the said property to Mrs. Vidya Vati through a Sale Deed dated 02.03.2009. Subsequently, Mrs. Vidya Vati passed away on 12.05.2020, leaving behind her legal heir, Mr. Mahendra Singh. Mr. Mahendra Singh sold the property to Mrs. Savita through a Sale Deed dated 11.07.2023. Please note that the chain documents the Survival Certificate in the name of the late Mrs. Vidya Vati is not available. The property will be financed by Hinduja Housing Finance Ltd., Branch Garh City, Noida, Uttar Pradesh. Any person(s) found in possession of aforesaid property and any objection, then kindly contact the undersigned along with original property document, within 07 days from date of this notice on below address, failing which, the claim as per aforesaid sale deed shall be treated as null and void in respect of the subject property. **[ASHWANI KUMAR] Advocate** Chamber No. 122, Tehsil Compound, Ghaziabad, U.P.

NAME CHANGE
I, SANGITA Mother of No. 15756971W Rank-SIGMN Name-BANDNGAR SANGITOSH LAXMAN Presently residing at VPO-BUDHGAON, TEH-MIRAJ, DIST-SANGLI, MAHARASHTRA-416304 have changed my name from SANGITA to SANGITA LAXMAN BANDGAR for all future purposes and in my son's service records my date of birth wrongly mentioned as 01/01/1974 instead of my correct date of birth as 01/06/1974 vide Affidavit dated 16/10/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is to inform the general public that Mrs. Raj Bala is the owner Property Bearing No. 434, area measuring 55 Sq. Mtrs., i.e., 66 Sq. Yds., Block-C1, in the residential Colony Known as ANSAL'S PALAM VIHAR, Gurugram, Situated in and around Village Chauma Tehsil & Distt. Gurugram, Haryana through Sale Deed dated 17.05.2024 regd. as doc. No. 1909 executed by Mrs. Preeti Yadav in favour of Mrs. Raj Bala in respect of the said property. The above-said owner has misplaced the (1) Original Allotment letter dated 19.08.1996 issued by M/S Ansal Properties and Industries Ltd in favour of Mrs. Krishna in respect of the said Property (2) Original Possession letter issued by M/S Ansal Properties & Industries Ltd in favour of Mrs. Krishna in respect of the said Property. (3) Original Sale Deed dated 11.07.2001 executed by M/S Ansal Properties & Industries Ltd in favour of Mrs. Krishna in respect of the said Property. (4) Original Regd. Copy of ATS & Will dated 31.07.2001 executed by Mrs. Krishna in favour of Mr. H.C. Baluja in respect of the said Property. (5) Original Sale Deed dated 20.11.2001 executed by Mrs. Krishna through GPA Mr. H.C. Baluja in favour of Mr. Ramvir Yadav in respect of the said Property. (6) Original Regd. Copy of the said Property. (7) Original Occupation certificate dated 13.12.2003 issued by Senior Town Planner in favour of Mr. Ramvir Yadav in respect of the said Property. FIR No. 2205695/2024, also registered at P.S. Crime Branch, Delhi on dated 15.10.2024. Anyone who finds the above-mentioned documents, kindly hand over the same to the Manager of ICICI Home Finance Co. Ltd, Gurgaon 1 -- Sector-29 Mrs. Raj Bala is in the process of mortgaging the said property with ICICI Home Finance Co. Ltd. Any objections or concerns regarding this transaction should be raised within a period of 07 days from the date of this public notice. Any objections submitted after the completion of this 07-day period will not be considered binding with respect to the said property or the interests of our client. If anyone wishes to raise an objection, please do so within the stipulated 07-days period by contacting: **Law Veritas: North (Advocates & Legal Consultants)** at Office No. 11, 1st Floor, Building No. A-44A, Sector-16, Noida, Uttar Pradesh-201301; Landline(s): +910120-3101683, E-mail: accounts@lvnorth.in

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I, SANGITA Mother of No. 15756971W Rank-SIGMN Name-BANDNGAR SANGITOSH LAXMAN Presently residing at VPO-BUDHGAON, TEH-MIRAJ, DIST-SANGLI, MAHARASHTRA-416304 have changed my name from SANGITA to SANGITA LAXMAN BANDGAR for all future purposes and in my son's service records my date of birth wrongly mentioned as 01/01/1974 instead of my correct date of birth as 01/06/1974 vide Affidavit dated 16/10/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

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I, SANGITA Mother of No. 15756971W Rank-SIGMN Name-BANDNGAR SANGITOSH LAXMAN Presently residing at VPO-BUDHGAON, TEH-MIRAJ, DIST-SANGLI, MAHARASHTRA-416304 have changed my name from SANGITA to SANGITA LAXMAN BANDGAR for all future purposes and in my son's service records my date of birth wrongly mentioned as 01/01/1974 instead of my correct date of birth as 01/06/1974 vide Affidavit dated 16/10/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is to inform the general public that Mrs. Raj Bala is the owner Property Bearing No. 434, area measuring 55 Sq. Mtrs., i.e., 66 Sq. Yds., Block-C1, in the residential Colony Known as ANSAL'S PALAM VIHAR, Gurugram, Situated in and around Village Chauma Tehsil & Distt. Gurugram, Haryana through Sale Deed dated 17.05.2024 regd. as doc. No. 1909 executed by Mrs. Preeti Yadav in favour of Mrs. Raj Bala in respect of the said property. The above-said owner has misplaced the (1) Original Allotment letter dated 19.08.1996 issued by M/S Ansal Properties and Industries Ltd in favour of Mrs. Krishna in respect of the said Property (2) Original Possession letter issued by M/S Ansal Properties & Industries Ltd in favour of Mrs. Krishna in respect of the said Property. (3) Original Sale Deed dated 11.07.2001 executed by M/S Ansal Properties & Industries Ltd in favour of Mrs. Krishna in respect of the said Property. (4) Original Regd. Copy of ATS & Will dated 31.07.2001 executed by Mrs. Krishna in favour of Mr. H.C. Baluja in respect of the said Property. (5) Original Sale Deed dated 20.11.2001 executed by Mrs. Krishna through GPA Mr. H.C. Baluja in favour of Mr. Ramvir Yadav in respect of the said Property. (6) Original Regd. Copy of the said Property. (7) Original Occupation certificate dated 13.12.2003 issued by Senior Town Planner in favour of Mr. Ramvir Yadav in respect of the said Property. FIR No. 2205695/2024, also registered at P.S. Crime Branch, Delhi on dated 15.10.2024. Anyone who finds the above-mentioned documents, kindly hand over the same to the Manager of ICICI Home Finance Co. Ltd, Gurgaon 1 -- Sector-29 Mrs. Raj Bala is in the process of mortgaging the said property with ICICI Home Finance Co. Ltd. Any objections or concerns regarding this transaction should be raised within a period of 07 days from the date of this public notice. Any objections submitted after the completion of this 07-day period will not be considered binding with respect to the said property or the interests of our client. If anyone wishes to raise an objection, please do so within the stipulated 07-days period by contacting: **Law Veritas: North (Advocates & Legal Consultants)** at Office No. 11, 1st Floor, Building No. A-44A, Sector-16, Noida, Uttar Pradesh-201301; Landline(s): +910120-3101683, E-mail: accounts@lvnorth.in

NEWS BOX

Johnson & Johnson to pay \$15 million to man who blamed baby powder for cancer

Connecticut. Johnson & Johnson (J&J) must pay \$15 million to a Connecticut man who alleges that he developed mesothelioma, a rare form of cancer, as a result of using the company's talc powder for decades, a jury found on Tuesday. Plaintiff Evan Plotkin sued the company in 2021 soon after his diagnosis, saying he was sickened by inhaling J&J's baby powder. The jury in Fairfield County, Connecticut Superior Court also found that the company should pay additional punitive damages, which will be determined later by the judge overseeing the case. Evan Plotkin and his trial team are thrilled that a jury once again decided to hold Johnson & Johnson accountable for their marketing and sale of a baby powder product that they knew contained asbestos. Ben Braly, a lawyer for Plotkin, said in an email. Erik Haas, J&J's worldwide vice president of litigation, said in a statement that the company would appeal "erroneous" rulings by the trial judge that kept the jury from hearing critical facts about the case. "Those facts show that the verdict is irreconcilable with the decades of independent scientific evaluations confirming talc is safe, does not contain asbestos and does not cause cancer," Haas said. Tuesday's verdict comes as J&J seeks to resolve claims by more than 62,000 people who say that they got ovarian and other gynaecological cancers from talc through a nearly \$9 billion settlement in bankruptcy. The bankruptcy deal, which faces legal challenges from some plaintiffs' lawyers, has put the lawsuits over gynaecological cancers on hold, but does not affect the much smaller number of mesothelioma claims like Plotkin's. The company has previously settled some of those claims but has not proposed a nationwide settlement. Plaintiffs in all of the lawsuits say that J&J's talc products, like its once iconic baby powder, were tainted with asbestos, a carcinogen known to cause mesothelioma and other cancers.



Several families in Punjab worried over India, Canada diplomatic fallout

CHANDIGARH. As relations between India and Canada have hit an all time low, after the diplomatic fallout now the parents and families of students and others from Punjab who have gone to Canada on study visas or currently working there are apprehensive on getting PR while those who got permanent residency or citizenship are anxious on how this might cause hindrance in travelling back to India. Talking with this newspaper, the parents and others expressed lot of apprehension and were worried about the outcome of this diplomatic row between countries and how it will be effect their families and children, as they expressed the feared that they will face difficulties in securing visas to meet families, children and relatives in Canada. Reacting to the fresh development, DP Singh who lives in Mohali has sent his children to Canada he is apprehensive that this deteriorating relationship should not have a negative effect on the permanent residency and citizenship of the children. "After spending so much the children have gone to Canada for higher studies and once they complete their studies they look to settle down there, but this present diplomatic row should not become hindrance in their permanent residency and afterwards citizenship," he says. Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (L) and PM Narendra Modi (R). Canada-Another parent Jaswant Singh whose son and daughter are studying in Canada, says that the day by day the Canadian Government is tightening the grip on intentional students as they have changed the rules and regulations and not only that the students will now face more difficulties in getting permanent residency (PR) and thus they fear they might be deported back and students will then be forced to apply for refugee status.

US warns Israel to boost humanitarian aid into Gaza or risk losing weapons funding

WASHINGTON. The Biden administration has warned Israel that it must increase the amount of humanitarian aid it is allowing into Gaza within the next 30 days or it could risk losing access to U.S. weapons funding. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin warned their Israeli counterparts in a letter dated Sunday that the changes must occur. The letter, which restates U.S. policy toward humanitarian aid and arms transfers, was sent amid deteriorating conditions in northern Gaza and an Israeli airstrike on a hospital tent site in central Gaza that killed at least four people and burned others. A similar letter that Blinken sent to Israeli officials in April led to more humanitarian assistance getting to the Palestinian territory, State Department spokesman Matthew Miller said Tuesday. But that has not lasted. "In fact, it's fallen by over 50% from where it was at its peak," Miller said at a briefing. Blinken and Austin "thought it was appropriate to make clear to the government of Israel that there are changes that they need to make again, to see that the level of assistance making it into Gaza comes back up from the very, very low levels that it is at today." For Israel to continue qualifying for foreign military financing, the level of aid getting into Gaza must increase to at least 350 trucks a day, Israel must institute additional humanitarian pauses and provide increased security for humanitarian sites, Austin and Blinken said in their letter. They said Israel had 30 days to respond to the requirements. "The letter was not meant as a threat," White House national security spokesman John Kirby told reporters. "The letter was simply meant to reiterate the sense of urgency we feel and the seriousness with which we feel it, about the need for an increase, a dramatic increase in humanitarian assistance." An Israeli official confirmed a letter had been delivered but did not discuss the contents. That official, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss a diplomatic matter, confirmed the U.S. had raised "humanitarian concerns" and was putting pressure on Israel to speed up the flow of aid into Gaza.

Pakistan PM Shehbaz urges SCO members to strengthen framework for regional challenges

Sharif mentioned the Belt and Road Initiative, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, and the North-South Initiative as critical for enhancing connectivity in the region.

ISLAMABAD. Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday urged Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) member states to strengthen the organisation's framework to address multiple regional challenges and foster closer cooperation. Sharif made these remarks while addressing the opening session of the 23rd meeting of the Council of the Heads of Government (CHG) of the SCO member states. "From the esteemed platform of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, a beacon of multilateralism, I believe we not only have the potential but also the will to create a future that is more prosperous and secure for our

people a future that is inclusive and reflective of the shared aspirations of all member states," he said. Prime Minister Shehbaz highlighted, "We are at a historic moment of transition where sweeping transformations are reshaping the global social, political, economic, and security landscape." He reaffirmed Pakistan's "commitment to regional peace, stability, enhanced connectivity, and sustainable socio-economic development." He also emphasized that the SCO "embodies the collective voice and wishes of over 40 percent of the global population, anchored in the Shanghai spirit." "Your presence here today underscores our shared commitment to fulfilling the aspirations of our people by ensuring collective security and enhancing mutually beneficial cooperation for the sustainable development and prosperity of the SCO region," he stated. He called the summit a testament to the strength of ties and collaboration among the SCO's diverse nations. "Together, we have the potential to drive socio-economic progress, enhance regional peace and stability, and improve the quality of life for our



citizens," the premier said. Prime Minister Shehbaz urged the leaders to use the SCO meeting to "exchange ideas, share best practices, and forge concrete action plans that will benefit our economies and societies." He expressed hope for "wonderful outcomes" from the in-depth deliberations. "Our collaboration and joint efforts to expand academic and tourism linkages, alleviate poverty, and empower women and youth across the SCO region reflect our commitment to promoting prosperity through unity," he noted. He recounted the successes achieved during Pakistan's chairmanship and urged for further tangible actions

through cooperation in trade and the economy. He said Afghanistan provides opportunities for trade and transit. "A stable Afghanistan is essential for fully realizing these opportunities," he added, calling on the international community to provide humanitarian support to the country while urging the interim Afghan government to ensure its territory is not used for terrorism against its neighbors. Shehbaz also stressed the importance of regional connectivity, noting that Pakistan supports the SCO's connectivity initiative. He mentioned the Belt and Road Initiative, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, and the North-South Initiative as critical for enhancing connectivity in the region. He urged against viewing connectivity projects through "narrow political lenses" and instead with a focus on increasing regional prosperity. Shehbaz also highlighted the issue of poverty, stating that collective efforts are needed to eradicate it. "Poverty is not just a social issue but a moral imperative," he said, urging closer cooperation within the SCO region to address it.

Imran Khan isolated in dark cell, no calls to sons, jail cook on leave: Ex-wife

World Jemima Goldsmith, the former wife of Pakistan's jailed ex-Prime Minister Imran Khan, has levelled some serious allegations against the Shehbaz Sharif-led government. She claimed that her former husband was being kept in solitary confinement with authorities cutting off the electricity supply in his jail cell and was no longer allowed to make weekly calls to his sons.



Goldsmith's allegations come as the Pakistan government is hosting the ongoing two-day SCO Summit in Islamabad, which has drawn top leaders from member states, including External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, and turned the capital city into a fortress. In the days leading to the summit, authorities also arrested hundreds of Imran Khan's supporters who attempted to march in Islamabad, demanding his release. In a social media post on Tuesday, Goldsmith, who was married to Imran Khan from 1995 to 2004, alleged that the Pakistani authorities have postponed all court hearings and also completely stopped

visits by the former Prime Minister's friends and family. Khan is presently lodged at the Adilala Jail in Rawalpindi, following his arrest on August 5, 2023. "In addition to cutting off in-person visits, and in defiance of a court order, his weekly calls to his sons, Sulaiman and Kasim Khan, who are British and who live in London, were stopped on September 10," she said, while referring to the couple's two sons. "We have received reports that the authorities have now turned off the lights and electricity in his cell and he is no longer allowed to leave his cell at any time. The jail cook has been sent on leave. He is now completely isolated,

in solitary confinement, literally in the dark, with no contact with the outside world. His lawyers are concerned about his safety and well-being." Goldsmith further alleged that the Pakistan government was not only mistreating Imran Khan, but also other members of his family in an "attempt to silence them and all political opposition." Imran's nephew, Hassan Niazi, a civilian, has been detained in military custody since August 2023. More recently, Imran Khan's sisters, Uzma and Aleema Khan, who have continued to speak out on his behalf, have also been arrested as they made their way peacefully to a demonstration, and they are currently being held in jail, despite there being no proper or lawful basis for their imprisonment," she said, while calling for all of their release. Imran Khan, 72, served as Prime Minister from 2018 to 2022, when he was ousted in a parliamentary no-confidence vote after falling out with the powerful military establishment considered Pakistan's political kingmakers.

