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NDA partners AJSU Party to contest 10 seats, JD(U) 2, LJP (Ram Vilas) 1 in J'Khand polls

Sanjay Kumar New Delhi, Oct. 18: Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, also the BJP's co-in-charge for Jharkhand Assembly elections, on Friday said National Democratic Alliance



(NDA) constituents AJSU Party will contest 10 seats, JD(U) two and LJP (Ram Vilas) one. Sarma said while the seat-sharing arrangement is nearly finalised, the BJP is adopting a "wait and watch" strategy as rival parties, including the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, are yet to disclose their plans. The elections for the 81-member Jharkhand Assembly will be held in two phases, on November 13 and November 20, with the count-

ing of votes scheduled for November 23. Sarma said, "NDA allies AJSU Party will contest 10 seats, JD(U) 2, and LJP (Ram Vilas) 1 in Jharkhand as per the seat-sharing arrangement, which is almost finalised." AJSU Party will contest from Silli, Ramgarh, Gomia, Ichagarh, Mandu, Jugsalai, Dumri, Pakur, Lohardaga, and Manoharpur. JD(U) will field candidates in Jamshepur West and Tamar, while LJP (Ram Vilas) will contest from Chatra, he said. Sarma made these remarks in the presence of Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and AJSU Party chief Sudesh Mahto. As per the arrangement, the BJP will contest 68 seats, but discussions are ongoing, and a final decision will be made soon. "We will fight the elections under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and on the agenda of development," Sarma said. Chouhan said the central leadership has decided the NDA will jointly contest the elections in the state to "save the identity of Jharkhand and to protect 'Mati, Beti, and Roti' (land, daughter, and bread)."

Arvind Kejriwal on Delhi court bail to Satyendar Jain

Simmi Kaur Babbar New Delhi, Oct 18: Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) convener Arvind Kejriwal on Friday hailed the Delhi court's decision to grant bail to his party colleague Satyendar Jain in a money laundering case. "Satyendra Jain also got bail after spending more than two years in jail. What was his fault? Several raids were conducted at his place. Not even a single penny was recovered," Kejriwal said in an X post. "His only fault was that he built mohalla clinics and made all treatment free for all the people of Delhi. Modi ji put him in jail for closing down mohalla clinics and stopping free treatment for the poor. But God is with us. Today he too has been released. Welcome back Satyendra!" the former Delhi chief minister said. Jain, who was arrested in 2022 in a money laundering case, got bail from a Delhi court on Friday. "Considering the delay in trial and long incarceration of 18 months, and the fact that trial will take long to start, let alone conclude, accused is favourably suited for the relief," the court observed. The Aam Aadmi Party said in an X post, "Satyamev Jayate. Another conspiracy of BJP

failed as Satyendra Jain ji, who brought about health revolution in Delhi by building magnificent Mohalla Clinics, got bail from the court. The real



face of BJP has been exposed again now in front of the entire country." The ED had arrested Satyendar Jain on May 30, 2022 on the charge of laundering money through four companies allegedly linked to him. It had lodged the case based on an FIR filed by the Central Bureau of Investigation

(CBI) against him in 2017 under the Prevention of Corruption Act. In his plea, Jain stated that the Supreme Court has said that the accused can't be incarcerated for an indefinite time during the pendency of trial. The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate on May 30, 2022 on money laundering charge due to four companies allegedly linked to him. "Considering the delay in trial and long incarceration of 18 months, and the fact that trial will take long to start, let alone conclude, the accused is favourably suited for the relief," PTI quoted Special Judge Vishal Gogne as saying. According to a PTI report, the judge granted the relief on a bail bond ₹50,000 with two sureties of like amount. The ED case stems from an FIR lodged against Jain by the Central Bureau of Investigation in 2017 under the Prevention of Corruption Act. AAP leader Manish Sisodia posted on X, "Satyamev Jayate. Long live the Constitution of the country. The dictatorship of the dictator slapped us once again. Satyendra Jain was kept in jail for such a long time by making false and baseless allegations. His house was raided four times." "Nothing was found, yet he was kept in jail by making a false case under

MK Stalin writes to PM Modi on Hindi-centred events

New Delhi, Oct 18: Tamil Nadu chief minister MK Stalin also suggested that special events to celebrate the richness of all the classical languages should be organised. Tamil Nadu chief minister MK Stalin on Friday wrote a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, citing "Hindi language-oriented events in non-Hindi-speaking states," which he said can be avoided. According to ANI, the letter also stated that if the government wants to continue to celebrate Hindi events in such states, then events related to local languages should also be honoured with equal warmth. "In the circumstances, in a multilingual country like India, according to a special place to Hindi and celebrating Hindi Month in non-Hindi speaking States is seen as an attempt to belittle other languages," Stalin wrote in his letter. "I suggest that holding such Hindi language oriented events in non-Hindi speaking States could be avoided or if the Union Government still desires to hold such events, I suggest that celebration of the local language month in respective states must also be done with equal warmth," the letter added. The DMK chief also suggested that special events to celebrate the richness of all the classical languages that are recognised by different states should be organized to enhance cordial relationships among all.

HC asks Delhi Police to reply to Brij Bhushan's plea for early hearing

Navdeep Singh Sahni

New Delhi, Oct 18: The Delhi High Court on Friday sought response of the city police and wrestlers on a plea by former Wrestling Federation of India chief Brij Bhushan Singh seeking early hearing of his petition to quash an FIR lodged against him by several women wrestlers. Singh has sought preponement of the date of hearing in the main petition which is listed on January 13, 2025, on the grounds that the matter is at the stage of recording prosecution evidence in the trial court and by the time the case will come up before the high court, most of the witnesses will be examined. Justice Manoj Kumar Ohri issued notice to the Delhi Police and the wrestlers on the application in which Singh has also urged the high court to direct the trial court not to proceed in the criminal case till disposal of his pending petition. The high court asked the police and the



wrestlers to file their replies to the application and listed it for hearing on December 16. During the brief hearing, Singh, represented by advocate Rajiv Mohan, submitted that being a special court, the trial court is fixing the matter on a weekly basis and one of the victims has already been examined. Seeking to stay the proceedings before the trial court, the application said if the trial will keep on going, it will cause prejudice and

mental agony to Singh who claimed to have a strong case on merits for quashing the FIR. The high court had earlier issued notice and sought response of the police and the wrestlers on Singh's petition seeking quashing of the FIR and charges framed against him in the sexual harassment case lodged by several women wrestlers. Singh, who is also a former MP of the BJP, was last year accused of sexual assault by several female wrestlers who sat on a protest for weeks demanding a probe against him. The Delhi Police filed an FIR against him after the intervention of the Supreme Court in May 2023. After a trial court framed charges of sexual harassment, intimidation and outraging the modesty of women against the former lawmaker on May 21, Singh approached the high court in August claiming that he has been falsely implicated and no offence as alleged by the prosecution has been committed by him.

Personal laws can't hinder law preventing child marriage: SC

ST Correspondent

New Delhi, Oct 18: The Supreme Court on Friday said the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act cannot be stunted by traditions under any personal law and observed marriages involving children violate the free will to choose a life partner. A bench comprising Chief Justice of India (CJI) D Y Chandrachud and Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra further issued a slew of guidelines for the effective implementation of the law on prevention of child marriages in the country. The bench, however, noted the issue whether the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act (PCMA) would prevail over personal laws was pending with the Parliament for consideration. The Centre had urged



the apex court to hold the PCMA to prevail over personal laws. "While the PCMA seeks to prohibit child marriages. It does not stipulate big social malaise of marriages fixed in the minority of a child which also have the effect of violating the rights to choice...It takes away from them, their choice of partner and life paths before they mature and form the ability to assert their agency..." the CJI said. The court noted that child marriages require an intersectional approach that acknowledges the overlapping vulnerabilities experienced by children, especially girls, from marginalised communities. "Inter-sectionality involves considering factors like gender, caste, socio-economic status and geography, which often increase the risks of early marriage" the CJI said. Preventive strategies should be tailored to the unique needs of various communities besides focusing on addressing the root causes of child marriage, such as poverty, gender, inequality, lack of education, the judgement said. "The PCMA as a social legislation will only succeed through the collective efforts of all stakeholders to address the issue within a broader social framework, which emphasises the need for multi sectoral coordination," it added. According to the top court, the scenario necessitated the enhancement of reporting mechanisms, expansion of public awareness campaigns and investment in the training and capacity building of law enforcement.

No resolution on Article 370, scaling down on JK's statehood demand huge setback

Tejinder Kaur Babbar

Srinagar, Oct 18: People's Democratic Party (PDP) on Friday said Jammu and Kashmir Government's first reported resolution demanding restoration of statehood and not Article 370, was a "huge setback" and nothing less than the ratification of the Centre's 2019 decisions. Another political party, the People's Conference, has also questioned the secrecy over the resolution. The reactions came after a Jammu-based newspaper 'Daily Excelsior' carried a report that the cabinet had passed a resolution urging the Centre to restore Jammu and Kashmir's statehood. The report also said that the chief minister will travel to Delhi to handover the draft of the resolution to Prime Minister Narendra Modi. "Omar Abdullah's first resolution on statehood is nothing less than ratification of the August 5, 2019 decision. No resolution on

Article 370 and scaling down the demand to mere statehood is a huge setback, espe-



cially after seeking votes on the promise of restoring Article 370," PDP youth president and MLA-elect Pulwama, Waheed Parra, said in a post on X. People's Conference chief Sajad Lone wondered why the resolution on statehood passed

by the cabinet was "shrouded in mystery and secrecy that only one newspaper publishes it". "I hope the CS (chief secretary) of Jammu and Kashmir has notified as it is the protocol," Lone said on X. Lone, who is an MLA-elect from Handwara, however, said the resolution should have been passed in the assembly rather than the cabinet. "I very humbly state that the will of the people of J&K is reflected in the Assembly and not in the cabinet. The cabinet is a majoritarian institution of governance. It does not reflect all shades and opinions as per the will of the people of J&K," he added. All across the country, to the best of my knowledge, Assembly is the proper institution for addressing major issues like that of statehood or

Article 370, he said. "When the NC Government passed a resolution on autonomy, they passed it in the Assembly not through a cabinet resolution. What has changed now? Fail to understand why this resolution should not have been reserved for Assembly. Why are we so keen to trivialise everything," he questioned. The separatist-turned-mainstream politician said he would have loved to see which way the BJP and other parties vote on statehood and on Article 370 resolution when it is presented in the Assembly. He reminded the National Conference (NC) of its commitment, as per the party's election manifesto, to strive to restore Articles 370 and 35A, and statehood as prior to August 5, 2019, and to pass a resolution in the Jammu and Kashmir assembly, in its first list of business after elections, against the Centre's decision to strip the region of its statehood and special status.