How S Jaishankar started his day in Islamabad ahead of SCO Summit

World External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar spent a quiet Wednesday morning in Islamabad doing a morning walk with Indian diplomats and planting a sapling on the premises of the Indian High Commission. Jaishankar is in the Pakistani capital for the SCO Summit, becoming the first External Affairs Minister to visit the neighbouring country in nine years. Jaishankar shared a picture of him wearing a full-sleeved bottle-green t-shirt and track pants and doing a morning walk with the diplomats of the Indian High Commission in Islamabad. "A morning walk together with colleagues of Team @IndianPakistan in our High Commission campus," he tweeted. He also put up a post showing him planting an Arjuna sapling in the presence of Indian diplomats there on the premises of the High Commission. "An Arjuna sapling at @IndianPakistan premises is another



commitment to #Plant4Mother," he wrote. Jaishankar is leading India's delegation at the SCO Summit that will be held at Jinnah Convention Centre today. On Tuesday, the External Affairs Minister met Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif during an informal dinner hosted by the latter. Both leaders shook hands and exchanged greetings. No bilateral talks are scheduled between Jaishankar and his Pakistani counterpart Ishaq Dar on the sidelines of the SCO Summit as ties between the two neighbours remain frosty over cross-border terrorism emanating from Pakistan. On Tuesday, Jaishankar landed at Nur Khan airbase in Rawalpindi in Pakistan, making him the first Indian foreign minister to visit the country in nine years. The last External Affairs Minister to visit Pakistan was Sushma Swaraj. Other leaders from SCO member states attending the summit include Chinese Premier Li Qiang, Belarus Prime Minister Roman Golovchenko, Kazakhstan Prime Minister-ster Olzhas Bektenov, Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin, Tajik Prime Minister Kohir Rasulzoda, Uzbek Prime Minister Abdulla Aripov, Kyrgyzstan's Chairman of Ministers Cabinet Zhaparov Akyzbek, and.

Day 2 of SCO summit in Pak: S Jaishankar to attend talks on trade, economy

World The second day of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) meeting is set to begin at Pakistan's Jinnah Convention Centre, where Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will welcome leaders from across the region. The event started with a group photograph, followed by Prime Minister Sharif's opening remarks. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar addressed the 23rd Meeting of SCO Council of Heads of Government, in Islamabad, with a video surfacing online. He was welcomed to the venue of the summit by Shehbaz Sharif. S Jaishankar raised the issue of terrorism during his address. He said, "If activities across borders are characterised by terrorism, extremism and separatism, they are hardly likely to encourage trade,

energy flows, connectivity and people-to-people exchanges." He also raised the issue of violation of Indian sovereignty because of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project. "Cooperation must be based on mutual respect and sovereign equality. It should recognise territorial integrity and sovereignty. It must be built on genuine partnerships, not unilateral agendas. It cannot progress if we cherry-pick global practices, especially in trade and transit," he said. He reiterated the need to make the UN Security Council more "inclusive, representative, transparent, efficient, democratic and accountable". The session also featured the signing of several documents, after which Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar and SCO Secretary General

Zhang Ming addressed the media. Following this, Prime Minister Sharif hosted an official lunch. Representatives from India, China, Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan are attending the meeting, with Iran's First Vice President and Mongolia's Prime Minister also present. The Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers and the Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan, attending as a special guest, will participate as well. According to Pakistan's Foreign Ministry, discussions will focus on economic cooperation, trade, environmental issues, and socio-cultural ties. The leaders are expected to make significant decisions to boost cooperation among SCO members and approve the organisation's budget.

Canadian Sikh MP wants sanctions on Indian diplomats, gets mocked by journalists

World Canadian Sikh leader Jagmeet Singh, a former ally of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, was ridiculed by journalists when he called for sanctions on Indian diplomats and walked out of the press conference as he faced a volley of tough questions from reporters amid an escalating diplomatic row between the two countries. "We need to bring severe sanctions on Indian diplomats. We got the RCMP saying that Indian diplomats are hiring criminal elements to shoot at Canadians. I mean why would we do anything other than put in place severe sanctions on Indian diplomats," Jagmeet Singh, a known Khalistani sympathiser, and the leader of the New Democratic Party (NDP) said. "The Modi government has to be held accountable and we all need to be unified as Canadian leaders. All of us have to be unified in denouncing (PM Narendra) Modi, making sure we protect Canadians by putting their safety first and foremost," he said before ending his press conference. As Jagmeet Singh was walking out of the room, some journalists tried to raise their questions to him, with one of them mocking the leader, saying, "That's not how it works," drawing laughter from the audience. The

development came after the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) claimed that Indian agents present in Canada were working with the Lawrence Bishnoi gang to target pro-Khalistan elements. Jagmeet Singh had supported Trudeau's Liberal government for over two years before pulling the plug last month, accusing the Canadian Prime Minister of not fulfilling his promises. He has often been involved in rallies featuring Khalistani extremists, advocating for a separate Sikh state. Earlier, Canadian Foreign Minister Melanie Joly had hinted that the Trudeau government may impose sanctions on Indian diplomats, saying "everything was on the table" amid the diplomatic rift. The ongoing India-Canada diplomatic row took a sharp turn on Monday when New Delhi lashed out at Ottawa over its charge that the Indian High Commissioner and other diplomats are 'persons of interest' linked to an investigation into the murder of Nijjar. India dismissed them as "preposterous imputations" and downgraded its ties with Canada. India also said Trudeau's hostility to India has long been evident and cited his constant support for violent extremists



and terrorists to harass, threaten and intimidate Indian diplomats in Canada, stressing that these were done in the name of freedom of speech. Both India and Canada recalled six of their diplomats in a tit-for-tat move as New Delhi chided Ottawa for not sharing a "shred of evidence" of India's involvement in Nijjar's killing and not doing enough to tackle separatist elements on Canadian soil. Ties between India and Canada dived in September last year when Trudeau alleged Indian government agents' involvement in the killing of Nijjar on Canadian soil. New Delhi rejected those charges as "motivated and absurd". Nijjar, the chief of Khalistan Tiger Force

and wanted by the Indian government, was shot dead outside a gurdwara in Canada's Surrey in June last year. 'CANADIAN SIKHS STALKED BY FEAR' Meanwhile, in a statement, Jagmeet Singh claimed that Canadian Sikhs were stalked by fear, threats and harassment from Indian diplomats and called for a ban on Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh Network (RSS) in Canada. "We support today's (Tuesday) decision to expel India's diplomats and we are calling on the Government of Canada yet again to put diplomat sanctions against India in place, ban the RSS in Canada, and commit to pursuing the most severe consequences for anyone found to have participated in organised criminal activity on Canadian soil," he said. "New Democrats are extremely worried about the information released by the RCMP commissioner today. Canadians, particularly the Sikh community in Canada, have been stalked by fear, threats, harassment and violence-including extortion, violence and electoral interference all allegedly at the hands of Indian officials," he alleged.

News box

Two held for derogatory comments on Surekha

HYDERABAD. The Cyberabad cyber crime police on Tuesday apprehended two persons for allegedly posting derogatory comments on social media against Medak MP Raghunandan Rao and Forests and Environment Minister Konda Surekha. The accused, Devanna and Mahesh, were apprehended from their hometown, the Cyberabad cybercrime police said. While Devanna is a former sarpanch from Nizamabad, Mahesh is a businessman from Jagtial. On September 3, the MP lodged a complaint with the cybercrime police against six persons for defaming him and outraging the modesty of the minister. In his complaint, Raghunandan Rao said that Konda Surekha, who is also the in-charge Minister for the erstwhile Medak district, attended the Shaadi Mubarak programme at Dubakka on September 26. During the event, the MP and the minister distributed Shaadi Mubarak cheques to the beneficiaries. Later, the MP placed a cotton garland, which was handwoven by the Dubakka weavers' community, around the minister's neck. However, this act triggered derogatory posts and comments on social media platforms. The MP named six individuals — M.R. (X handle), Mahesh Anumulla, Mohd Moizuddin, SouthPaw (X handle), Jai Telangana (X handle) and Devesh Konapur (X handle). "These individuals spread this defamatory content on various platforms, including WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram and other social media channels, allegedly at the instigation of T Harish Rao, KTR and other BRS party leaders," read the complaint letter. The MP claimed that this act was deliberately done to damage the reputation of the two leaders. The Cyberabad Cyber Crime police booked a case under Sections 79 (insult to modesty of woman), 356 (defamation) of BNS and 67 of the IT Act.

Yellow alert parameter changed for urban floods



BENGALURU. With increasing incidents of urban flooding in metros like Bengaluru, Delhi, Chennai and Mumbai, the parameters for urban flooding have been changed. A senior official from the India Meteorological Department said, "Now when rainfall forecast is of 5 cm or less, we issue a yellow alert, asking government agencies to stay on alert and citizens to stay indoors. Earlier, the advisory and alert used to be issued when the rainfall forecast was for 7 cm." As the number of incidents of urban flooding are increasingly being reported in multiple places, including Bengaluru, for the safety of citizens, the Ministry of Earth Sciences, Delhi, and IMD, Pune, directed changing the parameters for yellow alert, the official said. "Since there are no drains and no proper management for rainwater, the disaster management officials have also agreed to the change in the parameters and definition. We are also deliberating if the parameters for issuing alerts and caution can be altered based on cities," the official added. IMD officials said the new parameters have been followed for the last two-three months. While there has not been heavy rainfall in Bengaluru, in other cities, the change in announcements and alerts has helped citizens.

Cybercrime cops refund Rs 38 lakh to victim



HYDERABAD. In case you fall victim to cyber fraud, register a complaint at the earliest so that the chances of recovery of lost money are higher, the cybercrime police insisted. In a recent case, the Hyderabad cybercrime police helped in refunding 39 lakh to a 34-year-old man who had lost 78 lakh in a stock trading fraud. The victim was allegedly cheated by cyberconmen who approached him under the pretext of helping him with stock trading. Trusting the fraudsters, the victim transferred a total of 78.70 lakh to several bank accounts provided by the accused persons. However, once the victim realised that he was tricked by the fraudsters, he filed a complaint with the cybercrime police, who registered a case and quickly sprung to action. In light of the recent refund case, the DCP said, "There is a possibility to get a refund of at least part of the lost and 'put on hold' amount, if it is reported immediately." She requested victims of cyber fraud to report immediately through the helpline number 1930 or file a complaint on the national cybercrime reporting portal.

Family escapes unharmed as car catches fire on NH-16

A family from Bihar had a fortunate escape when their car caught fire near Nayapalli Durga Mandap while traveling from Khandagiri to Rasulgarh.

BHUBANESWAR . A family from Bihar had a narrow escape after their car caught fire on NH-16 near Nayapalli Durga Mandap on Tuesday evening. The incident occurred while the family was en route to Rasulgarh from Khandagiri. While the exact cause of the incident is yet to be ascertained, fire services personnel suspect it to be a case of short circuit. Owner of the car said he along with his family was on a tour to the city from Puri. "The vehicle was also in a good condition. However, we noticed smoke emanating from the bonnet and hence vacated the car immediately. A fire broke out soon after and engulfed the entire vehicle," he said. Meanwhile, helping hand extended by city hotel Crown located close to the national highway, assisted fire services personnel in containing the blaze effectively and reducing the risk on other vehicles moving on the route. Crown IHCL SeleQtions director Debasish Patnaik said swift action was taken after they came to know of the incident. "We laid down the hose pipes till the mishap spot immediately and also extinguished the fire to a significant extent using the



hydrant," Patnaik said. Soon the fire services team reached the spot. The help from hotel Crown aided the fire personnel in dousing the flames effectively. Patnaik said the family travelling in the car was also brought to the hotel, consoled and offered best room for their stay in the night as they were heading to Bihar.

Kerala govt removes NSS coordinator; to kickstart selection as per manual

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM. In the run-up to the appointment of a state programme coordinator for the National Service Scheme (NSS) Higher Secondary wing as per the NSS manual, the state government has removed the incumbent officer who was given repeated extensions to the key post, in violation of rules, since 2017. TNIE had reported that the continuance of Jacob John as state coordinator constituted a violation of the conditions laid down in the NSS manual and would affect the Union Government's assistance to the scheme. In an order issued on Tuesday, the government gave temporary charge of NSS state programme coordinator to the Joint Director (Academic) of the Higher Secondary wing. According to sources, a regular appointment will be made to the post through a proper selection process, as laid down in the rules. As per the rules, the Plus-II level state programme coordinator has to be appointed on deputation/short-term contract for three years and could be extended by one more year subject to satisfactory performance. Citing RTI documents, TNIE had reported that John was appointed to the post six times, of which four orders issued by the Higher Education Department pertained to the extension of his tenure for one year each. As per the NSS manual, the upper age limit of the state programme coordinator is 50 years at the time of selection. John, who is well above the upper age limit, is ineligible for reappointment or extension of tenure. However, the officer's proximity to the LDF dispensation is cited as the reason why he has not been replaced. With 1,570 units and 1.4 lakh volunteers, the higher secondary wing is the biggest NSS cell in the state and receives the largest chunk of the Union Government funds.

Work-life balance key, says AIG G Poonguzhali at KUWJ conference

KOCHI. Working women need support from families to ensure work-life balance, according to G Poonguzhali, AIG, Coastal Police. She was inaugurating a panel discussion on 'women and work' organised by Kerala Union of Working Journalists (KUWJ) as part of the union's 60th state conference on Tuesday. Addressing the

gathering at St Teresa's College, she urged to ensure work-life balance. "The kind of effort a man and a woman put and the challenges to build a career are different. After marriage, there are added challenges and discussions about babysitting and taking care of families. So women need to have support from families," she said,

adding that introspection and a circle of friends can help. Discussing the career development of women, she said like men, women too need to plan their careers, attempt to upscale their skills and attend health to ensure their dreams are pursued. Senior journalists and women representatives of various political parties spoke.



Senior journalists and women representatives of various political parties spoke.

BJD faces turmoil as former MP blames VK Pandian for party discontent

Prasanna Patasani, a former BJD MP, claims that VK Pandian's influence is detrimental to the party's future, urging Naveen Patnaik to take responsibility for the anticipated electoral losses.



BHUBANESWAR . With the BJD grappling with rising internal discontent and desertion of senior leaders, former Bhubaneswar MP Prasanna Patasani, who had quit the regional outfit to join the BJP before the elections this year, on Tuesday attributed the current turmoil in the party to former bureaucrat and then chief minister Naveen Patnaik's close aide VK Pandian. A founding member of the BJD and a five-time MP from Bhubaneswar, Patasani said, "I had to quit BJD because of VK Pandian and the popular government led by Naveen Patnaik was unseated due to him. It hurts when a person like me who was a founding member of the party is forced to quit." Responding to

mediapersons a day after senior BJD leader Amar Prasad Satpathy disassociated himself from the party saying it has now become suffocating for anybody to continue in the regional outfit, Patasani said the feeling was echoed by many. He also expressed doubts about Pandian's retirement from active politics. "The confidante of former chief minister still wields considerable influence in the party. The BJD will never win another election till he is around," he said. Patasani also supported Satpathy's demand that party supremo Naveen Patnaik should own up responsibility for the defeat in 2024 Assembly and LS elections. "I support whatever Satpathy has said. I feel the same thing," he stated.

48-year-old man sets himself ablaze at Kerala's Poojappura, suffers severe burns

The injured has been identified as Baiju, a native of Karakulam. Poojappura police sources said the man set himself ablaze after pouring petrol.



THIRUVANANTHAPURAM. A 48-year-old man suffered severe burns after attempting suicide by setting himself ablaze at Poojappura Junction on Tuesday night.

The injured has been identified as Baiju, a native of Karakulam. Poojappura police sources said the man set himself ablaze after pouring petrol. Baiju had domestic issues with his wife, who later left him. After break-up, the woman stayed at the Mahila Mandiram at Poojappura for a while and later left the place.

Unaware of his wife leaving the place, Baiju arrived at the Mandiram with his two children and demanded to meet her. When he was turned away, Baiju reportedly bought petrol and poured it overhead. Seeing this, the locals informed the police and the fire and rescue services. However, he set himself on fire when they arrived. A civil police officer sustained burns on his hand while trying to prevent Baiju from setting himself on fire. Baiju reportedly sustained 70 per cent burns and is in a serious condition. He has been admitted to the Medical College Hospital.

The Medical College authorities denied the allegation that there was laxity in attending to the patient at the casualty. They blamed the ambulance driver for trying to dump the critically ill patient before the casualty block. "The ambulance driver dropped the patient at the portico and tried to make him walk. There was no lapse on the part of the hospital staff. As soon as they came to know about the condition of the patient they arranged for a clean trolley as it was a burns patient. He was immediately shifted to the burns ICU," said hospital superintendent Dr B S Sunilkumar. He said the resident medical officer checked the CCTV footage and found no lapse on the part of the staff.

Twenty20 members vote out fellow panchayat president in no-trust motion in Kochi

The party alleged that she, along with the panchayat secretary, was involved in corruption amounting to crores of rupees.

KOCHI. The president of the Twenty20-ruled Kunnathunad panchayat, Nithamol M V, was ousted from office on Tuesday after a no-confidence motion was passed against her. Nithamol, who was at loggerheads with the party for several months, was removed when 10 out of 11 Twenty20 members voted in favour of the motion, while she abstained from voting. Although five UDF members were present at the meeting, they did not participate in the voting, and the two CPM members were absent. The Twenty20 members served a notice of no-confidence against their own panchayat president for alleged corruption and her failure to comply with party directives. Kunnathunad panchayat comprises 18 seats, with the party having 11 members.

forgery of documents, criminal conspiracies, scams worth crores of rupees, and links with criminal gangs, as well as dereliction of her official duties.



The UDF, including the Congress and the Muslim League, has five members and the CPM two. The Twenty20 said that the no-confidence motion against Nithamol was prompted by her alleged involvement in multiple illegal activities, including

creating a fake document of the panchayat committee's minutes, which was then uploaded as if it represented the majority decision.

Twenty20 further accused Nithamol of misusing her official position to forge financial deals worth lakhs of rupees with real estate businessmen, land mafias, and moneylenders. The party alleged that she, along with the panchayat secretary, was involved in corruption amounting to crores of rupees.

"A thorough vigilance investigation should be carried out in this regard," the party demanded in a statement issued on Tuesday. "The president's irresponsible actions and indifference have deprived the public of the benefits and services they deserve," the statement added.

"With the no-confidence motion against the president passed, there are 15 days to elect a new president, and the party will take a decision on this matter," said Roy Ouseph, vice-president of the panchayat.

What kind of military power does India need

SOME unrelated events of the last week draw attention to India's modest trans-border military (TBM) capability and the manner in which certain disruptive technologies are impacting the conduct of war. The military operations in the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war (that began in February 2022) and the spiral of violence triggered by the Hamas terror attack on Israel (in October 2023), now roiled by the entry of Hezbollah and Iran, testify to the latter trend to a certain degree. Some preliminary policy inferences can be drawn that are relevant for India. The first development pertains to the October 9 Cabinet Committee on Security approval for the acquisition of two nuclear propelled submarines (SSN); these platforms are also referred to as attack-submarines or hunter-killers. They will be indigenously designed and built at Visakhapatnam. This is a major policy decision and an ambitious one at that.

India was yet to acquire the requisite level of technological competence to design and build a conventional diesel-electric submarine, but yet it had moved straight to design and build a SSBN (a nuclear powered submarine with nuclear-tipped ballistic missiles) — the INS Arihant. The SSBN has a strategic role, which is to ensure credible second-strike capability to render nuclear deterrence more robust. India joined this select group of nations in 2018, one which includes the USA, Russia, the UK, France and China.

After a long gestation period of almost 17 years since the acquisition of an SSN was first mooted, India is now embarking on the project, though this approval has to be followed by adequate budgetary allocations. An SSN is a totally different platform by way of technological features and as is the case with the first type of any naval platform, the journey will be long, arduous and expensive. The two SSNs are reported to cost Rs 15,000 crore each, though this is an initial estimate. When these two boats enter service in an operational manner — with full ordnance package, which means submarine-launched missiles — India will have a credible underwater capability, wherein the SSN can be tasked with attack, surveillance and special operations roles, depending on the tactical exigency. In essence, the SSN can remain on extended underwater 'prowl', and unfriendly navies will have to factor this capability when operating in maritime areas of relevance to India. In the same week, on October 7, the CCS also approved phase III of the Space Based Surveillance system (SBS), which will allow India to launch 52 spy satellites in low earth and geostationary orbits. Expected to cost Rs 27,000 crore, the trans-border surveillance capability of this cluster will be enhanced by artificial intelligence and give a fillip to India's comprehensive TBM index. Air power is a core element of a nation's TBM capability and this aspect came into focus with the assumption of office by the new air chief, Air Chief Marshal Amar Preet Singh, who took over in end-September. During the traditional media interaction in the run-up to the Air Force Day on October 8, ACM Singh noted the gap between India and its principal strategic challenger, China, in the air power domain and dwelt on the need to ramp up domestic production of fighter jets to redress dwindling numbers. Moreover, he said, his first effort would be to allow "the fighter aircraft strength go down below 30 squadrons" and that HAL should stick to its promise to deliver 24 aircraft every year to bridge the numbers gap.

The 30 squadron figure has to be seen against the aspiration of the IAF to have 42 fighter squadrons to deal with a two-front operational requirement against China and Pakistan. This number was arrived at after the 1965 war with Pakistan; and none other than the legendary JRD Tata, an accomplished pilot and founder of Air India, was a member of the group that made this assessment.

The manner in which air power has been transmuted is evident in the Russia-Ukraine war as well as the violence in West Asia, where the use of relatively less expensive unmanned drones and missiles/rockets have replaced the once-familiar deployment of fighter aircraft and long-range bombers.

Himachal's financial struggle in a centralised system

Initially meant for specific, temporary purposes, cesses and surcharges have now become permanent fixtures in the tax system.

Tikender S Panwar (Ex-Dy Mayor, Shimla) and Raja Awasthi (Official, Govt of Himachal Pradesh)

OVER the past week, BJP president and Union Health Minister JP Nadda has made claims regarding the fiscal crisis in Himachal Pradesh. Nadda has argued that the state government, led by Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, is financially dependent on the Central government. He has claimed that Rs 500 crore was being provided as a fiscal deficit grant, with an additional Rs 800 crore given monthly to keep the state financially afloat. However, these statements are not merely a reflection of the fiscal concerns but also a political attack on the Congress-led Himachal government, raising questions about the state's fiscal management. Nadda's comments can be seen as part of a broader trend of undermining fiscal federalism in India, particularly targeting smaller states like Himachal Pradesh. But do the smaller Himalayan states truly depend on the Centre for survival? And why has fiscal centralisation intensified in recent years? Himachal Pradesh ranks just below Kerala in terms of human development indices, thanks to successive governments which have invested heavily in education and social welfare. By the mid-1980s, the state had achieved full electrification despite its low population density and challenging terrain. Human resource development has been a significant driver of growth even though the state has remained industrially underdeveloped. Himachal Pradesh also contributes significantly to national resources, particularly in water and electricity generation, thanks to its large reservoirs and hydroelectric power stations. However, this has come at the cost of environmental degradation in the state. While the state's expenditure on social welfare remains high, it plays a vital role in national infrastructure. The financial landscape of India over the last decade has increasingly shifted towards centralisation, weakening the fiscal autonomy of states. Contrary to Nadda's assertions, the Centre's financial assistance is not an act of mercy but rather a constitutionally mandated part of India's federal structure. Article 270 of the Constitution outlines the distribution of taxes collected by the Union between the Centre and the states, based on the Finance Commission's recommendations. These taxes include corporation

tax, personal income tax and the Central GST. However, the BJP leader's claim ignores the larger issue of cess and surcharge, which are collected by the Centre but not shared with the states. In 2024-25, cesses and surcharges are estimated to constitute 23 per cent of the Central government's gross tax



receipts, depriving the states of their share. The total tax revenue for 2022-23, 2023-24 (revised estimates) and 2024-25 (budget estimates) are projected to be Rs 30.5 lakh crore, Rs 34.4 lakh crore, and Rs 38.8 lakh crore, respectively. Of this, the states' share will be only Rs 9.5 lakh crore, Rs 11.0 lakh crore, and Rs 12.2 lakh crore. It is significantly lower than the 41 per cent share recommended by the 15th Finance Commission.

Initially meant for specific, temporary purposes, cesses and surcharges have now become permanent fixtures in India's tax system. The share of cesses and surcharges in the Centre's gross tax revenue increased from 10.4 per cent in 2011-12 to 20.1 per cent in 2020-21. This shift has eroded the share of taxes devolved to states, significantly affecting their revenue. Even though various finance commissions have repeatedly advised that cesses and surcharges be levied sparingly, the Central government has increasingly relied on these measures. States have little-to-no control over these revenues, which are often used for Centrally-sponsored schemes. This has undermined the spirit of fiscal federalism, leaving states with reduced fiscal independence.

For example, the GST compensation cess, intended to cover shortfalls in tax collection after the GST's introduction, is being used primarily to repay loans taken for compensation purposes. The Centre's

reliance on these levies has not only weakened the financial position of the states but also raised concerns about the transparency and accountability of how these funds are used. Does the given fiscal architecture mean that the larger game plan is to destabilise the Opposition-ruled state governments in the country? JP Nadda, hailing from Himachal Pradesh and having served as a Cabinet minister in the state, should recognise the unique fiscal challenges faced by the mountain states. Himachal, which shares an international border, has particular fiscal needs and requires special attention from the Centre. After achieving statehood, Himachal enjoyed a strong partnership with the Central government, which facilitated its remarkable developmental progress. This collaboration was built on mutual trust and shared responsibility for development, not on condescension or political ridicule. If Nadda truly wants to help HP, he should advocate for the state's rightful demands rather than demean it for political purposes. HP's fiscal concerns are longstanding and deserve attention. They include issues related to the Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB), the Punjab Reorganisation Act and the water cess dispute — all of which have significant financial implications for the state. The Supreme Court has upheld Himachal's claims in these matters. The Central government should work to resolve them fairly. Himachal Pradesh is not merely surviving on the Centre's largesse; it is an integral part of India's development, contributing to national resources while balancing its own fiscal needs. The state has made considerable progress in human development, largely through its investments in education, health and social welfare. However, the increasing centralisation of fiscal powers, particularly through cesses and surcharges, has limited the state's financial independence. For fiscal federalism to thrive, the Centre must recognise the importance of states like Himachal and work collaboratively to address their concerns. Restoring the balance between the Centre and the states that ensures a fair distribution of resources is essential for the long-term development of India's federal system. Rather than perpetuating political attacks, the Centre should focus on promoting the rightful fiscal interests of Himachal Pradesh and fostering a more cooperative approach to governance.

Right to protest

Normalisation of disruption is not good



THE right to protest is protected under Article 19 of the Constitution. Citizens have a right to assemble peacefully and protest against the action or inaction on the part of the State. What's becoming an issue of concern, particularly in Punjab, is the repeated recourse — almost a given — to blocking roads and railway tracks when something irks someone. The protesters base their argument on past experience, which is that memorandums and dharnas count for little and only the disruption of traffic and essential services has the desired effect of forcing the authorities to take cognisance. The counter-argument is equally persuasive. What purpose does it serve to inconvenience fellow citizens day in and day out? If the authorities are at fault, why make the people suffer? The normalisation of disruption is a telling commentary on a State that does not care — for protesters and public alike.

It is essential to guard against a citizen versus citizen binary taking root. A situation, where both protesters and citizens harbour the notion of being victims, does not augur well for democracy. It dilutes the legitimate demand of

protesters and makes citizens immune to legitimate causes. No one gains. The use of the term 'andolanjeevi', in the protests against the Modi government's three farm laws drew criticism, and rightly so. People in our region stood as one, in solidarity with the protesting farmers. If these selfsame citizens — known for backing a worthy cause — increasingly feel they are at the receiving end, those leading the protests need to introspect. The methods being adopted are not helping.

Meanwhile, another 'andolanjeevi,' the well-known Ladakhi activist Sonam Wangchuk is not being allowed to have his say in Delhi. Section 144, the Raj-era section in the revamped penal code, has been imposed all over the capital's New Delhi district, prohibiting the gathering of more than five people. This is unimaginable in Punjab. That is why we must further nurture the tradition of talking truth to power, but not at the cost of societal disjointedness.

Young doctors must introspect, too

They should also raise their voice against the dehumanisation of modern biomedical system

AS I write this piece from Kolkata, I see young doctors coming to the street, raising their voice, exposing the huge network of corruption, or the tyranny of 'threat culture' that operates in government hospitals in West Bengal, and demanding safety and protection in their workplaces. Will it be possible for young doctors to feel somewhat uneasy with the way their profession has been transformed into a trade or a profit-making business? Yes, their determinism, or their courage to fight the ruling political establishment, is indeed praiseworthy. Yet, I feel like appealing to them and their senior colleagues to widen their horizons, become sufficiently self-reflexive, and also critically examine the discontents of the hegemonic biomedicine — its power discourse, its commodification, and innumerable malpractices associated with it. Well, I too adore doctors; and I am aware of the remarkable achievements of modern medicine. Take insulin, control your diabetes, and lead life reasonably smoothly; or, go for a knee replacement surgery, and walk once again confidently — yes, the heroic tales of modern medicine can be heard in every household. But then, these achievements notwithstanding, I cannot deny my ambivalence, and even some serious critique of the modern biomedical establishment. And I want young doctors — particularly, because they have not yet lost their critical thinking, to reflect on this critique, and give a new meaning to their struggle. Well, young doctors need to reflect on the prevalent politics of knowledge. Isn't it a fact that it is fairly easy to debunk 'traditional' medical systems like ayurveda, unani or homeopathy? If, as a patient, you dare to speak of the discontents of the modern biomedical system, you are likely to be reminded that you are merely a layperson; and hence, it would be better to accept everything your doctor suggests or prescribes.

In fact, the power discourse implicit in the hegemonic biomedicine, as Ivan Illich articulated with great insight in his classic 'Limits to Medicine', "disempowers the patient." But then, as a patient, you are not just a discrete body with a set of measurable parameters (say, your blood culture, or the findings of your biopsy report); you are also a living soul with consciousness and agency; and you might have your own choice regarding the way you wish to live or die.

Should you pass through a painful process of chemotherapy in the ICU of a super-specialty hospital, and live with a faint hope that you might get temporary relief from the pain of 'acute myeloid leukemia', and survive for another two months?

Or, should you refuse to reduce yourself into an object of experimentation and choose to go back to your home, and eventually leave the world amid the presence of the loved ones in your own bedroom?

Nobody — not even the best doctors with the power and aura of 'scientism', and the technology of artificial life-support systems — should be allowed to deprive you of your choice or your agency.