PM Modi proposes holding NDA leaders conclave twice every year

Naresh Malhotra

New Delhi, Oct 18: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has described the meeting of NDA leaders in Chandigarh on Thursday as the largest get-together of non-Congress political parties post 1975, the year Emergency was imposed, and called for holding such a conclave twice every year, a BJP statement said. Making a point about the deeper connect his government enjoys with people compared to the previous Congress-led UPA government, he said at the meeting that he has received over 4.5 crore letters in the past 10 years compared to only 5 lakh letters received by his predecessor. Manmohan Singh headed the UPA government during 2004-14. Modi said at the conclave attended by 17 chief ministers and 18 deputy chief ministers from the BJP and its several allies that smooth governance, fast decision-making and transparency in governance have helped in attracting investors and investment in the states ruled by the NDA. The NDA is fulfilling the rising aspirations of the common citizens and it has been the distinction of its government to ensure the last mile delivery which has

helped in building the trust in public towards the government since 2014, he said. Modi dwelt on the concept of pro-people pro-active good gover-



nance (P2G2), stressing the need for greater interaction between all NDA-ruled states, as also among ministers and MLAs and advocated the use of social media for this. The prime minister lauded the BJP's win in Haryana as significant and historic, saying the NDA has secured the trust and support of all sections of society. The opposition, he said, tried to portray a false narrative of the NDA being anti-farmer whereas it was the farmers who came out in large numbers to

support the ruling party. People gave a clear message that they stand with progress and the good governance agenda of the NDA. He said good governance ultimately means finding solutions to people's problems, asserting that solution-centric governance with focus on grievance-redressal is a distinctive identity of all NDA state governments. The statement said, "The prime minister complimented the gathering describing it as the largest group of non-Congress political parties post 1975. A total of 17 chief ministers and 18 deputy chief ministers participated in this conclave. The PM suggested that such meetings should be held twice every year." A total of six resolutions were passed in the meeting, including Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's proposal on the celebration of 75 years of the making of Constitution of India as "Samvidhan ka Amrut Mahotsav" and Home Minister Amit Shah's proposal to observe 2025 as the 50th year of the "murder of democracy", a reference to the Emergency. Andhra Pradesh CM and TDP president N Chandrababu Naidu projected a win for the Congress, the BJP decided to hold the meeting of all NDA chief ministers, a first in many years, in the state where the ruling alliance leaders were invited to attend the swearing-in ceremony of the new state government.

Jammu & Kashmir Cabinet passes resolution seeking statehood

Srinagar, Oct 18: The new Cabinet of Jammu and Kashmir government passed a resolution on Thursday pressing the central government to restore the statehood to Jammu and Kashmir, according to the



sources. A day after taking oath as Chief Minister of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, Omar Abdullah on Thursday chaired his first Cabinet meeting. Omar Abdullah's first resolution on statehood is nothing less than ratification of the August 5th, 2019 decision. No resolution on Article

370 and scaling down the demand to mere statehood is a huge setback, especially after seeking votes on the promise of restoring Article 370. Till late on Thursday night, the J-K government was silent about the decisions and discussion which took place during the meeting. According to officials, in the meeting which was attended by other ministers at Srinagar's Civil Secretariat, a resolution was unanimously passed, urging the centre that statehood be restored to Jammu and Kashmir. Sources said that Chief Minister Omar Abdullah is expected to travel to New Delhi soon to meet the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, where he would hand over the resolution. Among the other issues, which were discussed in Thursday's meeting including administering oath to the newly elected members in the assembly, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said he led the inaugural meeting with his cabinet colleagues. "We delved into crucial administrative matters and outlined the government's immediate priorities.

News box

'Jail not obligated to give Salem release date'

Mumbai. Seeking rejection of terror convict and gangster Abu Salem's plea requesting information on the number of days left for his incarceration, the prosecution on Thursday submitted that as per the Supreme Court, it is evident that he must undergo a punishment of 25 years, which includes the setoff. The prosecution further submitted that, therefore, the prison authorities were not obligated to furnish the exact date to the convict.



"Since this interpretation is based on the SC order, in case any clarification is required, the convict will have to move SC. In light of the above facts, particularly since the issue of the 25-year sentence has been settled by SC, the question of providing the final date of sentence completion or the release date...by jail authorities does not arise," the reply said.

Salem had sought the court's direction to the prosecution to furnish him with the date of his release from Nashik Central Prison, on completion of his term. He has been in jail in India since his extradition from Portugal 19 years ago. The jail authorities sought time to file a reply.

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Navi Mumbai man fastest Asian to swim Kaiwi Channel



Navi Mumbai. Anshuman Jhingran, a 19-year-old swimmer from Navi Mumbai, achieved a remarkable feat by becoming the fastest Asian swimmer to cross the challenging 42 km-long Kaiwi Channel in Hawaii, USA. This accomplishment marks Jhingran's fifth international channel swim, solidifying his position as a prolific open water swimmer. Prior to this, he successfully crossed four international open water routes, including the North Channel, Catalina Channel, Cook Strait, and the Palk Strait.

The Kaiwi Channel, also known as the Molokai Channel, is situated in the middle of the Pacific Ocean within the Hawaiian Islands. Jhingran began his swim from Molokai Island and battled through the treacherous waters of the Pacific Ocean, reaching Oahu in an impressive time of 14 hours and 21 minutes.

Allow one-time withdrawal from NSS schemes: GCCI

Ahmedabad. The central govt has issued a directive regarding the National Savings Scheme (NSS), mandating that depositors withdraw their funds by Sep 30, with the subsequent cessation of interest payments effective from Oct 1, 2024. Top officials of the department of posts have stated that the directive applies only to those depositors who have NSS 87 and NSS 92 accounts. The Gujarat Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCCI) has demanded that since the withdrawal is taxable, the govt should allow a one-time withdrawal option until March 31, 2025.

A top official from the department of posts in Ahmedabad said, "The NSS 87 was discontinued from Oct 1, 1992, and NSS 92 was discontinued from Nov 1, 2002. Both these schemes do not see new investments, and many accounts are already closed. So the ministry of finance has issued directives to encourage people to withdraw their funds from these schemes and to invest in other schemes."

GCCI has written to the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) regarding the issue. Jainik Vakil, chairman of the GCCCI direct tax committee, said, "This decision has raised significant concerns among long-term depositors who relied on this scheme for their financial security. The NSS, introduced in 1987, provided an attractive investment option with an initial interest rate of 11%, which was subsequently adjusted to 7.5%. Under this scheme, depositors were permitted to invest up to Rs 40,000 annually, enjoying the added benefit of tax deductions under Section 80C of the Income Tax Act, 1961. The scheme's flexibility allowed savers to withdraw both their principal deposits and the accrued interest after a lock-in period of four years, contributing to its popularity among investors. The official regulations stipulate that any amount withdrawn from NSS is subject to taxation in the year of withdrawal. However, if the depositor chooses not to withdraw the funds, the interest earned on those deposits remains tax-free, provided the funds remain in the account." Moreover, should a depositor's heirs withdraw the funds following the depositor's death, the entire amount is treated as tax-free. This provision has incentivised many account holders to maintain their accounts over the years, he added.

Union minister calls for strong ties between research institutions, academia, industry

During the event, he stressed the need to devise global strategies to set a 'benchmark for ourselves'.

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM. A strong collaboration among academia, research institutions, startups and industry is vital for innovation, said Union Minister of State for Science and Technology Jitendra Singh.

He was speaking at the inauguration of the year-long Golden Jubilee celebrations of CSIR-National Institute for Interdisciplinary Science and Technology (CSIR-NIIST) at its Pappanamcode campus here on Thursday. During the event, he stressed the need to devise global strategies to set a 'benchmark for ourselves'. With its unique and exclusive research and development activities, CSIR-NIIST in Thiruvananthapuram has made a niche for all other centres of CSIR across India, he

said. The Union Minister also suggested that CSIR-NIIST draw a roadmap for the next 25 years with a major focus on the younger talent pool which also complements Mission 2027 (Viksit Bharat). C Anandharamakrishnan, Director of CSIR-NIIST, presided over the function and Dr Sanjay Behari, Director, SCTIMST, was the guest of honour.

The Minister also laid the foundation stone for the Centre of Excellence in Ayurveda Research on the campus and also inaugurated the Centre of Excellence in Performance Chemicals and Sustainable Polymers. Both milestone initiatives mark the commencement of the year-long golden jubilee celebrations of the



institute. MoUs for technology transfers by CSIR-NIIST with Bio Vastum Solutions, Ernakulam; Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology (SCTIMST); Science and Technology Park, Pune; Greensapio Tech, Haryana; VSSC, Thiruvananthapuram;

Tata Elxsi Limited, Bengaluru; PA Footwear Private Limited, Chennai; and Ecosure Pulpforming Technologies Ltd, Noida, UP, were also exchanged at the function.

Earlier, the Minister addressed 300 SC/ST farmers and artisans meet. They are the beneficiaries of

different projects spearheaded by Biotechnology Research and Innovation Council-Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Biotechnology (BRIC-RGCB) and Swadeshi Science Movement-Kerala (SSM-K). Speaking at the event at the RGCB campus, the Union Minister said that the time had come for India to lead the biotechnology sector.

He said that India was now preparing for the next industrial revolution, and initiatives like Bio E3 policy would help that. He also released two books published as part of the Science Heritage Project and launched six community projects under the Tribal Heritage Project of BRIC-RGCB and felicitated award-winning farmers.