However, the irony is that because of the hegemonic biomedicine, and, to use Illich's words, the resultant "medicalization of death", most of us seem to have lost our control over the experience of living and dying. Not to say 'yes' to everything the doctors and associated pharmaceutical industry suggest is often ridiculed as an act of irresponsibility, or a demonstration of one's 'anti-science' temperament! Likewise, will it be possible for young doctors to feel somewhat uneasy with the way their profession has

been transformed into a trade or a profit-making business? Of course, doctors need to earn and live a decent life. But then, we are witnessing how, because of the absence of good facilities in our overcrowded government hospitals (don't forget that public health spending for financial year 2024 is merely 2.2 per



cent of the GDP), corporate super-specialty hospitals do not hesitate in selling 'good health' as a commodity with an 'appropriate' price list — say, ICU: Rs. 90,000 per day; or deluxe room: Rs 75,000 per day; or attractive 'packages' or 'discounts' for bypass surgery and kidney transplant. No wonder, health insurance companies seek to "bring smiles to happy consumers", and advise you "not to worry about cost limit, and focus only on your recovery!"

However, if you acquire the courage to keep your eyes open, you can easily see the speedy transformation of a noble profession into an ugly trade involving the

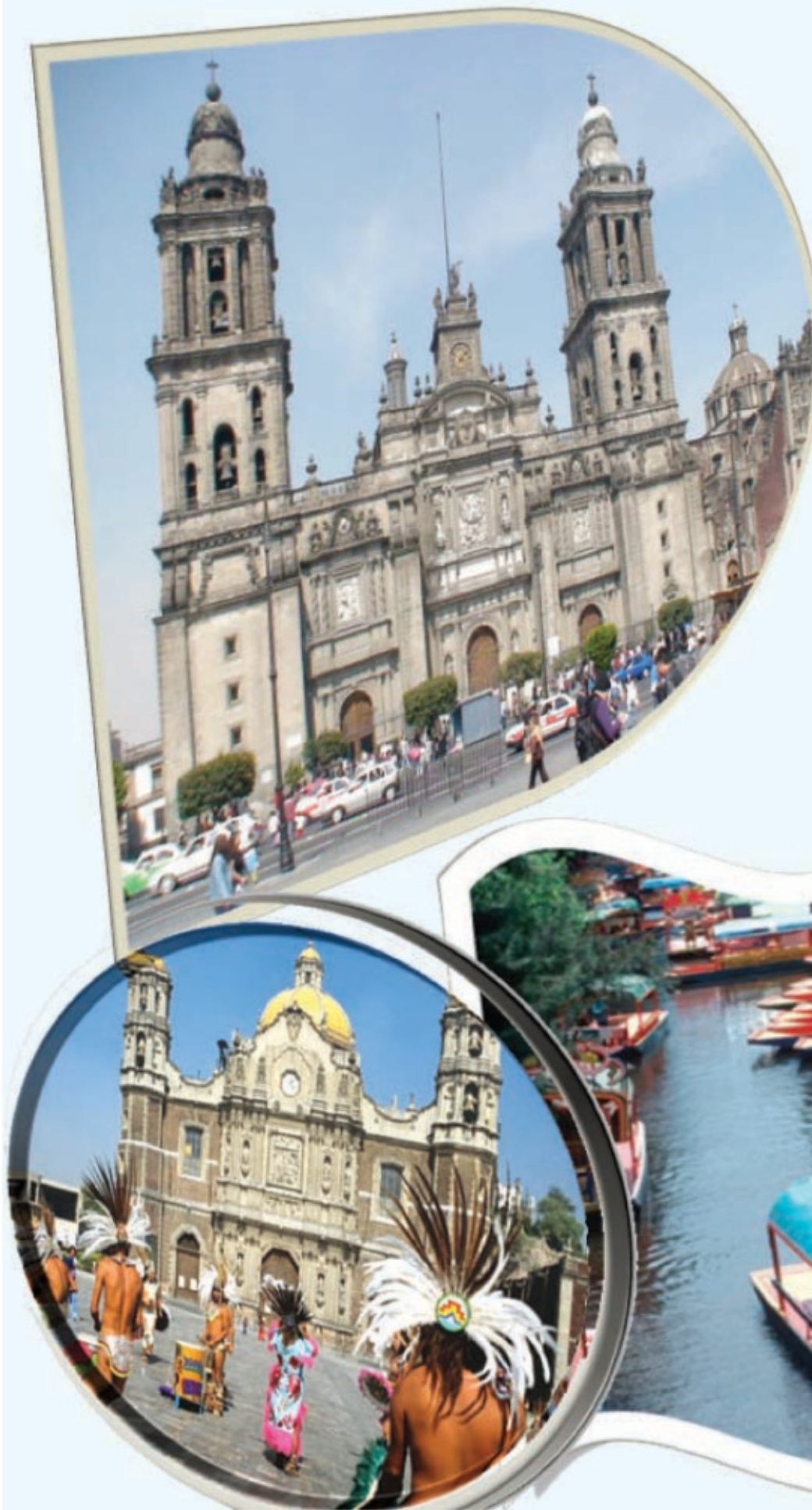
chain of corporate hospitals and nursing homes, all-pervading health insurance companies, and above all, the \$65-billion pharmaceutical industry.

Is it the reason why middle class parents are willing to sell their property, and send their children to dubious private medical colleges so that they can become 'doctors'? And, finally, should the practitioners of modern biomedicine recognise the social/economic dimension of disease and illness? For instance, can a doctor cure your chronic bronchitis only through costly medicine, if you are constantly exposed to polluted air because of your social location as a construction worker or a labourer in a coalmine? Or, for that matter, can even the best doctor help you to free yourself from the recurrence of stomach ailments and jaundice, if the state fails to provide clean and safe drinking water to the slum you live in and you don't have the money to buy

heavily priced filtered water bottles? Possibly, 'value-neutral' medical science does not want to ask difficult social/political questions; instead, it is easier to see the patient as just a 'discrete' body and ask him to go to clinical labs for a battery of 'tests' he can seldom afford! Yes, as Kolkata has demonstrated, young doctors are bold enough to protest for their rights and dignity. But then, will it be altogether wrong if you and I expect some amount of self-introspection from them so that they can also raise their voice against the pathology that has dehumanised the modern biomedical system?

10 signs you've never been to

Mexico City



1. You imagine it to be all dirt tracks and donkeys... Whenever Hollywood portrays Mexico it seems to show dusty roads with beat-up cars and the occasional donkey. It's not surprising, then, that if you've never been to Mexico's capital, you might be expecting something similar. However, Mexico City is a bustling urban centre with over 20 million inhabitants, real roads, and lots of new cars.

2. ...or an urban jungle. Mexico City is big and urban, but there are so many green spaces and huge parks in all different corners of the city. In addition, beautiful, tree-filled plazas are everywhere.

3. You think Mexico City is poor and third world. Mexico City is one of the most important economic centres of the Americas and one of the top 25 urban economies in the world. In fact, the country of Mexico is the

world's 14th-largest economy. Like in many large cities, there are very rich residents and very poor residents, but head to Polanco, Pedregal, and Lomas de Chapultepec and you might be very surprised by the extraordinary wealth in those parts of the city.

4. You think it's really dangerous and that you'll get kidnapped. Mexico City got a nasty reputation in the '90s for being dangerous and a hot spot for kidnappings. However, a lot's changed since then, and most tourists are surprised by just how safe they feel. Of course, crimes do occur—it's a big city—but it's not the crime-infested place many seem to believe.

5. You get confused when people in Mexico simply call Mexico City "Mexico." For new travelers to Mexico (the country), this can be a confusing one. Are people saying they're from Mexico the city or

Mexico the country? You can imagine some of the interesting (read: ridiculously confusing) conversations that can result from this. Note: You may also hear Mexico City referred to as D.F., Mexico D.F., the Federal District of Mexico, Chilangolandia, El Defectuoso, or La Capirucha. Now "Mexico" seems much better, right?

6. You don't know it's built on a lake and is in fact sinking. When the Spanish arrived in Mexico, they found the huge, important city of the Aztecs, Tenochtitlan, built on an island on Lake Texcoco. The Spaniards constructed Mexico City over Tenochtitlan, draining the water off the lake to extend the city. Imagine, a city of 20 million built on a lake. No wonder it's sinking at a rate of between 6-35 cm per year.

7. You're unaware of its elevation. Many people arrive in Mexico City wondering why they run out of breath so quickly or sometimes feel slightly light-headed for a day or two. The reason is that Mexico's capital is 7,350 ft (2,240 m) above sea level, making it the eighth-highest capital city in the world and the highest in North America. Oh, and that's another thing: Mexico is part of North America, not South America or Central America as many people think.

8. You haven't heard of the floating gardens of the Aztecs. South of Mexico City there are canals in an area called Xochimilco. Here, the Aztecs built fertile banks on the lake, in which they grew one-third of the produce needed to feed the city. These canals stood the test of time and still exist today. Nowadays, you can rent a colourful boat called a trajinera and float down the canal with friends, enjoying the music of mariachis and a cold beer or two.

9. You're unaware that it's the city with the most museums in the world. According to the National Council for Culture and Arts, Mexico's capital has more museums than any other city. Whatever your interest, be it archaeology, art, toys, or even chocolate, you'll find a museum or two or three for you.

10. You didn't know there's an Aztec pyramid right in the heart of the city. Right in the main square next to the cathedral is the Templo Mayor—huei teocalli in Nahuatl, the language of the Aztecs (or Mexico, as they were known). The Spanish built their cathedral on top of the temple, but years later, parts of the temple were excavated by archaeologists. Still, much of the Aztec city of Tenochtitlan remains buried, often discovered as new metro lines are built underground.

Istanbul

the city that lies on two continents

Istanbul, the largest city in Turkey and the fifth-largest city in the world by population, is considered European, yet it occupies two different continents. One part of Istanbul lies in Europe and the other part lies in Asia. Istanbul's European part is separated from its Asian part by the Bosphorus strait, a 31-km-long waterway that connects the Black Sea with the Sea of Marmara, and forms a natural boundary between the two continents. Two suspension bridges across the Bosphorus—the Bosphorus Bridge and the Fatih Sultan Mehmet Bridge, also called Bosphorus Bridge II—connect the two sides, yet many tourists prefer to visit the European side of Istanbul because of its historical significance. The European side is also the city's commercial center with banks, stores and corporations and two-third of its population. The Asian side feels more relaxed, with wide boulevards, residential neighbourhoods and fewer hotels and tourist attractions. Istanbul is one of the few cities in the world to be shared by two continents. Examples of other cities that are half-European and half-Asian include the Russian cities of Orenburg and Magnitogorsk, and Atyrau, a city in western Kazakhstan. Similarly, Suez, an Egyptian city straddling the Suez Canal, belongs to both Africa and Asia. But Istanbul is by far the largest, and the only metropolis in the world to do so. Being the only water route between the Mediterranean Sea and the Black Sea, the Bosphorus has been the site of significant settlements and cities for a long time. Of particular importance is the Golden Horn, an estuary that joins Bosphorus Strait at the immediate point where the strait meets the Sea of Marmara, and forms a large, sheltered harbour. It was here, on the European side of



the Bosphorus, that the city of Byzantium (which later became Istanbul) was founded by ancient Greeks around 660 BCE. When Constantine the Great became the Roman emperor, the city was renamed Constantinople in 330 AD. For the next sixteen centuries, Constantinople served as the capital of the Roman Empire, the Byzantine Empire, the Latin Empire and the Ottoman Empire. During this period, over 120 emperors and sultans ruled over this land. Istanbul was a Christian city during Roman and Byzantine times, before the Ottomans conquered the city in 1453 and transformed it into an Islamic stronghold and the seat of the last caliphate. After the Turkish War of Independence, the modern Republic of Turkey was established in 1923, and although Ankara was chosen as its capital, the city did not lose its significance. Many palaces and imperial mosques still line Istanbul's hills as visible reminders of the city's previous central role. Today, Istanbul is a huge metropolis connecting continents, cultures, and religions. Home to 15 million people, it is one of the greatest business and cultural centers of the region.

Surrounded by infinite slopes of bright green tea plantations and set against a backdrop of jagged white Himalayan peaks, Darjeeling is nestled in the northern regions of West Bengal.

Stroll through tea plantations

Tea was first introduced in Darjeeling in the mid-19th century by the British, and the sprawling tea estates, clubs and bungalows are reminiscent of that grand era. Stroll through miles of rolling tea gardens, strike up a conversation with the garden

Stop at Happy Valley Tea Estate

Wandering through the tea gardens settled on the gentle hill slopes of Darjeeling is the perfect way to start your day at the Happy Valley Tea Estate. With plantations as old as 150 years and picture-perfect stretches of lush green tea bushes beckoning you, this

Book a ride on the toy train

A journey on the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway fondly known as the toy train is a great way to explore and soak in the magnificent surroundings of this hill station. Staring out of the window at an endless expanse of tea plantations is an experience

Take the Darjeeling ropeway

Gliding over manicured tea bushes and dense forests, the Darjeeling-Rangnet Valley ropeway offers unmatched views and awe-inspiring experiences. The 20-minute ride takes you down to the Takvar tea estate where you can explore the

village.

Drive up to Tiger Hill

Catch the first rays of the sun up at Tiger Hill, and if you're lucky and the day is clear, you might even see the Everest at a distance. Located just above Ghum at the highest point in Darjeeling, Tiger Hill is best known for its dazzling view of the

Darjeeling Zoological Park

Catch a glimpse of rare Himalayan fauna such as snow leopards, red pandas, Tibetan wolves and Himalayan bears at the Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park. **Laze around in Glenary's**

Pull up a chair at Glenary's bakery and café and take in the sprawling mountain views from its massive windows. Order your tea, select a cake, grab your favourite book and sink into the wicker chair for a relaxing afternoon.

The queen of hills: Darjeeling

Overlooking the mighty Kanchenjunga, Darjeeling and its tea estates offer some of India's most idyllic scenery. The perfect Darjeeling getaway is all about scuttling between numerous tea gardens, enjoying the picturesque train ride and taking leisurely

The queen of hills Darjeeling



Why Lawrence Bishnoi is at the centre of India-Canada row over Nijjar killing

Amid its diplomatic row with India, Canada has accused the PM Narendra Modi-led government of colluding with the Bishnoi gang to carry out criminal operations even though it has not provided any concrete evidence.

New Delhi: Lawrence Bishnoi, the dreaded gangster imprisoned in Ahmedabad's Sabarmati Central Jail, has emerged as a new focal point in the India-Canada diplomatic row. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) has accused India of colluding with his gang to carry out criminal operations in Canada even though it has not provided any concrete evidence. A Washington Post report claimed that National Security Adviser (NSA) Ajit Doval held a secret meeting with his Canadian counterpart in Singapore, where they discussed Bishnoi's alleged involvement in the killing of Khalistani terrorist Hardeep Singh Nijjar in Canada. India has strongly rejected these accusations, dismissing Ottawa's claims of New Delhi's involvement in the murder as a "deliberate strategy to smear India for political gain".