Police probe fatal blaze in Lokhandwala flat as only bed charred, curtains intact

MUMBAI. Police suspect foul play in Wednesday morning's blaze in a flat in Andheri's Lokhandwala Complex that killed an elderly couple and their domestic help. Oshiwara police found bloodstains in the hall and although the couple's bed was charred, the nearby curtains were intact. Police sources said there was "also a distinct smell of kerosene" in the flat.

Chander Prakash Soni (73), a visually challenged marine engineer who owned a ship-repair MNC headquartered in Singapore, his homemaker wife Kanta (65) and their domestic help Ravi Bhatia (43) were declared brought dead at Cooper Hospital.

Prima facie reports suggested that the fire started from the flat's AC unit. However, when an inspection team spoke to neighbours, they said the couple hardly operated the AC so there was little chance of a short-circuit, police sources



said. Besides, household items were found intact, which adds to the mystery over how the fire started and how only the bed was gutted.

Metal barrier to protect solar roof cycling track in Hyderabad

The project is expected to be completed within six months after the tender process

HYDERABAD. Concerned about the frequent damage to India's first 23-km Solar Roof Cycle Track along the Outer Ring Road (ORR), the Hyderabad Growth Corridor Limited (HGCL) has decided to protect the track by installing "W" Metal Beam Crash Barriers.

These barriers will span 19.2 km from Nanakramguda to Telangana Police Academy (TGPA) and from Himayasatsagar to Narsingi to Kollur, at an estimated cost of Rs 8.05 crore. On average, two to three accidents occur monthly, primarily due to speeding vehicles colliding with the track, especially since the widening of the roads.

In response to cyclists' concerns, HGCL plans to enhance safety with these crash barriers, expected to be completed within



six months after the tender process. During construction, HGCL will ensure traffic safety with appropriate signage, barricades, and lighting, coordinating with officials for traffic

management. The barricades will be designed for durability and painted with alternating black and white stripes, equipped with warning lights for nighttime visibility.

Closure of iconic Swaraj Hotel signals change amidst Vattiyoorkavu Development Project

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM. Swaraj Hotel aka Chukkinte Chayakkada was hard to miss. Situated smack in the middle of Vattiyoorkavu junction, the wafting aroma of several fluffy, fresh, and flavourful delicacies was always a crowd puller. The insides of the tea shop bore a yesteryear charm, with food cooked in coconut oil served on plantain leaf strips.

It ran with high standards of hygiene, and proprietor Gopakumaran Nair made sure that every bit of the advice his father Chukku Velayudhan Nair passed on to him was followed to the T. And the tea shop continued to witness regular tete tete over a cup of hot tea and breakfast delicacies in the morning and warm snacks in the evening. And no one would pass by without packing the famous 'Rasavada' to take home. It never saw a slow day over the past eight decades. However, the



shop is now a memory for the old timers to recall. "Gopakumaran's shop was taken over as part of the Vattiyoorkavu development project. My shop also comes in the project course, and I also shifted from the spot a few years ago. Sometimes, we hear that the

project will take off, but it seems to be in fits and starts," says K Jayadharan Nair, an entrepreneur who runs two business establishments in the area. He, however, feels it's all talk, and the project is just an eyewash. "I have no hope; we have been hearing

this talk for the past 10 years," he says. Regular commuters agree as they point to the bottleneck the junction turns into during peak hours. But Thiruvananthapuram Development Authority (TRIDA) officials feel otherwise. A highly placed source in the authority told TNIE that the land acquisition process for rehabilitation of displaced is complete and works are in full swing for 'meaningful rehabilitation'.

"The aim is to finish the construction work for rehabilitation by March 2025," says the official. The project to develop the Sasthamangalam-Vattiyoorkavu-Peroorakada road to address traffic congestion on the stretch aims to make a four-lane, 10.75-km long, 18.5-metre-wide road. To rehabilitate those who lost their businesses, the project plans to acquire three acres to build a shopping complex that can accommodate about 200 vendors.

The plan was long in the suggestion list of town developers considering the strategic location of the junction that links the suburban areas of the district.

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News box

8th Paradiso tower with 60 families is now dubbed unsafe

Gurgaon. The Central Building Research Institute (CBRI) has deemed Tower A of Chintels Paradiso unfit for living, marking the eighth tower in the nine-building complex to be declared unsafe. The recent audit revealed significant structural deterioration in Tower A, primarily because of severe corrosion caused by high chloride content and poor-quality concrete — similar to issues found in the other towers. Tower A comprises 64 flats, 60 of which are occupied. Structural audits by IIT-Delhi earlier had already declared six other towers — D, E, F, G, H, and J — unsafe, with the demolition of these buildings expected to start next month. IIT had then classified Towers A, B, and C as safe, but warned of potential deterioration in the future. In response, Chintels India initiated a new round of audits through CBRI to further assess the condition of all towers. The CBRI report highlighted that almost all structural elements in Tower A were compromised because of corrosion and poor concrete quality, making the structure non-compliant with Indian safety standards, especially in seismic zone IV. A spokesperson for the developer said, "Once Tower A is vacated, we will offer compensation to flat owners or allow them to opt for reconstruction. The audit report for Tower B, the last remaining tower, is expected in 10 days."

In 1 month, 298 trucks fined for overloading

Gurgaon. With a drop in wind speed from 6 kmph to 2 kmph, the city's AQI saw a slight increase on Thursday, rising from 174 to 178, though it remained within the 'moderate' category.

According to the central govt's System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting and Research (Safar), the AQI could worsen to the 'poor' or 'very poor' category over the next six days. "Meteorological conditions are highly unfavourable for the effective dispersion of pollutants. Additional emissions from stubble/waste burning are likely to deteriorate air quality significantly," it stated.

The Central Pollution Control Board's (CPCB) 24-hour average data showed that the air monitoring station in **Serious Allegations Of SC/ST Harassment Against JNU's Prof. Mazhar Asif—Concerns Over His Candidacy As Jamia Millia Islamia VC**

New Delhi: Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) Professor Mazhar Asif faces allegations of severe caste-based harassment against Reena, a Scheduled Tribe (S.T) employee. The complaint, reviewed by JNU authorities, accuses Asif of deliberately giving Reena low grades, blocking promotions, and favoring ineligible candidates during his tenure as Associate Dean. The case raises concerns over his potential appointment as Vice-Chancellor of Jamia Millia Islamia. Reena fought the injustice in Delhi High Court and the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes. After an independent review, her grades were revised from 5.5 to 8.66, proving unjust actions by Asif. Despite this, Asif has managed to suppress the case through political and personal connections. His candidacy for Jamia's Vice-Chancellor now raises serious concerns for SC/ST students and staff. The case brings up crucial questions about the leadership of central universities. There are growing calls for the government and judiciary to take strict action against Prof. Asif to ensure that casteism and discrimination have no place in educational institutions.

8-year-old boy dies shielding his younger sister from bike in Gzb

Ghaziabad. An eight-year-old boy on way home with food for his mother died shielding his younger sister from a road accident in Vaishali on Wednesday afternoon. Anmol and his sister Reshma were crossing a road when he saw a biker hurtling down at them at high speed. He pushed his sister away to a corner of the road, but failed to jump to safety himself. Passersby took him to Max Hospital in Vaishali, where he succumbed to injuries during treatment.

Swatantra Singh, ACP (Indrapuram), said they received information about the fatal accident from the hospital authorities. "Around 3.15pm, the two children were crossing the road when they were alerted by a biker



frantically sounding the horn. The boy pushed his sister away, but was himself hit by the speeding bike," he added. Anmol and Reshma would beg on the streets. Their mother, who is separated from her husband, was high on drugs at their home in a Vaishali slum when the accident occurred, Singh said. Their father is believed to live somewhere in Nepal.

"The two kids were returning home after buying food with whatever they could earn for the day when the bike hit the boy. We haven't yet received any complaint. But the body has been sent for an autopsy. We are checking CCTV footage from cameras installed in nearby areas to identify the biker," Singh said.

In another accident, a 34-year-old woman died while her six-year-old son and husband suffered grievous injuries when their bike was hit by a truck near Dasna bridge on Thursday. Nikki Singh, her husband Yatendra (36) and their son Krishna were on their way home in Madhuban Bapudham when the accident occurred around 6am. Abhishek Srivastava, ACP (Kavi Nagar), said the truck hit the bike from behind near Govindpuram police chowki. "A police team rushed to the spot after getting information and took the injured family members to a nearby hospital for treatment. Nikki, who suffered critical injuries to her head, died during treatment. Her son Krishna, too, is seriously injured. Only Yatendra wore a helmet, which is why he is stable now," he added.

Streetlights out, dark spots raise safety risk here

Noida. Residents of Greater Noida have raised complaints regarding non-functional streetlights across several sectors, including Sectors Alpha, Beta, Delta, Mu, Xu, Sigma, among others. GNIDA officials conducted ground checks earlier this week, but no redress has been seen so far, residents said.

GNIDA ACEO Prema Singh, along with a team of officials, undertook ground checks on Tuesday and Wednesday and noted several dark spots in the city across both residential and industrial sectors.

Affected areas include the service lanes of Sectors 37, Mu, Xu, and towards the police post near Omaxe Mall in Beta-2, along with the service lane between Sigma and Sector 36. Residential sectors such as Beta, Alpha, Delta, and more, were also found to be in the dark. Additionally, 50% of the streetlights in industrial sector Ecotech 3 were found to be non-functional as well. "It's been several months since we complained about non-functional street lights in our sector, like in H, C, B, etc blocks. There are many lights which are faulty, leading to dark spots. These lead to issues of safety and security of the residents," said Rishpal Bhati, RWA general secretary of Delta 1. ACEO Singh directed officials to



repair or replace all non-functional lights before Diwali. She also directed that the lights be monitored through the control room built in the GNIDA office. Additionally, LED lights will be installed to illuminate key areas of Greater Noida — including main roads, intersections and important govt buildings — in preparation for Diwali. Residents can raise complaints on contact number 7982300721 and helpline number 18008332314, officials said. Meanwhile, residents also demanded sanitation drives be conducted ahead of the festival. "Untended garbage, C&D waste and

clogged sewers are common problems across several sectors. There is no regular sweeping of roads or cleanliness of parks and green spaces. All this leaves the city looking dirty and unhealthy. Given the scenario, the festive spirit is also affected. We made several complaints to the Authority, but no action has been taken so far," said Harinder Bhati, a resident of Beta 1.

Taking note of residents' woes, GNIDA CEO NG Ravi Kumar has directed special cleanliness drives before Diwali.

The CEO has assigned responsibilities across several departments — including public health, civil, horticulture, electrical, etc — so that cleaning, repair and beautification work in all sectors can be completed on time.

"Work including sweeping, cleaning, and garbage disposal along with repair of curb stones, RCC poles, and wire fencing installed on the roadside, painting work to pruning of trees in parks, cutting grass, and repairing parks, etc., will be done under this drive," said a GNIDA official.

VK Singh's daughter files FIR against bizman for Rs 3.5 crore fraud

Ghaziabad. Yogya Singh, the daughter of former Union minister General V K Singh (retd), has filed an FIR at the Kavinagar police station in Ghaziabad accusing a local businessman named Anand Prakash of committing a fraud amounting to approximately Rs 3.5 crore. "In her complaint, Yogya Singh claimed that she entered into an agreement to purchase a house at Rajnagar Colony for Rs 5.5 crore. But despite the payment of Rs 3.5 crore, the seller failed to finalise the sales deed. The agreement was made in 2014, and she subsequently provided additional

funds via cheque for the property's renovation," assistant commissioner of police Abhishek Srivastava said. The former Army chief's daughter claimed in her complaint that in Aug this year, Anand Prakash sent her a notice based on false information. In her response, she accused Prakash of attempting to misappropriate the funds she had given to him. "She also alleged that Prakash fabricated a receipt to support an eviction suit against her, and that she found out that a loan had been taken against the house with efforts underway to increase the loan amount.

3 ministers from NCR, 6 from south Haryana as Team Saini takes oath

Gurgaon. In the 14-member state cabinet led by chief minister Nayab Singh Saini, who is starting as head of govt afresh after a short term as CM before the assembly elections, south Haryana has found a significant place.

The region, which has remained a BJP fortress since 2014, will have six ministers in the cabinet — three from NCR (two from Faridabad and one from Gurgaon) and one each from Palwal, Mahendergarh and Bhiwani.

Rao Narbir Singh and Vipul Goel, who were ministers in the first BJP govt led by Manohar Lal Khattar from 2014-19, made comebacks. Aarti Rao, daughter of Gurgaon MP and Union minister Rao Inderjit Singh, Shruti Choudhary, who along with her mother Kiran Choudhary switched to BJP from Congress before the election, Rajesh Nagar and first-time MLA Gaurav Gautam are the others to become ministers. The Ahirwal region, where BJP won 10 out of 11 seats, will have two faces in the ministry in Narbir and Arti, who has earned a cabinet berth in her debut innings as MLA after winning a close election in Ateli. This is

the highest representation for south Haryana in the three BJP terms (two with single-party majority and one in coalition with JJP). In the first BJP govt under Khattar, south Haryana had five ministers, which reduced to three in the second term when JJP was an alliance partner. The govt led by Saini, after he replaced Khattar as CM this March, had five ministers from south Haryana. Signifying his seniority in the cabinet, Narbir was the fourth to take oath on Thursday after Saini, former home minister Anil Vij and Israna MLA Krishan Lal Panwar. Ministries have not been allocated yet.

Goel, who was first elected MLA from Faridabad in 2014, had become a minister in 2016 during the cabinet reshuffle. But relations soured between him and the party after he was denied a ticket in 2019. This election, he was given the green light to contest again and won, putting him among leading contenders for induction into the cabinet. Shruti, granddaughter of former CM Bansil Lal, first contested elections from Mahendergarh-Bhiwani Lok Sabha constituency in

2009 and defeated Ajay Singh Chautala of INLD to become MP. In 2014 and 2019, she was defeated by BJP MP Choudhary Dharambir Singh. In the 2024 LS election, Congress denied her a ticket and fielded Bhupinder Singh Hooda's loyalist Rao Dan Singh. Before the assembly polls, Shruti and Kiran switched to BJP. Shruti contested her first assembly election from Tosham, defeating cousin and Congress candidate Aniruddh Choudhary by 14,257 votes. Besides Arti, another MLA elected to the assembly for the first time is Gaurav Gautam, who represents Palwal. BJP replaced its sitting MLA Deepak Mangla with the young Gautam and it paid off.

"The induction of six ministers from South Haryana is not surprising. The region deserves its share in governance. It has been supporting BJP. Besides, south Haryana has been making maximum contribution to the state's coffers," said political expert Dr Kunal Pal, who is principal of Indira Gandhi National College, Kurukshetra.

Anaemia, diabetes key health issues in adults: Survey

Gurgaon: A door-to-door screening drive, which covered around 4 lakh people in the district, found prevalence of malnourishment and low-birth weight among children even as anaemia, tuberculosis, diabetes and hypertension among adults were the "key health issues". While 5,543 people were found to be suffering from anaemia, 4,648 suffered from hypertension, 3,529 from diabetes, 267 with cardiac diseases and 23 with cancer. The survey was conducted as part of the Nirogi Haryana Yojana, under which health check-ups are to be conducted once every two years to identify and reduce the burden of disease.

The identified population has been categorised into six age groups for check-ups. "Health workers have been conducting check-ups for eligible individuals and directing them to facilities for comprehensive testing. To enhance this process, the state govt plans to develop health packages," chief medical officer Virender Yadav said. In Gurgaon, 44 lakh tests have been conducted so far since Nov 1, 2022. The tests also helped diagnose 17 cases of TB and 21 patients who were unaware of neurological strokes. The state govt aims to screen 1.2 crore people with an annual income of less than Rs 1.8 lakh. Since its launch in 2022, around 4.3 crore tests have been

NGT takes cognisance of report, says its orders on Aravalis 'flagrantly violated'

Gurgaon. Taking suo-motu cognisance of a TOI report on illegal construction at Ansal Aravali Retreat in Raisina, the National Green Tribunal issued notices to authorities and said that rebuilding of razed structures was a "flagrant violation" of its previous orders. The bench of NGT chairperson Prakash Shrivastava and expert member Dr A Senthil Vel on Aug 23 directed Haryana chief secretary, principal chief conservator of forest, Haryana space application center and Gurgaon district magistrate to respond at least a week before the next date of hearing on Dec 3. Titled 'Gurgaon farmhouses back: Raze & rebuild cycle endures Raisina never heals', TOI reported on July 28 that farmhouses demolished just 15 days ago were being reconstructed in

Raisina hills. New roads were also being laid down on protected forest land and electric poles were being installed. The report also said that some farmhouse owners were pasting "court orders" on their gates and claiming that their properties cannot be razed. There are no court orders to that effect. In the latest directive, NGT noted that Aravali land in Raisina was 'garu munkin pahar (uncultivable hill)' and thereby protected under the Punjab Land Preservation Act (PLPA) and the Aravali Notification. The two regulations prohibit construction and tree felling without permission from the authorities. The tribunal said that reconstruction was a "flagrant violation" of its 2022 ruling in the Sonya Ghosh vs State of Haryana and others

case. In this order, NGT had directed Haryana and Rajasthan govt to remove all encroachments on protected Aravali land, create a monitoring committee and revive degraded forest areas. "The news item raises substantial issues relating to compliance of environmental norms, especially compliance of Forest Conservation Act, 1980 and the Environment Protection Act, 1986," the order said. The tribunal underscored the ecological significance of Raisina hills,

which serve as a wildlife corridor between Sariska National Park in Rajasthan and Asola Bhatti Wildlife sanctuary in Delhi. Asked about the direction, a Haryana forest department official told TOI on Wednesday: "We haven't received any direction yet. We will submit the response as directed." Gurgaon: Taging

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NAME CHANGE
I, SHAKTI SINGH SEHRAWAT S/O JOGINDER SINGH R/O HOUSE NO-125, NEAR RADHA KRISHNA MANDIR, BESIDE CHOTI CHOJPAL, MAHPALPUR, SOUTH WEST DELHI, DELHI-110037 have changed the name of my minor daughter DRISHITI aged 13 years and she shall hereafter be known as DRISHITI SEHRAWAT.

NAME CHANGE
I, NAVEEN S/O ASHOK KUMAR R/O H-40-41, 3rd Floor, Gupta Colony, Palam Vihar, Cartarpuri Alia, Daulatpur Nasirabad (63), Ferozshahpur, Gurgaon, Haryana-122017. Have Changed My Name To Naveen Agarwal For All Future Purposes.

NAME CHANGE
I, SHAILEE W/O NARESH R/O HOUSE NO-157/8, Ward No-8, Near Laxmi Dhamam, Kartar, Rajpur Chowk, Patel, Hariyana-121102. Have Changed My Name To Shailee Saini For All Future Purposes.

NAME CHANGE
I, KRISHNA VENI mother of NO-17010170W, Rank-NK, Name-DHAMODHARAN S, residing at 13, KOLATHI MUTTU STREET, ALLVARAM, KATUPUTHUR, VELLORE, TAMIL NADU-632058 have changed my name from KRISHNA VENI to KRISHNA VENI SHANMUGAM for all future purposes, in my son's service record my date of birth wrongly mentioned as 05/07/1965 instead of my correct date of birth as 01/01/1965. Vide Affidavit dated 18/10/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, KALAYARASI V wife of NO-17010170W, Rank-NK, Name-DHAMODHARAN S, Presently residing at 45/13, SATHUPALAYA, MAIN ROAD, ALLVARAM, KATUPUTHUR, VELLORE, TAMIL NADU-632058 have changed my name from KALAYARASI V to KALAYARASI D for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 18/10/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, SUSHIL KUMAR YADAV S/O KEHARI SINGH YADAV R/O Salook Nagar, Barnahal, Mainpuri, Uttar Pradesh 205281 have changed my name to Sushil Kumar and father's name to KEHARI SINGH for all purposes.