HARDEEP NIJJAR'S MURDER AND BISHNOI GANG



On June 18, 2023, Hardeep Singh Nijjar was shot dead outside a gurdwara in British Columbia, Canada. Three sharpshooters fired 34 rounds at him. Nijjar, designated as a terrorist by India's National Investigation Agency (NIA), had a Rs 10 lakh bounty. He was accused of carrying out targeted killings of Hindu leaders in Punjab in collaboration with Pakistan's intelligence agency, ISI, and had been involved in terrorist activities in Punjab. Intelligence agencies also reported that Nijjar had undergone training in

Pakistan. Almost a year later, in May 2024, Canadian police arrested four men of Indian origin -- three initially and one later -- in connection with the murder. Karan Brar and Kamal Preet Singh, both 22, along with 28-year-old Karan Preet Singh, reportedly confessed to the killing, according to Canadian officials. A fourth suspect, 22-year-old Amardeep Singh, was later arrested and also claimed involvement in the murder. All four had arrived in Canada on student visas and were staying there. Before the police made any official statement, a Canadian newspaper reported that the four arrested men were linked to the Lawrence Bishnoi gang. The report claimed that Bishnoi's men, allegedly at the behest of India's Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), carried out Nijjar's murder by sending four shooters from Punjab to Canada. On October 15, amid reports of the Bishnoi gang's hand in the murder of an NCP leader and former

Maharashtra minister Baba Siddique, Canada reiterated that Indian agents working with the Lawrence Bishnoi gang were targeting pro-Khalistan elements. However, the Canadian police have yet to provide any concrete evidence beyond the names of the four men from Punjab. According to Canadian authorities, members of the Bishnoi gang were also responsible for the killing of another Khalistani terrorist, Sukhdool Singh, in Winnipeg, Canada, in September last year. Sukhdool Singh, also known as Sukha Duni, had fled India and was associated with the rival Bamba gang. The Bishnoi gang later took responsibility for the murder, declaring, "We will find and eliminate our enemies, wherever they may be". An official from India's intelligence agency stated that many gangsters and terrorists from Punjab flee to Canada, where they are given refuge by the government. According to him, a gang war is going on between.

40,000 Indians apply for Australia's work and holiday visa with only 1,000 spots

New Delhi: Australia's new Working Holiday visa has attracted significant interest from Indians, with 40,000 applications submitted for only 1,000 available spots, reported news agency PTL. The visa, open for the age group of 18 to 30, allows them to study, work, or travel in Australia for up to 12 months.

The application process, which began on October 1, will close at the end of the month. Applicants will be selected randomly, and those shortlisted can apply for a temporary visa to start their stay in Australia next year. "The great thing about the Working Holiday visa is that there are no restrictions on the jobs you can do. Till now, 40,000 applications have been received for the 1,000 visa spots. While many participants are expected to work in hospitality and agriculture, they will also have the option to pursue short courses or improve their English skills," Australian Assistant Minister for Immigration Matt Thistlethwaite told PTL. "The great thing about the Working Holiday visa is that there are no restrictions on the jobs you can do. Till now, 40,000 applications have been received for the 1,000 visa spots. While many participants are expected to work in hospitality and agriculture, they will also have the option to pursue short courses or improve their English skills," Australian Assistant Minister for Immigration Matt Thistlethwaite told PTL. Many participants are expected to work in hospitality and agriculture, while others may take short courses or improve their English skills. Thistlethwaite pointed out that the process offers young people the chance to experience Australian culture and gain work experience across various sectors, with hopes that it may encourage future returns on student or skilled worker visas.

Punjab Should Declare Itself Helpless": Supreme Court On Delhi Air Pollution

New Delhi: The Supreme Court - as Delhi faces (predictably) worsening air pollution levels in the city and the national capital region - slammed the Punjab and Haryana governments Wednesday, calling them out for failing to act on June 2021 orders to prosecute violators of anti-pollution laws. The court seemed to dare the Punjab government to declare itself "helpless" to deal with multiple violations. "Let them declare 'we cannot do anything... we are helpless,' it said, as it noted that Punjab and Haryana - ruled by the AAP and BJP, respectively - had not prosecuted violators, particularly farmers burning stubble, or agricultural waste, since 2021, and only imposed nominal fines. The Commission for Air Quality Management - the central government panel that had issued orders to prosecute pollution law violators - was also criticised. It was called a "toothless wonder" for failing to enforce its own orders and its members' competence was questioned.

A bench of Justice Abhay S Oka, Justice AG Masih, and Justice A Amanullah - hearing the issue of non-compliance with CAQM directions - set a one-week deadline to prosecute violators. "Why is there no prosecution for violation of orders? This is not a political issue... it is about implementation of statutory directions by CAQM under Section 12..." Justice Oka said. "We will take penal action against (CAQM) officers... only then there will be action. No political considerations will apply here," he added, as the court called out the Haryana government over nearly 200 recorded cases of farm fires for which "only nominal fine has been recovered". The court pointed out states were fed detailed information - by the Indian Space Research Organisation - about the location and size of fires caused by burning farm stubble.

"So you cannot say locations were not found... but nobody is going to prosecute, nobody is going to take action (against the violators)," he continued. "They will pay a nominal fine..." "What is all this going on?" an angry court asked, also demanding to know if prosecution was being halted or slowed "at the instance of somebody else". "... we will issue summons to them also. What is this hesitation in prosecuting people?" the court asked of the state governments. Earlier this month too, the CAQM was slammed for "total non-compliance" with the law. "Have committees been constituted? Please show us a single step taken... show us a single direction issued..." the court said, unimpressed when told the CAQM meets once in three months.

Air India flight, diverted to Canada due to bomb threat, leaves for Chicago

New Delhi: Air India on Wednesday announced that the Chicago-bound flight carrying 211 people which was diverted to Canada after receiving a bomb threat, was finally heading to its destination. On Tuesday, seven Indian flights got bomb threats, with at least two of them making emergency landings. In a statement, Air India said that passengers of flight AI127 were being ferried on a Canadian Air Force aircraft which took off from the remote Canadian city of Iqaluit at 3.54 am (local time) and is expected to land in Chicago at 7.48 am (local US time). "We thank the Canadian authorities and authorities at Iqaluit airport for their support and assistance extended to the passengers and Air India during this unexpected

disruption," it added. Of the 211 people on board, 20 were crew



members. On Tuesday night, the flag carrier had announced that the flight was "subject of a security threat posted online and, as a precautionary measure, has landed at Canada's Iqaluit airport".

Besides the New Delhi-Chicago Air India flight, the six others that received bomb threats on Tuesday were the Jaipur-Bengaluru Air India Express, Dammam-Lucknow IndiGo, Darbhanga-Mumbai SpiceJet, Siliguri-Bengaluru Akasa Air, Amritsar-Dehradun-Delhi Alliance Air and Madurai-Singapore Air India Express. The development came a day after three international flights from Mumbai were affected due to similar threats, with one being diverted to Delhi. While the Mumbai-New York Air India flight carrying 239 passengers was diverted to Delhi for security checks, the two other concerned flights were IndiGo 6E 1275 en route to Muscat, IndiGo 6E 56, headed for Jeddah.

Supreme Court questions National Task Force's slow pace of work: Must expedite

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Tuesday noted that the National Task Force (NTF), set up to establish safety protocols for healthcare professionals, has made little progress. The court directed the government to take steps to ensure the task force completes its work within a reasonable time. A bench led by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud observed that no meetings of the task force had been held since September 9.

"What has the task force done after September 9? Why (there is) no meeting after September 9? Why is there no progress? It must expedite the work," the bench

said. Solicitor General of India Tushar Mehta, representing the Centre, informed the court that an affidavit had been submitted outlining the actions



taken by the National Task Force (NTF) to date. He described the NTF's efforts as "humongous" and assured that it was working toward a lasting

solution to the challenges faced by healthcare professionals. Mehta also assured the court that the NTF would accelerate its efforts. "It appears that neither the National Task Force nor the subgroups have made any substantial progress pursuant to the remit set in the orders of this court. The SG has accepted that no meeting appears to have been held since the first week of September 2024. We are of the view that the Union of India must take proactive efforts to ensure that the task of the task force is completed within a reasonable period in the future," noted the bench. The court ordered that meetings be held regularly and asked for updates on tentative recommendations. The court set a tentative deadline of three weeks for the task force to present its progress.

Complete defiance: Supreme Court blasts Punjab, Haryana over Delhi air pollution

The Supreme Court directed the Commission of Air Quality Management to take penal action against state government officers and directed the Haryana Chief Secretary to be present in court next Wednesday.

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Wednesday reprimanded Punjab and Haryana over the issue of stubble burning, stating that no effective action has been taken by the states to address the problem, which exacerbates air pollution levels in Delhi and its neighbouring regions during the winter season. Noting that there has been a substantial increase in stubble burning cases in both the states and calling it an "absolute defiance" of

direction by the Commission of Air Quality Management (CAQM), the court summoned Haryana Chief Secretary on October 23. "We see that the affidavit by Haryana is full of non-compliance. We direct Commission to take penal action against State Officers under Section 14. We direct Chief Secretary Mr Prasad to be physically present on next Wednesday. Commission will make statement about coercive action taken against State officials. Chief Secretary holds an explanation to court not only for non-compliance but also for not taking stringent action against violators," Justice AS Oka said. The Supreme Court was hearing a case of non-compliance of orders passed by the Commission for Air Quality Management in the National Capital Region (NCR), particularly regarding stubble burning. The court also criticised the central commission for failing to take action on violations. It said, "Who is



appearing for Punjab and Haryana? None of the members of the commission are qualified for dealing with matters of air pollution. Absolute non-compliance. Check our last order and June 10 order as well. Not a single prosecution has been done yet. Everything is just on paper". When the Haryana Chief Secretary submitted that 17 FIRs were registered this year, Justice Oka pointed out that the cases were not under the required provisions and warned that the court would issue contempt proceedings if

action was not taken within one week. "We are telling you very clearly. We will give you one week and if not complied, we will issue contempt against Chief Secretary. Why are you shy of prosecuting people?" the top court asked. The Supreme Court had directed the Punjab and Haryana governments to file affidavits disclosing steps taken to comply with CAQM orders. Taking up the affidavit filed by Punjab, the court noted the state also has not prosecuted people for stubble burning. Show us a single prosecution. You could have prosecuted persons under Section 15 of the Environment Protection Act. Not a single case is initiated. There is no compliance..." Justice Oka said. Stubble burning in Punjab and Haryana is a significant contributor to Delhi's air pollution, especially during the post-harvest October-November season, worsening the Air Quality Index (AQI) to extremely unhealthy levels.

Continuous rain in Tamil Nadu, several trains cancelled, red alert in Andhra

New Delhi: The well-marked low-pressure area over the southwest and adjoining southeast Bay of Bengal moved west to northwestwards and intensified into a depression on Tuesday evening, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said in a statement. The weather system is expected to make landfall between Andhra Pradesh's Nellore and north Puducherry on Thursday, October 17.

This meteorological system is advancing northwestwards at approximately 10 kmph, and the anticipated landfall is likely to bring significant weather changes to the region, the Met said in a press statement. According to a Met official, heavy to very heavy rainfall is likely in a few places in southern Andhra Pradesh and northeast Tamil Nadu in the next 24 to 36 hours. Southern Karnataka is also expected to receive a fresh spell of rainfall in the same period, the wether body said. In view of the rain alert, schools and colleges will remain shut in Chennai, Kanchipuram, Tiruvallur and Chengalpet districts of Tamil Nadu on Wednesday, October 16. The government has also urged private officers to allow their employees to work from home due to the rain forecast. State Chief Minister MK Stalin also spoke to people living in relief camps due to the heavy rain.

He also announced that free food would be provided on October 16 and 17 at all Amma canteens in view of the rain. Similarly, in Bengaluru, officials announced that schools will also be shut on October 16 due to the orange alert issued in the city. Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar advised people to take necessary precautions following incessant rains in the city, as he declared the government's preparedness to deal with the situation.

Shivakumar said the government has the "strength" to manage the situation and "set right" the issues that have cropped up due to the rains. "I appeal to citizens to take necessary precautions in the wake of the rains. There might be some traffic issues today," Shivakumar, who is also the Minister in-charge of Bengaluru Development, Shivakumar said.

Teams of NDRF and State Disaster Response have also been deployed in Chennai and Bengaluru following the heavy rain forecast. In Tamil Nadu, 1,000 monsoon medical camps have been set up, which includes 100 such facilities in Chennai. As many as 13,000 volunteers have come forward to assist authorities in rain-related tasks. In total, 65,000 volunteers are on standby in the state.



Austin at a Glance

If you've never been before, these Austin neighbourhoods will acquaint you with the city and its layout and make your maiden visit easy. Labelled as one of the most quirky and alternative cities in the world, Austin—even despite its recent transition from a small idyllic town to a thriving Texas hub—is one of those places you'll never be able to forget. Whether it's because of the city's laidback vibe, its unfettered idealism or its complete lack of judgement; you'll come away with memories that will last you a lifetime.

University of Texas

Youthful energy, high-brow culture, and cheap food and drinks keep the UT area buzzing day and night. The 50,000-student University of Texas is like a small town within a mid-sized city. And it's not all about higher learning: the 350-acre campus offers numerous cultural amenities for non-students, including seven museums, the Bass Concert Hall, and the Cactus Cafe, an intimate live music venue. Guadalupe Street is the dividing line between UT and the West Campus neighborhood. Also known as 'The Drag', it's home to budget-friendly sandwich shops, pizza joints, bookstores and clothing boutiques. At the Hole in the Wall, a dive bar that's been around since 1974, you can always find cheap beer and loud, up-and-coming Austin bands. The West Campus neighborhood - tucked in-between The Drag and Lamar Boulevard - is a densely packed mash-up of upscale condos, low-rent apartments, beautiful old houses, restaurants and bars. The strong drinks

at Cain & Abel's on Rio Grande have been fueling poor judgment since 1991.

South Congress Avenue

The mix of funky clothing boutiques, food trailers, and fine dining establishments attracts all manner of Austinites and sets the scene for excellent people-watching. Back in the 1980s, this was the seedy part of town, largely populated by hookers instead of hipsters. These days, movie stars visiting Austin for a shoot often stay at the Hotel San Jose, catch a band at the Continental Club, and get their Tex-Mex

fix at Guero's. The area is known for its varied dining options, including a parking lot near Monroe and South Congress where more than a dozen food trailers sell everything from cupcakes to chicken in a cone. Italian food fans flock to the upscale Vespaio, while seafood lovers rave about Perla's. If you look closely, you can still see evidence of the avenue's rich past, such as the fading letters on the Guero's building that reads 'Feed Store' and the lighted sign near the Continental Club that advertises 'Guns'. The historic Travis Heights neighborhood, with beautifully restored turn-of-the-

century houses, borders South Congress to the east.

East Austin

Small galleries, coffee shops and cafes create an artsy enclave within a neighborhood that still feels homey and unpretentious. Historically, I-35 served as Austin's racial dividing line, with whites on the west side and blacks and Hispanics on the east side. While that boundary is still discernible in northeast and southeast Austin, the area east of downtown is now home to a vibrant mix of young professionals and artists. The gentrification has been gradual

enough to allow East Austin to retain much of its original character. Shiny new art studios stand next to decades-old Mexican restaurants and barbecue joints. Along Manor Road's restaurant row, you can enjoy an organic salad from Eastside Cafe, Tex-Mex fare at Vivo's, or soul food at Hoover's Cooking. Within walking distance of the restaurants, many of the area's modest homes have been transformed into artists' studios. The artists produce everything from paintings to jewelry, and are often available to chat about their work - or the human condition - over a beer or two.

6th Street

6th Street is Austin's perpetual pub crawl - seven blocks packed with shot bars, daiquiri bars, sports bars, hookup bars, and hookah bars. Word to the wise: All of Austin's east-west streets downtown were

originally named after trees - 6th was called Pecan Street. This bustling strip has been a major business district since the mid-1800s, when local farmers brought their goods to market via horse and buggy. Many of the two- and three-story buildings that housed feed stores and blacksmith shops are still in use today, earning 6th Street a spot in the National Register of Historic Places. The historical significance of the area may be lost on the drunken frat boys who meander along 6th Street on weekend nights, however. Loud music blasts from every doorway, but it's mostly cover songs. Austin's serious musicians generally perform on 6th Street to make money - and play their original tunes elsewhere. The fickleness of the 6th Street crowd means that few bars survive for the long haul. Maggie Mae's, however, has been thriving since 1978. Lovejoy's, another long-term survivor, is one of the few mellow bars in the area.

The onset of winter is marked by poetic misty mornings, a crisp breeze, and nights when all you want to do is snuggle into a quilt and read a book. But the winter months are also a fantastic time to discover a completely new side of some of India's popular travel destinations. Immerse in the snow-laden beauty of Gulmarg, set up a tent amidst sand dunes of Jaisalmer, or warm up to a steaming cup of tea in Munnar's expansive tea plantations—there are many wintry experiences to choose from, once you don the layers and buttress yourself against the cold. From the Himalayan peaks blanketed in glistening snow to verdant hill towns down south, here are some of the best escapes in India that are ideal for your winter vacation.

Manali

Manali gets its first snowfall around mid December, when it transforms into a winter wonderland replete with snow-covered peaks, and a blanket of pristine white draped all across the hill station. With the stunning backdrop of the Himalayas, it offers the perfect balance between tranquility

and adventure, making it one of the most popular hill destinations in northern India. Fringed by thick pine trees and the Beas river gurgling along, you can decide to spend your holiday doing nothing at all or pack in your itinerary with interesting activities.

Approached by road from Chandigarh, which is about 300 kilometres away, there are a number of Himachal Tourism buses that run from Delhi and Chandigarh at frequent intervals, though the distance from Delhi is best undertaken in one of the comfortable overnight buses. For those who wish to partake in adventurous activities, there's fishing, white water rafting, paragliding, skiing, mountaineering, and hiking in and around Manali. If you're looking to go off the beaten path, try one of the packages organised by Trans Himalayan Adventures, which focus on healing and rejuvenation. Solang Valley is a good option for the kids, offering a bunch of fun winter sports including skiing.

Gulmarg

If you're looking for a destination which is as breathtakingly beautiful as it is adventurous, then look no further than Kashmir. The Kashmir valley is considered heaven on earth, and when it's blanketed in snow, it exudes a charm few other places do. The tiny and isolated hill village of Gulmarg is situated at the western extremity of the Himalayas in a subsidiary range called the Pir Panjals. Lying about 50 kilometres from Srinagar, it can be easily accessed by tourist buses, taxis and even by air. Owing to its location, Gulmarg gets some of the heaviest snowfalls in the Himalayas and has earned the distinction of being the best ski resort in the country. So once you've feasted

Ideal winter holiday destinations in India

your eyes on all the beauty, immerse yourself in some activity by hitting the slopes. Catering to both beginners and pros, skiing here can be one of the most powerful experiences. For the more mild adventure enthusiasts, there's the option of sledging, cable-car rides and snow boarding. Ski season starts mid December and lasts till the beginning of April. As for accommodation, there are various options. From state-owned huts and cottages, and beautifully appointed mid-range hotels like Nedous Hotel, to luxury accommodation at Hotel Highlands Park, there's something to suit every budget.

In addition, Gulmarg offers several other sites of interest for tourists. It has the highest golf course in the world, the frozen Alpine lake of Alpather, the Baba Reshi shrine and the Gulmarg Biosphere Reserves.

Jaisalmer

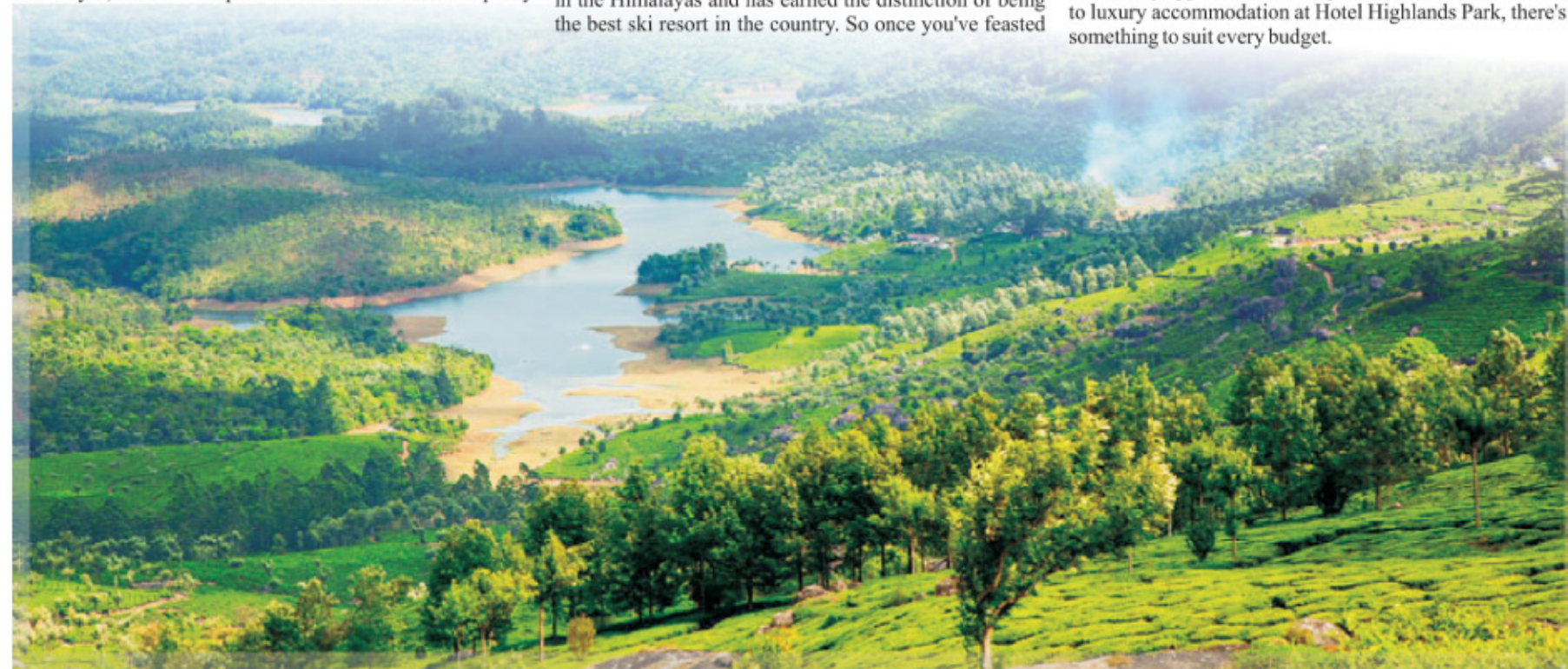
A magnificent fort looming over the city, picture-postcard vistas of sand dunes and an array of illuminated sandstone buildings—Jaisalmer is nothing short of a scene straight out of Arabian Nights. Once a sleepy desert city, Jaisalmer now attracts many couples, honeymooners and families by dint of its erstwhile royal splendour. The Jaisalmer Fort (also known as the Golden Fort of Rajasthan) is the most splendid attraction of the city, perched on an elevated patch looking over the city. Surrounded by numerous golden-hued shrines, the Gadisar Lake is ideal for an evening picnic or a short paddleboat ride. The city's most popular activity is taking a camel ride over the desert sands; best enjoyed at sunrise and sunset, the ride gives an insight into Rajasthan's rural life and stunning vistas of the horizon. Jaisalmer's winding alleys are home to vibrant markets from where you can pick up quintessential Rajasthani souvenirs. Rajasthani cuisine, famous for its spicy veg curries, mouth-watering meat dishes and delectable sweets is the icing on the cake.

Munnar

Pluck tea leaves while you explore Munnar's dense tea plantations; prance about in gurgling brooks while hiking on cloud-covered slopes; or wander through the hill town's winding lanes—Munnar is an idyllic escape into the natural wonders of God's own country, Kerala. Perched at the confluence of three mountain streams—Madhurapuzha, Nallathanni and Kundaly—the charming hill town lies about 130 km east of Kochi and 100 km north of the Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary in Thekkady. A haven for bird-watchers, photographers and wildlife-enthusiasts, the Eravikulam National Park is just a short drive away from the hill town. Thrill-seekers can go hiking to the highest peak in the Western Ghats in India—Anamudi—located about 13 km away from Munnar. At an altitude of 1600 m, Munnar is a delight for adventure-enthusiasts, honeymooners and families.

Wayanad

Located between the Kannur and Kozhikode districts in Kerala, Wayanad is a sparkling green emerald sprawled across the slopes of the Western Ghats. The monsoons persevere here—the rainy season starts in June and lasts all the way till mid November—during which the already lush landscape takes on an even more vibrant shade of green, and everything is washed squeaky clean. The most enjoyable way to experience it is by checking into a jungle resort—even better if it has a treehouse. During the occasional dry spells in between, venture out and enjoy everything else the region has to offer. Wayanad ploughs tourists with some interesting prehistoric archaeological sites, tea plantations and thick forests, and is home to some of the oldest (and most insulated) tribes in India.



Gold, silver price : Precious metals record hike on MCX

New Delhi. Both gold and silver prices recorded a hike on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX) on Wednesday, October 16, 2024. Gold futures, maturing on December 5, 2024, stood at Rs 76,425 per 10 grams on the MCX, after recording a jump of Rs 65 or 0.09 per cent. The previous close was recorded at Rs 76,360.

Meanwhile, silver futures, maturing on December 5, 2024, witnessed a marginal hike of Rs 120 or 0.13 per cent and were retailing at Rs 91,743 per kg on the MCX against the previous close of Rs 91,623. The gold and silver prices in India depend on several factors, including the value of the rupee against the dollar. Global demand also plays a key role in determining the trends observed in the rate of precious metals.

GOLD, SILVER PRICES IN INTERNATIONAL MARKET

Gold prices inched higher on Wednesday, as U.S. Treasury yields eased, while market participants waited for more U.S. economic data to determine the number of interest rate cuts the Federal Reserve is likely to deliver in the near term, news agency Reuters reported.

According to the latest metal report, spot gold gained 0.3 per cent at \$2,667.97 per ounce by 0217 GMT, while U.S. gold futures rose 0.2 per cent to \$2,683.80.

Bobba Logistics expands warehousing infrastructure with Rs 100 crore investment

BENGALURU: Bengaluru-headquartered logistics pioneer Bobba Logistics is set to operationalise phase II of its warehousing infrastructure by Q1 2026.

The project, taking shape near Devanahalli on the outskirts of Bengaluru, will involve an investment of ₹100 crore to establish over 300,000 square feet of cutting-edge warehousing, logistical, and cargo-handling facilities to serve a wide customer base.

A year ago, Bobba launched its 75,000 square foot phase I project at Sonnappanahalli on the new airport road, with a ₹30 crore investment. This facility caters to both dry and cold storage needs, serving as a central hub in the supply chain for storing, managing, and shipping goods. By consolidating fragmented logistics operations through an integrated network, Bobba Logistics aims to streamline the supply chain for both large and medium-sized enterprises. The aforementioned investments are made through internal accruals. Sharing details about the expansion with The New Indian Express, Bobba Logistics Director Chandrakala Bobba stated, "We have recently implemented a final design on our phase II project, which will come up on a much larger scale. It will be 'build-to-suit', wherein each customer will have their own boxes, space, service, and dock area, among others." Highlighting the sectors served by the company, Bobba Logistics Director Balajee Bobba commented, "Our customers include freight forwarders, those with cold storage requirements, frozen food, exporters of perishables, imported goods, airlines, lifestyle and luxury products, healthcare, automobile components, and tyre manufacturers. We handle a vast inventory of products. Customers can use our facility for distribution too, in a hub-and-spoke model, sending across required materials to the needed premises." With over three decades of experience, especially in airport logistics, the brand is now strategising to blend its extensive knowledge into diversifying its offerings. From transport and distribution to cold chain storage, Bobba provides customised solutions. "Our customers are those dedicated to smaller spaces but seek more individual services. They would rather have everything under one roof than a separate centre for warehousing, packaging, stickering, labelling, and so on. Since we provide everything under one roof, it eliminates many gaps and inventory issues, while offering transparency and safety against theft, damage, and wastage, especially during transit," Balajee stressed, highlighting the in-house warehouse management software that makes service delivery more efficient.

SpiceJet meets DGCA's safety norms, out of enhanced surveillance regime

NEW DELHI. In a major relief for SpiceJet, aviation regulator DGCA on Tuesday said it has removed the low-cost carrier from enhanced surveillance regime. This action comes as the regulator is satisfied that SpiceJet is taking actions to rectify deficiencies following the fundraising. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) had placed SpiceJet under enhanced surveillance on September 13, 2024 over a severe cash crunch at the airline which had impacted its ability to discharge mandatory obligations of aircraft maintenance. This action had resulted in increased spot checks and night surveillance to ensure the safety of the airline's operations. DAGCA said 266 spot checks were conducted at various locations as part of monitoring effort. It said deficiencies identified during these checks were addressed appropriately by the airline.

"In light of the same and the financial infusion of additional funds into the company, SpiceJet has been taken off the enhanced surveillance regime," DGCA said in a statement. DGCA will continue to carry random spot checks across the airline's operational fleet to ensure safety standards. Since the enhanced surveillance was placed, SpiceJet has successfully raised Rs 3,000 crore via sale of shares to qualified institutional buyers. It is using this money to pay lenders and expand its fleet. SpiceJet said on Tuesday it has settled a \$23.39 million dispute with Aircastle (Ireland) Designated Activity Company and Wilmington Trust SP Services (Dublin) Limited for an aggregate sum of \$5 million, together with agreement in relation to the treatment of certain aircraft engines. This came a day after it was reported that SpiceJet is staring at fresh insolvency proceedings initiated by aircraft lessor Aviator ML 29641 Ltd over unpaid dues amounting to Rs 58 crore. The lessor claimed that SpiceJet failed to pay rental charges for a Boeing 737 that it had leased. Creditors caused delay in Jet resolution process: JKC

NEW DELHI: Jalan Kalrock Consortium (JKC), resolution applicant (SRA) who acquired ownership of Jet Airways, on Tuesday argued the Supreme Court that they can't be held solely responsible for delays caused by security clearances and procedural hurdles in reviving the airline.

Much appreciated: Elon Musk on Centre confirming no spectrum auction

New Delhi. Starlink CEO Elon Musk reacted to the announcement made by Telecom Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia denying spectrum auction in India and said that the move is 'much appreciated' on Wednesday. In a recent announcement by Telecom Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia, confirmed that India would allocate spectrum administratively, following global norms. Responding to the news, Musk took to X (formerly Twitter) and said, "Much appreciated! We will do our best to serve the people of India with Starlink." Musk had previously been vocal about his stance against the auction of satellite spectrum, a position that contrasts with the preferences of Indian telecom giants like Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Jio and Sunil Bharti Mittal's Bharti Airtel.

INDIA FOLLOWS GLOBAL PRACTICES

During the announcement, Telecom Minister Scindia explained that India's decision aligns with international standards. "Satellite spectrum across the

world is allocated administratively. So, India is not doing anything different from the rest of the world," Scindia said, clarifying the government's stance. The decision to adopt the administrative allocation of spectrum comes after Elon Musk and his company Starlink, along with other global satellite players such as Amazon's Project Kuiper, voiced their support for this method. According to Musk, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), a United Nations agency, classifies satellite spectrum as shared, and therefore, it should not be auctioned. India is a member of the ITU, which further strengthens the argument for administrative allocation.

MUSK'S CRITICISM OF SPECTRUM AUCTIONS

The debate over how satellite spectrum should be allocated gained significant attention after Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Jio pushed for a spectrum auction. Musk, however, openly

criticised the idea, calling the auction process "unprecedented." He argued that such a move would be an outlier in global satellite communication practices and could hinder the expansion of satellite-based internet services like Starlink in India. Just a day before the government's announcement, Musk had responded to reports about Reliance Jio's stance, questioning the logic behind auctioning satellite spectrum. He expressed concerns that the auction route could create unnecessary barriers for companies like Starlink that aim to provide affordable satellite internet access, especially in rural and remote areas of India.