NAME CHANGE
I, SUSHAMA VERMA wife of NO-17008365H, Rank-HMT, Name-HARISHANKAR CHAUHAN, residing at VPO-NAKVA, JUNGLE, TEHSIL-SADAR, DISTT-MAHARAJGARH, UP-273306 have changed my name from SUSHAMA VERMA to SUSHAMA VERMA for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 18/10/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, AJAY DUTTA S/O LATE PRABHAS CHANDRA DATTA R/O NOWATOLI, MOHESHARAM, BHAGALPUR, BIHAR, 813209 Have changed my name to AJAY KUMAR DATTA for All future purposes.

NAME CHANGE
I, D TUKARAM father of No. 6500010X, Rank-SEF Name DAHIPHALE MANESH TUKARAM R/O VILL-KHADGACON, PO & TEH-GANGAKHED, DISTT-PARBHANI, MAHARASHTRA-431514 have changed my name from D TUKARAM to DAHIPHALE TUKARAM YASHIWANTRAO. And my date of birth from 01/12/1959 to 01/01/1963 (in the service records of my son) for all future purposes. Vide affidavit dated 14.10.2024 before Public Notary Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, SUSHIL KUMAR YADAV S/O KEHARI SINGH YADAV R/O Salook Nagar, Barnahal, Mainpuri, Uttar Pradesh 205281 have changed my name to Sushil Kumar and father's name to KEHARI SINGH for all purposes.

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NAME CHANGE
I, SHANMUGAM Father of NO-17010170W, Rank-NK, Name-DHAMODHARAN S, residing at 13, KOLATHI MUTTU STREET, ALLVARAM, KATUPUTHUR, VELLORE, TAMIL NADU-632058 have changed my name from SHANMUGAM to SHANMUGAM MUNJASAMY for all future purposes, in my son's service record my date of birth wrongly mentioned as 02/04/1960 instead of my correct date of birth as 22/04/1960. Vide Affidavit dated 18/10/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, SUSHAMA VERMA wife of NO-17008365H, Rank-HMT, Name-HARISHANKAR CHAUHAN, residing at VPO-NAKVA, JUNGLE, TEHSIL-SADAR, DISTT-MAHARAJGARH, UP-273306 have changed my name from SUSHAMA VERMA to SUSHAMA VERMA for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 18/10/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

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News box

Pakistan on-campus rape: Violent protests in Lahore; properties damaged, one killed

World Police in Pakistan used tear gas and batons to disperse student protesters on Thursday after they ransacked a college building. The protests erupted over an alleged on-campus rape in Lahore that has sparked anger and demonstrations in four cities.

Reports of the incident spread on social media, increasing tensions on college campuses. Students in Rawalpindi, Punjab province, burned furniture and blocked a key road before vandalizing a college building.

Earlier, a security guard died during clashes between student protesters and police in Gujrat, also in Punjab province. Authorities arrested one person related to the guard's death and another for spreading misinformation about the alleged rape.

In Lahore, over two dozen students were injured earlier this week while demanding justice for the alleged victim, who students claim was raped at the Punjab Group of Colleges. In response to the growing unrest, the government banned rallies in Punjab. The Federal Investigation Agency filed cases against 36 people accused of spreading misinformation on social media.

Authorities, including the Punjab chief minister, and the woman's parents denied any assault happened. However, Punjab police called on the public to share any information regarding the alleged rape.

The unrest seems to have started spontaneously, as student unions in Pakistan have been banned since 1984.

These protests also come after a woman reported being gang-raped during a polio vaccination drive in Sindh province last month. Police arrested three men involved, but the woman's husband expelled her from home, citing damage to the family name.

Dil Hai Chhota Sa...! AR Rahman's Iconic Song In Campaign Video For Kamala Harris

Washington D.C. An Indian American Democratic fundraiser on Thursday released a new digital video titled "I WILL VOTE FOR KAMALA HARRIS-TIM WALZ" to rally the South Asian voters in key battleground states.

The Bollywood-inspired video, set to the instrumental version from movie Anamika based on one of A.R. Rahman's iconic song "Dil Hai Chhota Sa, Chhoti Si Asha" from the movie Roja, is aimed at connecting with the South Asian communities across Michigan, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Georgia, Nevada, Arizona, and North Carolina. This is the moment for us to unite and show our support for Kamala Harris," said Ajay Bhutoria, National Finance Committee member for the Kamala Harris presidential campaign.

He also announced plans to release additional Bollywood-inspired videos as part of ongoing efforts to boost voter turnout for Harris and her running mate Tim Walz.

"The choice is clear between Kamala Harris' vision for a better future and Trump's divisiveness. Thousands of South Asian volunteers are organizing, knocking on doors, and making calls to help win this race," he said. In the video, Bhutoria highlights how these themes resonate with Vice President Harris' message of hope and unity. "Vice President Harris embodies joy and hope for our community. She's running to build a future that moves beyond the divisiveness of Donald Trump. She represents hope for over 5 million Indian Americans. We are using Bollywood music to engage our community and ensure their voices are heard," he said.

US Sanctions 2 Indians For Alleged Ties With Houthis

New York. The US has sanctioned two Indians for their alleged ties to a Houthi network transporting Iranian oil to raise funds for its activities in disrupting shipping in the Red Sea region and attacking Israel.

Both are linked to a Sharjah-based Indo Gulf Ship Management (IGSM) company -- Rahul Rattanlal Warikoo Rattanlal as Managing Director and Dipankar Mohan Keot as Technical Manager, according to the US Treasury Department. Under the sanctions, all their property and any others in which they have more than 50 per cent interest are frozen in the US. State Department Spokesperson Matthew Miller asserted on Thursday that they had ties to the network of Houthi financial operative Sa'ud al-Jamal, who in turn was backed by the Iran-based Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Qods Force.

The Treasury Department said that IGSM served as the operator of a vessel that was used by the al-Jamal network to ship several millions of dollars worth of Iranian fuel oil. Rattanlal, who is based in India and the UAE, has served in management roles for US-designated companies Safe Seas Ship Management FZE and Arum Ship Management FZC, "which have been implicated in Iranian oil shipments for Iran's Ministry of Defense and Armed Forces Logistics (MODAFL) and the al-Jamal network", the Department said. Keot, who is based in India and Hong Kong, as the technical manager of Indo Gulf Ship Management "is responsible for monitoring vessel operations, including the budget and expenditure of the vessels under Indo Gulf Ship Management LLC's oversight", the Treasury Department said.

Hezbollah says it will escalate war with Israel after killing of Hamas chief

Lebanon's Hezbollah militant group said on Friday it was moving to a new and escalating phase in its war against Israel, while Iran said "the spirit of resistance will be strengthened" after the killing of Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar. Sinwar, a mastermind of the October 7, 2023, attack that triggered the Gaza war, was killed during an operation by Israeli soldiers in the Palestinian enclave on Wednesday, a pivotal event in the year-long conflict. Western leaders said his death offered an opportunity for the conflict to end, but Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the war would go on until the hostages seized by Hamas militants were returned. "Today we have settled the score. Today evil has been dealt a blow but our task has still not been completed," Netanyahu said in a recorded video statement after the death was confirmed on Thursday. "To the dear hostage

Jerusalem. Lebanon's Hezbollah militant group said on Friday it was moving to a new and escalating phase in its war against Israel, while Iran said "the spirit of resistance will be strengthened" after the killing of Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar. Sinwar, a mastermind of the October 7, 2023, attack that triggered the Gaza war, was killed during an operation by Israeli soldiers in the Palestinian enclave on Wednesday, a pivotal event in the year-long conflict. Western leaders said his death offered an opportunity for the conflict to end, but Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the war would go on until the hostages seized by Hamas militants were returned. "Today we have settled the score. Today evil has been dealt a blow but our task has still not been completed," Netanyahu said in a recorded video statement after the death was confirmed on Thursday. "To the dear hostage

families, I say: This is an important moment in the war. We will continue full force until all your loved ones, our loved ones, are home. "Sinwar, who was named as Hamas' overall leader following the assassination of political chief Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran in July, was believed to have been hiding in the warren of tunnels Hamas has built under Gaza over the past two decades. He was killed during a gun battle in southern Gaza on Wednesday by Israeli troops who were initially unaware that they had caught their country's number one enemy, Israeli officials said.

The military released drone video of what it said was Sinwar, sitting on an armchair and covered in dust inside a destroyed building. Hamas has not made any comment itself, but sources within the group have said the indications they have seen suggest Sinwar was indeed killed by Israeli troops.



'CHIEF OBSTACLE'

Despite Western hopes of a ceasefire, Sinwar's death could dial up hostilities in the Middle East where the prospect of an even wider conflict has grown.

Israel has launched a ground campaign in Lebanon over the past month and is now planning a response to an Oct. 1 missile attack carried out by Iran, ally of Hamas and Lebanon's Hezbollah.

But the demise of the man who planned the attack last year in which fighters killed 1,200 people in Israel and captured more than 250 hostages, according to Israeli tallies, could

also help push forward stalled efforts to end the war in which Israel has killed more than 42,000 Palestinians, according to Gaza health authorities. U.S. President Joe Biden, who spoke to Netanyahu by phone to congratulate him, said Sinwar's death provided a chance for the conflict in Gaza to finally end and for Israeli hostages to be brought home. The U.S. wants to kick-start talks on a proposal to achieve a ceasefire and secure the release of hostages, U.S. State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller said, calling Sinwar the "chief obstacle" to ending the war. "That obstacle has obviously been removed. Can't predict that that means whoever replaces (Sinwar) will agree to a ceasefire, but it does remove what has been in recent months the chief obstacle to getting one," he said. In recent weeks, Sinwar had refused to negotiate at all, Miller said.

Canada's ex-NSA explains how cops changed tack in Nijjar killing probe

World In a fresh twist in the investigation into the murder of Khalistani terrorist Hardeep Singh Nijjar, Canada's former national security adviser (NSA) Jody Thomas testified that initial intelligence and police probe suggested the killing was a retaliation for the murder of Ripudaman Singh Malik, who was accused of involvement in the 1985 Air India Kanishka bombing.