Elon Musk has long been eyeing the Indian market for Starlink, his satellite internet venture. Starlink aims to offer high-speed internet in remote and underserved areas by deploying a large constellation of low-earth orbit (LEO) satellites. Musk believes that the administrative allocation of spectrum will help accelerate Starlink's entry into India and improve

internet access in regions where traditional telecom infrastructure is lacking. The administrative allocation approach, widely adopted by countries across the globe, enables companies like Starlink to operate without the burden of hefty auction fees. This approach is considered more conducive for expanding satellite-based services, which are crucial for connecting areas with limited access to traditional broadband networks. While the government's decision is a win for Musk and other satellite service providers, it has met with opposition from Indian telecom giants. Mukesh Ambani, head of Reliance Jio, had been lobbying for an auction of the satellite spectrum, arguing that an auction would create a level playing field. Sunil Bharti Mittal's Bharti Airtel had also been in favour of an auction process. Despite their arguments, the government's stance appears firm, siding with the global practice of administrative spectrum allocation.

Cabinet approves MSP for rabi crops for marketing sseason 2025-26

NEW DELHI. The Union Cabinet has approved new Minimum Support Prices (MSP) for Rabi crops for the upcoming marketing season 2025-26. The decision was taken to ensure better income for farmers and to promote the cultivation of key crops during the Rabi season. The revised MSP rates aim to give farmers a fair price for their produce.

WHEAT MSP HIKED BY RS 150 PER QUINTAL

The MSP for wheat, a key Rabi crop, has been increased by Rs 150 per quintal, sources told *Indiatoday.in*. This brings the new price to Rs 2,425 per quintal, up from Rs 2,275 in the previous season. Wheat is a staple crop in many parts of the country, and this increase is expected to benefit farmers, particularly in northern India where wheat is the primary crop. The government aims to support wheat growers by ensuring they get a better price for their produce, helping to



cover their input costs and providing some buffer against market fluctuations.

MUSTARD MSP INCREASED BY RS 300

For mustard, the MSP has been raised by Rs 300, taking it from Rs 5,650 to Rs 5,950 per quintal. Mustard is widely grown in states like Rajasthan, Haryana, and Madhya Pradesh, and is an important oilseed crop for both farmers and consumers. The higher

MSP for mustard is expected to provide farmers with better returns and encourage more cultivation of this oilseed, which is crucial for India's edible oil supply.

CHANA MSP SEES RS 210 RISE

Chana has seen an increase in its MSP by Rs 210, bringing the new rate to Rs 5,650 per quintal. Chana is a key pulse crop in India and is widely consumed across the country. With this increase, the government aims to encourage more production of pulses, which are an important source of protein in the Indian diet. Farmers growing chana, particularly in states like Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra, will benefit from the rise in MSP, which is expected to help cover their input costs and provide them with better returns.

Hyundai IPO: GMP rises marginally, should you subscribe

NEW DELHI. The much-anticipated initial public offering (IPO) of Hyundai Motor India opened for subscription on October 15. The share price has been set between Rs 1,865 and Rs 1,960 per share. With this IPO, Hyundai aims to raise a massive Rs 27,856 crore, making it the largest public offering in India's history. It's also the first automaker IPO since Maruti Suzuki went public in 2003. However, the response from investors has been lukewarm so far. As of October 16, the IPO has seen only 22% subscription, with 0.32 times in the retail category, 0.05 times in the Qualified Institutional Buyers (QIB) category, and 0.17 times in the Non-Institutional Investors (NII) category.

HYUNDAI IPO LATEST GMP

The grey market premium (GMP) for Hyundai IPO has seen a slight increase compared to the first day. As of 16th October, the GMP for Hyundai Motor IPO stands at Rs 63, reflecting an estimated listing price of Rs 2,023 (cap price plus the current GMP). This translates to a 3.21% expected gain per share.

SHOULD YOU SUBSCRIBE?



Hyundai Motor India is offering shares at a price-to-book value ratio of 13.11 times, much higher than Maruti Suzuki's 4.79 times. This higher valuation reduces the margin of safety for investors, despite Hyundai showing a better return on equity (ROE), according to Amar Nandu, a Research Analyst at SAMCO Securities. Nandu also highlighted that, due to the size of the IPO, most applicants are likely to receive shares. This could limit any significant price surge after listing, reducing the potential for short-term profits. Additionally, Hyundai's promoter is offering a 17.5% stake in this IPO, with an additional 7.5% stake sale expected within the next three years to meet regulatory requirements. This could lead to selling pressure, making the IPO less attractive for those looking for quick returns.

Central government employees get early Diwali gift with 3% DA hike

NEW DELHI. The Union Cabinet on Wednesday cleared a 3% hike in the Dearness Allowance (DA) for central government employees. This increase brings the total DA to 53% of basic pay, offering crucial financial relief just ahead of the Diwali festivities. The additional 3% hike is expected to ease the financial burden on government employees amid rising inflation.

For example, if the basic salary is Rs 40,000, the 3% hike in Dearness Allowance (DA) would result in an additional Rs 1,200 per month. This would bring the total DA to Rs 21,200 per month, up from Rs 20,000. This increment will significantly enhance their disposable income as they prepare for the upcoming festive season. With this, central government employees will receive their October salary with the revised DA, along with arrears for the past three months. Pensioners will

also benefit from this announcement, as the Dearness Relief (DR) will be adjusted accordingly.

The DA hike is determined based on the All India Consumer Price Index (AICPI), reflecting the government's ongoing commitment to support employees facing increasing living costs.

WHAT IS DA?

Dearness Allowance is a cost-of-living adjustment paid to government employees, pensioners, and public sector employees. Its primary purpose is to help cushion the impact of inflation by adjusting salaries and pensions in line with rising prices. The DA is revised twice a year, based on the inflation rate as measured by the AICPI, ensuring that the purchasing power of employees and pensioners is maintained despite fluctuating market conditions. The DA hike comes after a previous 4% increase in March 2024,

which brought the DA to 50%.

These adjustments are typically reviewed biannually, in January and July, with announcements often made in March and September. The government uses the AICPI as a key indicator to decide the DA rates, aiming to cushion its employees from inflationary pressures. This year's October approval aligns with the pattern of pre-Diwali announcements in recent years, ensuring that employees receive some financial reprieve during the festive season.

As the festive season approaches, this DA hike is expected to boost consumer spending and bring much-deserved cheer to central government employees and pensioners. Not only does the hike benefit those currently employed, but it also aids pensioners through an increase in Dearness Relief, ensuring that they, too, receive necessary support to tackle rising living costs.

New ITR e-filing portal 3.0 launching soon: All you need to know

According to an internal circular dated October 8, 2024, the new portal, part of Project IEC 3.0, will replace the current system and introduce advanced features for smoother and more secure filing of income tax returns.

NEW DELHI. The Income Tax Department is set to launch a revamped e-filing portal, ITR E-Filing Portal 3.0, with significant improvements aimed at making tax filing easier for taxpayers. According to an internal circular dated October 8, 2024, the new portal, part of Project IEC 3.0, will replace the current system and introduce advanced features for smoother and more secure filing of income tax returns. The existing ITR e-filing system, known as IEC 2.0, is

coming to the end of its operational phase. The new system, IEC 3.0, will not only continue offering all the current services but will also come with enhancements that aim to create a more user-friendly and secure environment for taxpayers. According to the Income Tax Department's internal circular, the IEC platform allows taxpayers to electronically file their Income Tax Returns (ITRs), submit statutory forms, and access other services. The Centralised Processing Centre (CPC) handles the processing of these returns through the portal. In addition to this, there is a Back-Office (BO) portal that tax officers use to access data related to taxpayer filings and processing. Project IEC 3.0 will continue all these functions, but with a focus on improving user experience and providing faster, more efficient services.

PUBLIC SUGGESTIONS SOUGHT BEFORE LAUNCH

Before launching the new portal, the Income Tax Department is seeking feedback from the public and stakeholders. The department believes that the new platform will have a major impact on how both taxpayers and tax



officers work in the future, so they are encouraging users to share their opinions and suggestions. A committee will be formed to gather input from various stakeholders, including taxpayers, tax professionals, and officers of the department. This committee, led by a senior officer not below the rank of CIT (Commissioner of Income Tax), will be tasked with gathering feedback on the current system's strengths and weaknesses and identifying areas for improvement in IEC 3.0. The committee will be formed within a week of the order, and all suggestions are expected to be submitted by November 30, 2024.

IMPROVEMENTS EXPECTED IN IEC 3.0

Chartered Accountant Ashish Niraj, Partner at A S N & Company, believes that the transition to IEC 3.0 will make the system more user-friendly. He expects that the new portal will process ITRs more quickly, potentially speeding up refunds for taxpayers. He also hopes that common issues such as problems with downloading past tax returns or forms, server failures, and payment issues will be resolved in the upgraded system. There were some technical glitches in IEC 2.0, but with the high-speed technology expected in IEC 3.0, I am optimistic that these problems will be reduced," said Niraj. Chartered Accountant Hardik Kakadiya, President of the Chartered Accountants Association, Surat, also commented on the potential improvements. He noted that there have been ongoing issues with the current portal, and a case has even been filed in the Gujarat High Court regarding the glitches. Kakadiya hopes that the new portal will be able to handle the increasing number of taxpayers more efficiently and prevent similar problems in the future.

NEWS BOX

Lionel Messi remains coy on Argentina future: These can be my last games

New Delhi. Lionel Messi has remained coy on his Argentina future after scoring a hat-trick against Bolivia in the South American World Cup qualifiers on October 15, Tuesday. Messi was in scintillating form as he put the Bolivian side to the sword, bagging his 10th international hat-trick. With this, Messi went level with Cristiano Ronaldo for the most international hat-tricks in history. Messi was asked after the win over Bolivia if he would be there in time for the 2026 World Cup, where Argentina will be defending their crown. The 37-year-old would give an honest answer saying, as quoted by ESPN, he hasn't set a deadline for his future and is focussed on enjoying the love he is getting from the fans at the moment.

"I didn't set any date or deadline about my future," Messi said. "I'm just enjoying all this. I am more emotional than ever and taking all the love from the people because I know these can be my last games." Plan to be with Argentina as long as I can contribute. Messi went on to say that he feels great playing at home as he can lap up the affection from the Argentina fans. The Argentine maestro said that the team enjoys the connection with the fans at the



moment. "It is very nice to play here feeling the affection of the Argentina fans," Messi said after the game. "It makes me emotional to listen how they shout my name. We all enjoy this connection with the fans and we love playing at home."

Messi said that he feels like a kid once again being surrounded by younger teammates and would continue playing for the Argentina team if he can maintain that feeling and contribute to the side.

"It's a joy to be present and appreciate this moment. Being surrounded by younger teammates, given my age, makes me feel like a kid again," Messi said. "I find myself doing silly things because I feel so comfortable. As long as I maintain that feeling and can continue contributing to the team, I plan to be here enjoying [the national team]."

Shubman Gill should not open in Rohit Sharma's absence in Australia: Anil Kumble

New Delhi. Shubman Gill has the experience of playing in Australia and he is capable of shining at No. 3, former India captain Anil Kumble said. The legendary leg-spinner urged India to resist the temptation to open the batting with Gill if and when Rohit Sharma is unavailable for a Test match in the much-anticipated Border-Gavaskar Trophy. Shubman Gill began his career as an opener, making his debut in Melbourne in 2020. He opened the batting for India in as many as 17



Tests before opting to move to No. 3 in 2023. When India looked beyond Cheteshwar Pujara, Gill volunteered to drop in the batting order and allow Yashasvi Jaiswal to open the innings with Rohit Sharma in Test cricket.

Rohit, according to sources, is likely to miss the first Test of the upcoming five-match series against Australia in Perth due to personal reasons, leaving a spot at the top up for the taking. Kumble said India should look at opening with Yashasvi and KL Rahul and allow Shubman to continue batting at No. 3. "You know he (Shubman) is exceptionally talented, skilful and he's done that. He's been to Australia before. Like you mentioned, in Brisbane, he got a wonderful fifty there and he knows the conditions," Kumble told the broadcasters during a rain delay on Day 1 of the Test between India and New Zealand in Bengaluru on October 16. "I don't want to change that. I know there's a temptation to push Shubman Gill because Rohit is not available in the first Test. But, there's always KL Rahul. KL Rahul's name is synonymous with change and adapting to whatever the team wants. Whether you want to open the batting or keep wickets, Rahul Dravid did that, now KL Rahul is doing that," he said. Gill hit a match-winning 91 in India's iconic victory in the Brisbane Test in 2021 while opening the batting. The young batting star has slowly, but surely, found his footing at the No. 3 spot for India.

Pro Kabaddi League: Tamil Thalaivas bank on Sachin, retained core for season 11

- Thalaivas bought Sachin for 2.15 crores
- Sachin will have a chance to cement himself as one of the best in the league
- Thalaivas retained their core players before the auction

New Delhi. After a disappointing campaign last time around, Tamil Thalaivas are eager to make a strong comeback as Season 11 of the Pro Kabaddi League kicks off on October 18. Despite reaching the semi-finals in Season 9, the Thalaivas faltered last season, failing to progress beyond the league stage. Now, with a revamped coaching setup and key player retentions, they are determined to secure a place in the PKL 11 Playoffs. For this season, the Thalaivas have adopted a dual-coach system, appointing Udaya Kumar as head coach and former PKL champion Dharmaraj Cheralathan as the strategy coach. This collaborative approach is

expected to bring fresh ideas and guidance to the team. Although Tamil Thalaivas weren't amongst the busiest teams during the Season 11 Player Auction, they made headlines by signing star raider Sachin for a record INR 2.15 crores. With their core squad intact, here's a breakdown of the Thalaivas' strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats heading into the new season.

Strengths

One of Tamil Thalaivas' key strengths is their ability to retain most of their core players from last season. Star raider Narender, who has accumulated 429 raid points in two seasons, will once again be the focal point of their attack. Adding to this is the acquisition of Sachin, who boasts 952 raid points in his PKL career and holds the record for the most do-or-die raid points (233) in league history. Together, Narender and Sachin form a formidable raiding duo, providing the team with a powerful offensive unit. The Thalaivas' depth in raiding is further strengthened by backup options like Vishal Chahal, who made an impressive debut last season with 34 raid points, and the experienced Chandran Ranjit, who has tallied 534 raid points in his PKL career. In defence, the team has maintained continuity by retaining key players such as Sagar, M.



Abishek, Sahil Gulia, Himanshu, Mohit, and Amirhossein Bastami. Sahil Gulia and Sagar were among the top 10 defenders last season, with 69 and 66 tackle points respectively, ensuring the Thalaivas have a solid defensive lineup.

Weaknesses

Despite their strong roster, the Thalaivas' depth in defence could be a concern if key defenders like Sahil Gulia or Sagar suffer injuries or experience a dip in form. Sagar's absence for several matches last season significantly affected the team's defensive balance, and a similar situation this season could expose their backup defenders, such as M. Abishek, Himanshu, Mohit, and Bastami,

who will need to step up under pressure.

Opportunities

For Sachin, this season presents an opportunity to further cement his status as one of the league's premier raiders. Just 48 raid points away from reaching 1000 in his PKL career, he will aim to surpass the 200 raid points mark in a season for the first time. With the support of Narender, who will share the raiding responsibilities, Sachin finds himself in an ideal setup to achieve his personal and team goals.

Threats

One potential threat for the Thalaivas is the lack of an experienced all-rounder in their squad. All-rounders are crucial for providing balance, contributing on both offense and defense. Iranian Moein Safaghi is the team's only designated all-rounder, but he has yet to make his PKL debut. Relying solely on him to fill this vital role could be risky, especially if key players are sidelined due to injuries. Without a proven all-rounder, the Thalaivas may struggle to maintain balance if they face personnel challenges throughout the season. As Season 11 approaches, Tamil Thalaivas will look to build on their strengths while addressing these potential weaknesses and threats, as they aim to make a deep playoff run.