Thomas, who was NSA at the time Nijjar was gunned down in Surrey last year, appeared before Canada's foreign interference inquiry and claimed that certain members of the Canadian Sikh community were not satisfied with the assessment that Nijjar's killing was a tit-for-tat for Malik's murder. "It [Nijjar's killing] was the second high-profile murder in the same gurdwara," Thomas said. "Mr Malik's murder had occurred almost exactly the year before. The initial hypothesis was that it was a retaliation. But the community was raising that concern." Ripudaman Singh Malik, a Sikh

activist acquitted in the 1985 Air India Kanishka terror bombing, was shot dead in Surrey on July 15, 2022. Malik's death came after a public smear campaign against him by Nijjar, the leader of the Khalistan Tiger Force, who had labelled him a traitor and called for his social boycott. However, as the investigation progressed, further intelligence indicated that Nijjar's assassination might have been an extra-judicial killing. "Through very good intelligence and policing work, we learnt that there was a high probability that this was an extra-judicial killing,"

Thomas stated. In response to Malik's killing in 2022, sources in Indian intelligence agencies told India Today that it was part of a broader conspiracy involving pro-separatist forces, possibly supported by Pakistan's ISI. They also said that the role of Nijjar in the killing could not be ruled out.

Thomas's testimony coincided with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's appearance before the same commission, where he accused India of violating Canada's sovereignty. In response, the Ministry of External Affairs stated again that Canada has not provided India any evidence of the allegations. India has consistently criticised Trudeau's government for its leniency towards Khalistan supporters in Canada. The tension between the two nations escalated last year after Trudeau's explosive claim in parliament that Indian agents were involved in Nijjar's death. India dismissed the allegations as "absurd" and "motivated."

Good day for Israel: Joe Biden on killing of Hamas chief Yahya Sinwar

UPDATED. President Joe Biden said Thursday that the killing of Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar by Israeli troops is a "good day for Israel, for the United States, and for the world," calling it an "opportunity" to free hostages held by the terrorist group and end the yearlong war in Gaza. US officials expressed measured optimism that the killing of a terrorist characterised by national security adviser Jake Sullivan as a "massive obstacle to peace" might breathe new life into cease-fire talks that have failed to produce a breakthrough despite periodic signs of progress. "Over the past few weeks, there have been no negotiations for an end to the war because Sinwar has refused to negotiate," State Department spokesman Matthew Miller told reporters Thursday. "We now see an opportunity with him having been removed from the battlefield, being removed from the leadership of Hamas, and we want to seize that opportunity." Biden, in a statement as he was on his way to Germany, compared the reaction to Sinwar's death to the feeling in the US after the killing of al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden, who was responsible for the September 11, 2001, attacks. He said the killing of the mastermind of the October 7, 2023, attacks on Israel "proves once again that no terrorists anywhere in the world can escape justice, no matter how long it takes." Biden said he would speak with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and other Israeli leaders to congratulate them "and to discuss the pathway for bringing the hostages home to their families, and for ending this war once and for all." Some 100 hostages are still inside Gaza, about a third of whom are believed to be dead. The inability to reach a cease-fire that could end the war in Gaza and also deliver the return of the hostages has bedeviled negotiators from the start. The US has been working with fellow mediators Egypt and Qatar on a cease-fire proposal in Gaza since the war began a year ago, sending Secretary of State Antony Blinken and other envoys to the Middle East multiple times to try to broker a deal without success.

Taiwan president thanks air force for 'outstanding' work during China war games

TAIPEI. Taiwan President Lai Ching-te thanked the air force on Friday for their "outstanding" work during Chinese war games around the island earlier this week, telling them to keep up the good work.



China's military said Monday's day of war games were a warning to "separatist acts", vowing to take further action against the democratically governed island Beijing claims as its own territory if needed. Visiting air force headquarters in Taipei, Lai was connected by radio to what sounded like a fighter pilot who the president identified by their call sign, "Viper One", in a video released by the presidential office. "Thank you for your hard work for

our country. Please continue to guard the airspace of the Taiwan Strait to ensure national security, and have a safe and smooth flight," Lai said, before adding in English "happy landing". In subsequent comments made to personnel inside air force command, Lai praised their

performance. "We were all on full alert during these Chinese exercises and did our best. The performance was outstanding. Thank you very much and please keep up the good work in our duty to protect and defend our country." Taiwan's air force, which is dwarfed by that of China's, has repeatedly scrambled in to see off almost daily missions by the Chinese military around the island. During Monday's drills, Taiwan said it had detected 153 Chinese aircraft, the highest figure for a single day. Lai and his government reject Beijing's sovereignty claims. Lai has offered talks many times with China, but been rebuffed.

Ex-RAW official charged in US over plot to murder Khalistani terrorist Pannun

The indictment claimed that the former Indian RAW official, along with his co-conspirator, plotted to kill Pannun in the summer of 2023 and hired an individual who demanded \$100,000 for the job. The individual turned out to be an FBI informant.

World The United States has charged a former RAW official, Vikash Yadav, for allegedly orchestrating a failed plot to assassinate Khalistani terrorist Gurbatwant Singh Pannun residing in New York City. The US Justice Department has charged the former Indian intelligence officer with murder-for-hire and money laundering. "Today's charges demonstrate that the Justice Department will not tolerate attempts to target and endanger Americans and to undermine the rights to which every US citizen is entitled," US Attorney General Merrick B Garland said. The plot reportedly began in May 2023, spearheaded by Yadav, then an employee of the Indian government. Yadav allegedly collaborated with individuals in India and abroad to orchestrate the assassination of Gurbatwant Singh Pannun, a designated terrorist in India. Meanwhile, Nikhil Gupta, an Indian national accused of being recruited by Yadav, was arrested in

Prague last June after travelling from India. Gupta has since been extradited to the US and pleaded not guilty to charges of conspiracy to commit murder. The indictment details Yadav's alleged plan, including hiring Gupta to "orchestrate the assassination of the victim in the United States." According to US officials, urgency surrounded the plot following the murder of Hardeep Singh Nijjar, another Khalistani terrorist, in Canada in 2023. Gupta believed that there was "now no need to wait" for Pannun's assassination after Nijjar's death. The indictment reveals that Yadav and Gupta contracted an individual to carry out the assassination for \$100,000, only to discover that the hired assassin was actually an FBI informant. Just days before Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the US, the informant received a \$15,000 advance for the murder in a car in New York, with photographic



evidence included in the indictment. Yadav reportedly instructed Gupta and the informant to postpone the killing until after PM Modi's visit to prevent diplomatic fallout during the high-profile event. A message from Yadav to Gupta suggested the need for verification before proceeding with the assassination.

In response to the allegations, the Indian Ministry of External Affairs confirmed that the individual named in the US Justice Department's indictment is no longer affiliated with the Indian government. "The US State Department informed us that the individual in the Justice Department indictment is no longer

employed by India. I confirm that he is no longer an employee of the Government of India," MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal stated. US State Department Spokesperson Matthew Miller added that the Indian delegation had met with an inter-agency team from the FBI, Department of Justice, and State Department, highlighting ongoing cooperation in the investigation. "They did inform us that the individual who was named in the Justice Department indictment is no longer an employee of the Indian government. We are satisfied with the cooperation," State Department spokesman Matthew Miller said. In September, a US court issued a summons to the Indian government regarding a civil suit filed by Pannun, alleging a plot to murder him. The Indian government responded, labelling the summons as "completely unwarranted."

Elon Musk now offers \$100 to mobilise swing state voters in support of Trump

World With the US presidential election in its final stretch, billionaire Elon Musk is ramping up his support for Republican candidate Donald Trump's campaign by offering \$100 to people who refer registered voters in a crucial battleground state to sign his petition supporting free speech and the right to bear arms. The petition, floated by Musk's America PAC, aims to gather 1 million signatures from swing state voters in support of the First and Second Amendments of the US Constitution. The PAC was formed with backing from Musk and other tech entrepreneurs specifically to support Trump's campaign. Musk tweeted, "If you're a registered Pennsylvania voter, you & whoever referred you will now get \$100 for signing our petition in support of free speech & right to bear arms. Earn money for supporting something you already believe

in! Offer valid until midnight on Monday." The offer marks a substantial increase from an earlier promise of \$47 to voters who referred others to sign the petition. If recruiters manage to gather 1 million signatures from swing-state voters, the Tesla boss would face a \$100 million payout. To curb potential fraud, the Tesla and SpaceX boss said that cheques will only be mailed to addresses listed in state voter rolls. The legality of pay-per-signature compensation varies by state, and while some states permit it, critics warn that it could lead to fraud. America PAC, based in Texas, operates in a state without specific regulations on this practice.



Pennsylvania is a key battleground in the election, with both Kamala Harris and Donald Trump focusing considerable

resources on the state, according to an NBC News report. Recent data shows that one in four dollars spent on presidential campaign ads from September 1 to 20 was targeted at Pennsylvania. In the Electoral College, Pennsylvania holds the most electoral votes among swing states, making it pivotal to both candidates' paths to the White House. Recent opinion polls indicate the race in Pennsylvania is tight, with a Quinnipiac University survey showing Harris leading by 3 percentage points, and a Wall Street Journal survey showing Trump leading by 1 point.

News box

NID deadlock: Director leaves for Delhi

Ahmedabad. Ashok Mondal, the newly appointed director of the National Institute of Design (NID), left for a visit to Delhi on Thursday. This was his first trip after assuming charge on Friday. The visit is considered significant due to the ongoing protest by the students at the premier design institute against Mondal's decision to reshuffle several faculty members and discipline leads soon after assuming charge. Sources close to the development said that the visit is seen in light of the protests, as the ministry of commerce and industry, which oversees the administration of NID, might have taken note of the dissent. The student body had approached the ministry officials, according to sources. Meanwhile, yet another meeting with the director by the student body late on Wednesday failed to yield conclusive results. Sources said the students remained firm in their demand for clarity on the changes in various design disciplines and to resolve the matter in a timely manner. "The director only assured them that the faculty members are being utilised differently and not relocated. Among the issues discussed was also the order transferring NID's immediate past director, Praveen Nahar, to the Bengaluru campus. When the students asked the director about the responsibilities of the previous leads of different disciplines, he told them that he was working on the details and would issue an official order soon," said sources. On Monday, the students, dressed in black attire, began their demonstration in front of the director's office. Discussions took place between the director and student representatives on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday to arrive at an amicable solution to the situation. The students argued that the sweeping changes made in the middle of the semester could affect their studies.

Woman made to undress during 'digital arrest', extorted of Rs 5 lakh in Ahmedabad

AHMEDABAD. A woman from Naranpura, aged 27, lodged a police complaint stating that unknown individuals, posing as officers from central agencies, extorted Rs 5 lakh from her by threatening her with legal action under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act. The cybercriminals also allegedly forced the woman to undress in front of a webcam during her 'digital arrest'. According to the FIR filed with Naranpura police, the victim, Hemali Pandya, who resides in Samarpan Tower on the 132 Feet Ring Road, received a call on Oct 13 from a man claiming to be a courier firm employee. He informed her that a parcel containing three laptops, two cell phones, 150 grams of mephedrone and 1.5 kg of clothes was sent to Thailand using her name. The caller instructed Pandya to contact cybercrime immediately. Soon after disconnecting the call to reach out to the cybercrime helpline, Pandya received a WhatsApp call from someone claiming to be an officer from Delhi Cybercrime. The officer informed Pandya that her name cropped up during a probe in a narcotics case and asked her to join a video conference. She then received messages containing allegedly forged letters from Delhi Cybercrime and the CBI naming her as a suspect in a narcotics smuggling and money laundering case. A frightened Pandya joined the video call, where a man posing as a CBI officer, without showing his face, allegedly coerced her into disrobing to reveal all her birthmarks.

CGST scam: ED files case under PMLA

Ahmedabad. Teams from the Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Thursday launched a widespread search operation in Gujarat after filing a case under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) in a multi-crore CGST scam unearthed recently. The teams searched 23 premises, including commercial and residential properties, on Thursday. ED sources said that around 100 officials conducted searches at 23 locations in Ahmedabad, Surat, Rajkot, Junagadh, Gir Somnath and Bhavnagar districts. The action comes days after Mahesh Langa, a senior journalist from a national English daily, was arrested along with seven others in connection with the case. A note by the ED stated that the investigation so far indicated that PAN, mobile numbers and email IDs related to 34 GST registration numbers were used to create another 186 registrations, including 50 in Gujarat. Sources said that the primary and additional registrations were later cancelled. "It appears that an organised web of fake and shell entities is being operated by the accused persons, involving more than 200 such firms, thus passing on the fraudulent input tax credit (ITC) to the tune of crores of rupees to ineligible firms," stated the ED note. Details are yet to emerge as officials said that it will take time to assess the valuable documents, including both paper and digital evidence, they added. The ED is also looking at the roles of other entities in this GST evasion case as it probes the allegations of "a wider conspiracy and generation of purported proceeds of crime", the sources said.

Waterlogging lingers, drain repair orders issued in Chennai

Work orders have been issued for urgent storm water drain repair work in areas like Aziz Mulk street and Peters road.

CHENNAI. Without further rains, all areas in the city is expected to be free from waterlogging by Thursday night, said city corporation officials. According to official data, stagnant water from 539 of 542 inundated locations in the city were cleared by Thursday evening. Officials added that work on the remaining locations is on. As many as 213 medical camps were set up by the corporation and health department to tackle any vector-borne disease outbreaks. Some parts that were inundated on Wednesday, including Mullai Nagar in Vyasarpadi, parts of Pulianthope and Pattalam, were cleared, barring a few streets like Kanakaraya Thottam and Ansari street in Pattalam where water mixed with sludge, say residents. A part of Valluvar Kottam high road was still waterlogged, along with a few roads in Velachery's Dhandeeswaram. Work orders have been issued for urgent storm water drain repair work in areas like Aziz Mulk street and Peters road. The corporation has deployed 1,233 motor pumps across the city and is handling 7,470 complaints that it has received through its helpline numbers from Wednesday to Thursday. Rainwater harvesting The corporation has also proposed to set up

revamped rain water harvesting structures in 770 locations, mostly in parks and playgrounds, at an outlay of Rs 8.4 crore. As per plan, 320 structures will be set up in the south region, 200 in the central region and 250 in north region. "We did have rain water harvesting structures in some parks but these are



much bigger structures in permeable locations that comprise eco bloc infiltration tanks," said a corporation official. The water deposited in these tanks will be filtered through a filtration unit and stored for further reuse including for watering gardens. This is in addition to the sponge parks that are already being constructed in various parks across the city. Will expedite steps to clear water

hyacinths: Min Chennai: Minister T M Anbarasan on Thursday inspected ongoing flood mitigation projects in Tambaram Corporation, including the construction of a stormwater drain in Moovarasampet and a surplus water canal at Selaiyur Lake. He assured that efforts to clear water hyacinths from local lakes would be expedited. During his visit, the minister inspected the Moovarasampet Lake, where a 1.85 km cut-and-cover stormwater drain is being constructed. The Rs 34-crore project aims to prevent flooding by diverting surplus water to the nearby Keelkattalai canal. Anbarasan noted that residents of Anbu Nagar, Rukmani Amman Nagar, Thiruvalluvar Street, and Moovarasampet have long suffered from flooding during the monsoon. "Forty percent of the work has been completed, and the rest will be finished in the next four to five months. Once completed, this area will no longer face flooding, no matter how heavy the rainfall," he told reporters.

Explain non-disclosure of forest guard exam marks: HC to GSSSB

Ahmedabad. The Gujarat high court has sought an explanation from the Gujarat Subordinate Services Selection Board (GSSSB) for not disclosing the marks of the candidates on the merit list prepared for the recruitment of forest guards. The HC issued notices to the state govt, GSSSB and Tata Consultancy Services Ltd after 108 candidates, who participated in the recruitment process, challenged the selection process. Over 7 lakh candidates applied for the test conducted for the recruitment of 813 positions of forest guard. After the merit list was declared, the unsuccessful candidates approached the HC through advocates Vikram Thakor and Bhushan Oza, raising questions about the propriety of the recruitment process. They objected to the board's last-minute decision to change the mode of examination from OMR to computer-based recruitment test (CBRT). They also pointed out that the board did not mention the marks obtained by the candidates who were selected. After hearing the submissions, Justice Nirzar Desai stated that non-disclosure of the marks obtained by the candidates who qualified would raise questions regarding the transparency of the recruitment process. The court sought an explanation in this regard, stating: "The respondents are directed to file an affidavit, justifying their action of not disclosing the marks of each of the qualified candidates against their names, while preparing the selection list by way of CBRT. Further, considering the fact that non-disclosure of the marks, against the name of each qualified candidate, has given rise to the speculations that the exam was not conducted properly, it shall be further clarified that as to whether the non-disclosure of marks against the name of each qualified candidate was done under any policy decision taken by the authorities."

NGT fines hospitals for dumping medical waste in Pallavaram lake

CHENNAI. The southern bench of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) on Thursday directed the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board (TNPCB) to levy environmental compensation on two private hospitals who had dumped medical waste in Pallavaram lake. The bench also directed TNPCB to collect the amount the board had spent on collecting and transporting the waste from the site. The bench comprising judicial member Justice Pushpa Satyanarayana and expert



member Satyagopal Kolarpati was hearing a case taken up suo motu based on a newspaper report pertaining to dumping

of medical waste in the lake by two hospitals, MIOT International and GEM Hospital. The local body, Tambaram Corporation, had also sent notices to the hospitals based on which the hospitals paid a penalty of Rs 5 lakh each. According to the news report, unknown persons had dumped around five tonnes waste along the compound wall of the lake on September 24. After being informed by the public, Tambaram Corporation and TNPCB officials inspected the site.

The local body, Tambaram Corporation, had also sent notices to the hospitals based on which the hospitals paid a penalty of Rs 5 lakh each.

Karnataka government can't oust court's jurisdiction: Justice Santhosh Gajanan Bhat

BENGALURU. A special court has observed that the state government should maintain neutrality and it cannot oust the jurisdiction of the court by monitoring each and every step of investigation, although it is a party to a criminal case. Judge Santhosh Gajanan Bhat made this observation while granting bail to Rajarajeshwari Nagar BJP MLA Munirathna on October 15 after going through the contents of a notification issued by the government to form a SIT to probe cases against him, including a rape case registered in Kaggalipura police station. "It is relevant to note that the jurisdiction of the court cannot be ousted and it is the sacrosanct act of the investigating agency to file its final report to the court. However, in the instant case (Munirathna), the notification to

constitute the SIT indicates that every minute details of investigations are to be shared with the government. The special public prosecutor (SPP) has submitted that the government is monitoring the investigation to ensure its fairness. In my humble opinion, the submission would not be appropriate for the reason that though the state is a party to the criminal case, it is required to maintain neutrality and it cannot monitor every step which is being taken up during the course of investigation," the judge said. The court said the investigation process can be brought to the notice of higher police authorities. However, it does not mean that the government can interfere with the nature and process of investigation. A delicate line should be maintained as enshrined in the Constitution, the court added. The court noted that it has been fairly admitted by the SPP that the notification issued to

constitute the SIT is not happily worded. Be that as it may, even otherwise when the entire factual aspects of the case are carefully appreciated, it would indicate that no prima facie case is made out by the prosecution. Admittedly, Munirathna was remanded in police custody and after completion of the same, he is now in judicial custody. It seems that the sole ground for which he is sought to be detained by the prosecution is that he may threaten and tamper with the witnesses. This apprehension can be taken care of by imposing stringent conditions for granting bail, the court said. The court said that admittedly, the alleged incident took place in 2021 and now the complainant has filed a complaint. As such, the question of destroying evidence will not be of much relevance since much time has already been spent.

'Project Anantha' to boost development of Thiruvananthapuram airport

The highlight of the project is a new terminal of international standards with a touch of local heritage.