IPL 2025: Coach Paras Mhambrey to work with Lasith Malinga at Mumbai Indians

- Paras Mhambrey worked with Mumbai Indians for 4 years from 2009
- Mhambrey was part of the Rahul Dravid-led coaching staff at T20 World Cup 2024
- Mumbai appointed Mahela Jayawardene as their head coach in October

New Delhi. Mumbai Indians added former India bowling coach Paras Mhambrey to their coaching unit on Wednesday, October 16. The five-time Indian Premier League champions confirmed that Mhambrey will work closely with bowling coach Lasith Malinga in IPL 2025. Mhambrey returns to the Mumbai franchise after having had a successful stint with the Indian senior men's



cricket team. Paras Mhambrey, 52, was part of the Rahul Dravid-led coaching team during India's T20 World Cup triumph. Having worked closely with Dravid over the last few years, Mhambrey is one of the most sought-after bowling coaches. Mumbai Indians confirmed that Lasith Malinga will continue to have the responsibility of working with the bowlers and Mhambrey will work alongside him in IPL 2025. The announcement came a week after MI welcomed Mahela Jayawardene back as

their head coach for the IPL 2025 season. The former Sri Lanka captain, who was instrumental in their title triumphs, replaced Mark Boucher, who was in charge of the team for the 2022 and 2023 seasons. "He will work alongside current Bowling Coach Lasith Malinga, as part of the coaching team under Head Coach, Mahela Jayawardene. He has been a part of the Mumbai Indians coaching team earlier as well, celebrating title wins in the IPL and the Champions League T20," Mumbai Indians said in a statement.

Paras Mhambrey played two Tests and three ODIs for India after making his debut in 1996. A medium-pace bowler, Mhambrey picked 5 wickets in international cricket. Mhambrey played domestic cricket for Mumbai, featuring in 91 first-class matches and taking 284 wickets and 83 List A matches with 111 wickets. Mhambrey worked with the Mumbai Indians for four years after he was first appointed as assistant coach in 2010. The former fast bowler's extensive experience of working as a bowling coach will come in handy as Mumbai Indians look to bounce back from the horror season in 2023.

Net gains for Adarshini, Sachin in CM Trophy 2024

- Adarshini defeated Rajarajeshwari J of Sivagangai 21-13, 21-4 in the girls' final, while Sachin JT got the better of Rishivanth CA of Tiruppur 21-15, 15-21, 21-14 in the boys' category.

CHENNAI. Adarshini Shri NB of Vellore and Sachin JT of Coimbatore clinched the badminton schools girls' and boys' singles gold medals in the CM Trophy 2024 on a day where incessant rains battered the city. Adarshini defeated Rajarajeshwari J of Sivagangai 21-13, 21-4 in the girls' final, while Sachin JT got the better of Rishivanth CA of Tiruppur 21-15, 15-21, 21-14 in the boys' category. Defending champs Chennai



continue to top the leaderboard with 59 gold, 40 silver and 43 bronze while Chengalpattu is a distant second with 12 gold, 17 silver and 17 bronze. Salem district, who are third in the standings, managed to close the gap on Chengalpattu by winning the women's handball gold as Kancheepuram and Chennai bagged silver and bronze, respectively. Tiruchirappalli bagged the school boys' hockey gold on a better goal difference as three teams finished with five points each, registering one win and two draws.

MOP Vaishnav triumph

MOP Vaishnav College for Women won the University of Madras, Inter-Zone (women) ball badminton tournament held at SA Arts & Science College. In the final, MOP defeated Ethiraj 35-19, 35-26. Teams from MOP, JBAS, SRMAS, Ethiraj and WCC took part in the tournament. Placings: 1. MOP Vaishnav; 2. Ethiraj; 3. B-Zone combined team; 4. A-Zone combined team.

Vijay clinches title

Tamil Nadu's Vijay Shreeram finished with a tally of 7.5 points at the end of the 8th and final round and won the New Prince Group of Institutions-Sri MS Venkataraman Memorial 9th International FIDE-rated chess tournament. International Master Ravichandran Siddharth, Aswin Sairam, Ayushh Ravikumar, Madhesh Kumar, Vignesh B, IM Balasubramanian R and Karan JP scored seven points each and they finished 2nd to 8th place, respectively, based on their tie-breaks. Vijay bagged a cash award of Rs 60000 and a trophy.

Yusuf Dikec Exclusive: Viral Turkish shooter reflects on meteoric rise to stardom

New Delhi. The Dr. Karni Singh Shooting Range in New Delhi was buzzing with excitement during the ISSF World Cup 2024, and much of that energy centred around one man -- Yusuf Dikec. The Turkish marksman, famous for his unconventional style and relaxed demeanour, was a major draw for fans and fellow athletes alike. Dikec failed to qualify for the final in the 10m air pistol event on October 15, but his performance mattered little for those who queued up to catch a glimpse of him. Dikec's rise to global fame started during the 2024 Paris Olympics, where his unorthodox stance and minimalistic gear turned heads. Competing in the mixed team 10m air pistol event, he secured a historic silver medal for Turkey—the country's first-ever Olympic medal in shooting. But it wasn't just his performance that stole the spotlight; it was his casual approach. While most elite shooters are decked out in high-tech gear with custom lenses, visors, and elaborate ear protection, Dikec stood out for keeping things simple. He wore standard glasses, and yellow earplugs, and, in a style that has since gone viral, often kept one hand casually tucked in his pocket—looking more like a relaxed spectator than an Olympic marksman. When asked about his now-iconic shooting pose, Dikec's response was as cool as his demeanour. "I started shooting and continued to shoot in this position only," he told India Today, almost shrugging off the fame that's come with it. "But after the medal in the Olympics, I have gained popularity. But I have been shooting in this position." For Dikec, his minimal gear and style aren't just for show—they're part of his strategy to stay relaxed under pressure. "The idea is to be relaxed," he emphasised. It's that effortless style that has turned Dikec into a viral sensation, with athletes from football to basketball imitating his stance in their own celebrations. "Football, basketball, several athletes have done it very good," he said when asked who had nailed the best imitation of his pose post-Olympics. This move—often likened to that of a hitman or a casual observer—has now become more than just a quirky shooting technique. It has morphed into a symbol of confidence and coolness, widely adopted across the sports world. Dikec's journey to the top wasn't an overnight sensation, though. Born in 1973 in Turkey, his love for shooting developed early. He made his Olympic debut back in 2008 and has spent years honing his craft to become one of the most respected shooters in the sport. Despite his years of experience, it was only recently that his laid-back style catapulted him into the limelight.

Bengaluru crowd erupts with Virat Kohli chants at Chinnaswamy Stadium

- India host New Zealand for three-match Test series
- Day 1 of 1st Test delayed due to persistent rain in Bengaluru
- Kohli received loud cheers from crowd at M Chinnaswamy

New Delhi. Day 1 of the 1st Test between India and New Zealand might not have witnessed any action yet, with rain playing spoilsport. Nonetheless, the fans remained upbeat, cheering through a rainy day at the M



Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru on October 16, Wednesday. Despite an Orange Alert declared in the city and the Karnataka government ordering work from home due to inclement weather, this couldn't stop the fans from turning up in huge numbers despite the

incessant rain. Supporters queued outside the stadium amid persistent showers before finally gaining entry. The toss was delayed, but the fans continued to fill the stadium, showcasing their enthusiasm for the game and its players. As the Indian team shifted

their base to an indoor training session, Virat Kohli made an appearance, sending the crowd into a frenzy. The RCB star walked across the stadium to the indoor training area, greeted by thunderous cheers. Emerging star Yashasvi Jaiswal accompanied Kohli, eager to get into the groove before the match. Jaiswal has frequently been seen practising alongside Kohli in the nets, eager to learn from the seasoned campaigner. Kohli's arrival was met with chants of his name, creating the perfect homecoming for the crowd favourite. The unbreakable bond between the Bengaluru fans, RCB, and Kohli was on full display. Kohli has always acknowledged the love and support showered on him by the fans. Now, the Bengaluru crowd eagerly awaits his performance in whites for India as they take on New Zealand. Although rain and drizzle persisted throughout the day, fans remained unfazed, waiting patiently for the Indian team and their favorite stars.



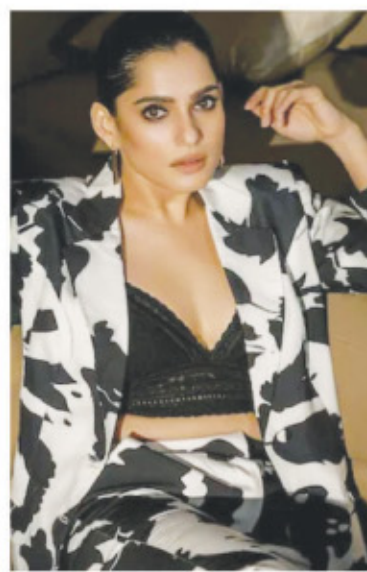
Priya Bapat

Sends A Message On Body Positivity With Her New Beach Outfit

Marathi actress Priya Bapat maintains a strong presence on social media. She is currently enjoying a vacation on the beach. During her free time, she indulges in activities she enjoys, including photoshoots, and the pictures are currently going viral on social media. In the photos, Priya donned a black transparent full-sleeve top, which she teamed with a matching sequin skirt. She chose a glam look, including perfectly drawn eyebrows, black smoky eyes, contoured cheeks, and a pink lip shade. She left her hair open and free-flowing and rounded off her look with a pair of golden hoops. She can be seen posing on a beachside. Her happy and vibrant sun-kissed look, along with her body-positive message, gives pure vacation vibes.

The photos went viral. While one of her fans commented, "Wow, stunning." Another one added, "Adorable." While many dropped red heart and fire emotions in the comment section. Well, this is not the first time. A few days back, the actress dropped a couple of photographs from her photoshoot session and surprised her fans. In the photos, the actress is seen slaying in a black and white printed co-ord set. She wore a blazer teamed with a matching black bralette and trousers. She chose a nude base except for the Kohl-rimmed eyes, tied her hair in a high-rise bun, and completed her look with golden earrings. Her pictures gave boss lady vibes, and she looked stunning.

Priya Bapat mainly works in Marathi films. She is best known for her roles in the movies Kakspash and Aamhi Doghi, for which she won the Best Actress award. She made her debut with the Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar movie in 2000. She is also remembered for her roles in Munnabhai MBBS and Lage Raho Munnabhai. Priya Bapat is one of the highest-paid actresses in Marathi cinema. She was recently seen in the Hindi-language crime thriller film Visfot. The film was written by Abbas Dalal and Hussain Dalal, directed by Kookie Gulati, and produced by Sanjay Gupta and Anuradha Gupta under the banner of White Feather Films. The film stars Riteish Deshmukh and Fardeen Khan, with Priya Bapat and Krystle D'Souza in supporting roles. It was released on September 6, on Jio Cinema.



Oviya Filed A Complaint With The Commissioner Against 'Morphed Video', Says Manager: 'It's A Sensitive Issue'



An alleged private video of actress Oviya, known for Kalavani and Bigg Boss Tamil Season 1, was making the rounds of social media. The notorious incident has been the talk of all leading social media platforms with many rumours afloat. Actress Oviya, on the other hand, hasn't made an official statement regarding the ongoing controversy. However, she replied to many users who harassed her in the comments section of her Instagram posts. Many lauded her for handling the issues with sarcasm, while others questioned why she is not denying the claims.

Meanwhile, News18 got in touch with Oviya's manager, who claimed that the actress has filed a complaint with the Chennai police commissioner and will be taking necessary action against the culprit. "It is a morphed video made by someone who wanted to tarnish the name of Oviya. She has taken the matter to the police commissioner and will take necessary legal action against the culprit," he said. When asked about the details of the accused, Oviya's manager said, "It is a sensitive issue. So, I can't reveal such details." When trying to reach Oviya, the manager claimed that she is currently unwell and cannot be contacted. Social media continues to be abuzz with talks about the scandal. Many have come down heavily on people sharing the screenshots of the viral clip. Actress Oviya made her acting debut with the Malayalam film Kangaroo. She later became famous with the Tamil film Kalavani, which had actor Vemal in the lead role. The film became a blockbuster and Oviya was roped in for notable projects like Marina and Kalakalappu. She became immensely popular for her stint at Bigg Boss Tamil Season 1, where she was harassed by other teammates. Her statements like "Neenga Shut up Pannunga" in the house became part of Tamil pop culture. It also made Tamil merchandise like t-shirts.

Raveena Tandon Recalls Mob Attack, Says Similar Thing Happened With Richa Chadha: 'It's A Planned Thing'



In June, Raveena Tandon and her driver were attacked by a mob in Mumbai amid allegations of rash driving. In a recent interview with NewsX Live, Raveena shared that Mumbai Police indicated the attack was pre-planned. She also mentioned that her friend, actress Richa Chadha experienced a similar mob incident the next day. Raveena expressed concern over these intimidation tactics and said that Richa had to settle the matter because there were no CCTV cameras to capture the truth. Raveena said, "Unfortunately, this has been going on in Mumbai, which is a planned kind of a thing. Jo ki darane ki baat hai (to intimidate). Jab ye mob ka incident hua (When this mob incident happened), in fact, the next day, my friend Richa Chadha called me. She said, 'Raveena, you won't believe it, the same thing happened!' The same thing happened with Richa, and unfortunately, no CCTV cameras to record the truth. In fact, she had to pay up. She had to settle the matter. The cops told her that settle it. She, in fact, the poor thing, went ahead and settled."

Raveena Tandon said that the police believe her mob incident was planned to get money. She described how the mob tried to break into her house while her children were inside and her husband was away. Raveena and her staff blocked the gate to stop them, insisting that the police should take care of it.

"I remember, the mob was so aggressive. They were entering my house. My children were upstairs at home. My husband wasn't at home. Jo mere male members of staff dikh rahe the unko, wo kheech ke maar rahe the unko. In fact, gate pe main khadi ho gayi aur meri jo do domestic staff ki members hain, jo saalo se hain mere sath, hum gate par khade ho gaye the that no one will enter the house. Aur wo dhakka de de ke bol rahe the aap bas driver ko bahar bhej dijiye. Toh maine kaha uski galti hai toh police ko aa jane dijiye, fir aap le jaye usko. (They were bashing up male members of my staff. Me and two female members of my staff stood at the gate so that no one enters the house. They kept pushing and demanding us to surrender the driver. I said if the driver is at fault, let the police come and take him). Who are you to give justice? Who are you to lynch him? Aap kyu maara peeti karna chahte ho? No hitting! Please don't hit anyone. But ek jo mob frenzy ho jati hai na jab sab sath mein ho jate hain (it was like a mob frenzy, when everyone gets together)," Raveena added.

Taapsee Pannu

Takes A Jibe At The Rise In Spy Thrillers In Bollywood: 'Everyone Wants To Do...'

Taapsee Pannu has done a plethora of spy films in her career. While she made her debut in Bollywood with the slapstick comedy film Chashme Baddoor, she went on to play more nuanced roles later. In a recent interview, she took a dig at the rise in spy thrillers in Bollywood. She spoke about how every actor wants to work in a spy thriller today which she had done years ago. In a conversation with News X, Taapsee Pannu spoke about how she worked in spy thrillers when they weren't the rage in Bollywood. She mentioned how she was a part of spy-thrillers when they 'were not in fashion.' The actor said, "Now, everybody wants to do a spy thriller. I did it so many years ago that now if I do it again it's very weird; why are you repeating yourself? I've done something which was so remarkable back then, I don't want to touch it and spoil it again. If I have to really do action thriller, I was very clear I will go in some other world."

Pannu played the role of a spy in Baby which was released in 2015. Following this, she stepped into the shoes of a spy in Naam Shabana which was released in 2017. Bollywood has a plethora of spy films in the pipeline, including the YRF Spy Universe and the woman-led Alpha which will star Alia Bhatt and Sharvari in lead roles. On the work front, Pannu will be next seen in Gandhari. Netflix recently shared the introduction teaser of the film. From the looks of it, the project might revolve around a mother who



takes drastic steps when her children are in danger. Sharing the announcement, the OTT giant wrote, "The Hasseen writer-actor duo is back. Kanika Dhillon and Taapsee Pannu return with an action thriller. Gandhari arrives soon, only on Netflix. #GandhariOnNetflix @kanika.d @taapsee @kathhaptures." The release date of Gandhari has not been announced yet.