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM. The Thiruvananthapuram International Airport is set for a makeover with 'Project Anantha', a development project mooted at the recently concluded TRV Growth Conclave. The project was presented at the event attended by political leaders, bureaucrats, travel, tourism and trade representatives and airport partners. The highlight of the project is a new terminal of international standards with a touch of local heritage. The airport will see an investment of rs 1,300 crore over the next three years as part of the project. Its Terminal 2 will be expanded to cater to the growing demands of passengers. The present 45,000 sq.m terminal can handle only 3.2 million passengers per annum. Under the expansion plan, the capacity will be expanded to 165,000 square metres to handle almost 12 million passengers each year, with a multi-level curb integrated terminal. The terminal will also have a forecourt with a plaza, a hotel, and a commercial and administration block all under one roof. The airport handles 118 air traffic movements per day. As the connectivity improves the present capacity of the airport is unable to meet the demand. The 93-year-old airport is at a crucial point, trying to overcome long-standing legacy issues. According to the DGCA, TRV, a code E airport, should operate on 1,200 acres. But the airport currently functions on just 585 acres, about one-third the size of CIAL.

BEE unveils new guidelines to achieve climate goals faster

HYDERABAD. To accelerate the country's climate goals, the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) unveiled two guidelines—detailed compliance mechanisms and accreditation procedures for criteria verification agencies—during a recent workshop in Hyderabad. The workshop was attended by stakeholders from various industries, including steel, cement, textile and paper. The compliance mechanism outlines how companies can monitor, report, and verify their GHG emissions while earning carbon credits. This system enables fair trading of credits, rewarding companies that exceed emission-reduction targets and providing cost-effective options for others. The accreditation procedure sets standards for accredited carbon verification agencies (ACVs), which will audit emission reduction claims, ensuring the accuracy and fairness of the carbon credit system.

Bengaluru metro extension till Madavara will help ease traffic on Tumakuru bypass road

The stations are being spruced up for the inaugural ceremony expected to happen within a week.

BENGALURU. The 3.14-km Green Line extension, set to launch shortly, is eagerly awaited by people who commute towards the heart of the city. The completion of the line is expected to drastically change the commuting routines of citizens of Nelamangala, Madanayakanahalli, Makali, residents of apartments near the three stations dotting the Nagasandra-Madavara line and those in surrounding villages. The new stations are Manjunatha Nagar, Chikkabidarakallu and Madavara (new terminal). TNIE visited the stations and surrounding areas on Wednesday. The stations are being spruced up for the inaugural ceremony expected to happen within a week. The Bangalore International Exhibition Centre (BIEC), which hosts the biggest exhibitions in Asia, will see a surge in footfalls when the line opens, with the Chikkabidarakallu station located right in front. Senior Director and Head of

Marketing at BIEC Ubaid Ahmed told, "We will have better patronage when the line opens. The traffic on Tumakuru Main Road puts off many from visiting the



expos here. Metro would ensure a smooth visit to our Centre. We have around 15-20 lakh people visiting annually. This could go up by 15% to 20% now." The line would also boost the state's economy, he added. "Delegates taking part in various events would generally opt to stay a few more days and explore places

around. Their hotel stay, sightseeing, travel and so on will make a difference." KR Arun, proprietor of Sangam Properties in Madanayakanahalli said, "Real estate prices shot up right from when the pillars were being laid for the Metro line in 2020. From Rs 1,500 to Rs 2,000 per sqft, the rate today is Rs 3,500 to Rs 4,500 per sq ft. This is applicable right from Parle Toll Plaza till Madanayakanahalli. The rental value is also expected to shoot up." The area has already been upgraded from panchayat to a city municipal corporation due to the Metro network touching it, he added. Sandeep, a contractor, who commutes frequently to the PWD office at Anand Rao Circle said, "I have to drive 4 km to Nagasandra to catch a Metro but now I can easily go to Madavara to catch a train. It's not just me but students and vendors heading to KR Market daily will also benefit enormously. Jagadish LR Gowda, a businessman, who resides in Prestige Jindal City said, "Traffic is synonymous with Tumakuru Road now."

AI & other lessons from the Nobels

ONE technology that is linked to both the physics and chemistry Nobel prizes this year is artificial intelligence (AI). The physics laureates — John Hopfield and Geoffrey Hinton — applied principles and tools of physics to develop methods that have facilitated machine learning. Hopfield used the principle of atomic spin to create a structure that can store and reconstruct information, while Hinton invented a method that can independently discover properties in data forming the basis for the large artificial neural networks now in use. These discoveries, over the decades, have helped powerful computers mimic human functions like memory and learning. The chemistry Nobel has gone to David Baker of the University of Washington; Demis Hassabis and John M Jumper of Google DeepMind. Baker has been awarded for his work on computational protein design and the DeepMind researchers get the other half of the prize for developments in protein structure prediction. Proteins are essential for cellular functions in living bodies. They are intricately folded, depending on their atomic structure and water molecules surrounding them. In a single protein, there could be trillions of potential interactions, creating countless possible shapes. Baker developed computational tools for designing new proteins, which, in turn, has opened the door for new therapies and treatments. The Google DeepMind researchers have developed an AI system called AlphaFold that predicts the three-dimensional structure of proteins from their amino acid sequences.

The physics, chemistry and medicine Nobel prizes again demonstrate that fundamental research is vital for knowledge creation and there is no substitute for basic research. This point has to be re-emphasised in the Indian context because every time, we bemoan that no Indian has got a Nobel for scientific research done in India after CV Raman. Hargobind Khorana, S Chandrasekhar and Venki Ramakrishnan won their Nobels for research conducted in foreign universities. Along with applied research and technology development, sustained investments are needed in fundamental research for breakthroughs. The Nobel is usually given for pathbreaking work that leads to transformative tools and technologies. Hopfield, who is 91, began working on what came to be known as the 'Hopfield network' and associative memory in the 1980s. So did Hinton, with his 'Boltzmann machine' method. Their methods enabled the machine learning revolution decades later, in 2010. And finally, we have consumer products like ChatGPT. Similarly, chemistry laureate Baker has been working on protein structures for decades. He came up with the first tool for protein structure prediction, Rosetta, in 1998. The edifice of AI is based on many building blocks created over the decades. Not many know that Indian scientists have also contributed to this process. At a time when AI was just emerging as a possibility and engaging the attention of scientists along with the development of digital computers in the 1950s, physicist-turned-statistician Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis developed a concept which came to be known as the Mahalanobis Distance. It helps detect outliers in data and measure dissimilarities in data points. Subsequently, Mahalanobis Distance found wide applications in computer science and AI. At the Indian Statistical Institute (ISI) founded by him, Mahalanobis recognised the importance of cybernetics and invited its pioneer Norbert Wiener to spend time in the institute as a visiting professor in 1955. Wiener initiated ISI researchers like Dwijesh Datta Majumder to work in pattern recognition, fuzzy logic and neural networks. In 1966, Raj Reddy, a young Indian doctoral student in America, pioneered the development of systems for recognising continuous speech. He developed a new system called Hearsay I for continuous speech recognition. Along with giving computers the capability to memorise and learn like humans, making them capable of recognising human speech was a critical step towards achieving AI. Reddy later developed Hearsay II, Harpy and Dragon systems, which are the basis of commercial speech recognition technology used in computers as well as robots.

Diplomacy, restraint and respect, Israel's need of the hour

The Foreign Minister of Israel overstepped the limits of his office when he declared the UN Secretary-General as persona non grata.

A simple, matter-of-fact statement issued by United Nations Secretary-General (UNSG) Antonio Guterres on October 1, caused an unprecedented diplomatic storm. "I condemn the broadening of the Middle East conflict, with escalation after escalation. This must stop. We absolutely need a ceasefire," the Secretary-General said in his statement. Another statement, issued on the same day on Lebanon by the Secretary-General's spokesperson Stéphane Dujarric, reflected a similar concern. The statement read, "The Secretary-General is extremely concerned with the escalation of the conflict in Lebanon. He appeals for an immediate ceasefire. An all-out war must be avoided in Lebanon at all costs." Though Guterres' statement did not mention any country per se, use of the jargon "escalation after escalation" and "broadening of the Middle East conflict" touched a raw nerve causing alarm in Israel, and drew a swift reaction from its combative Foreign Minister Israel Katz. The Foreign Minister overstepped the limits of his office to declare the UN Secretary-General as persona non grata. The term is normally used to expel a diplomat whenever his/her presence in the country of his/her posting becomes 'undesirable'. To equate as such the Secretary-General of the United Nations, of which Israel has been a 'difficult' member since the beginning, is beyond all canons of law of international organisation and the corpus of immunities and privileges of the diplomatic personnel. More importantly, the 'declaration' by Katz about the UN Secretary-General does not apply to international organisations. The UN and its staff are governed by a special Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations. Called the "General Convention", it was negotiated and adopted immediately after establishment of the UN. As provided for in Article 105 of the UN Charter, the Convention was adopted by the UN General Assembly (UNGA) at its first session on February 13, 1946, (Resolution 22 A (I)), and it entered into force on September 17, 1946. The General Convention specifies the notion of "functional" personality and immunity of the UN. It contains detailed provisions on the privileges and immunities enjoyed by UN officials.

The overboard Israeli reaction was unwarranted. It is a

classic example of 'shooting the messenger' who has often been troubled by the habitual and wilful defiance of international law in the Middle East by various state actors (Israel, Iran, etc.) and non-state actors (Hamas, Hezbollah, Houthi, etc.). The UN Secretary-General has sought to act within the remit of mandate of his office. However, the tone, tenor and phraseology of the Israeli minister's declaration was not unexpected, especially in the aftermath of Prime Minister Netanyahu's defiant address to the



UN General Assembly on September 27. In diplomatic parlance, any such statement prohibiting entry of the UN Secretary-General is tantamount to coercive action against the Chief Administrative Officer (Article 97) of the 193-member political organisation of sovereign states. This kind of overburst, however, is not new in the UN history. Several other member countries, some overtly and others covertly, have sought to dissuade the Secretary-General from visiting their country. Yet, the sheer weight of the office of the UN Secretary-General is beyond insults. All Secretary-Generals, who take their task seriously, had to face this professional hazard from ill-tempered heads of government or their representatives. The UN history is replete with such stories. To control the damage, after a discussion on the Middle East situation on October 3, the 15-member UN Security Council issued a joint statement that indirectly chided Israel. Expressing its full support to the Secretary-General, the Council said, "Any decision not to engage with the UN Secretary-General or the United Nations is counterproductive, especially in the context of escalating tensions in the Middle East."

The founders of the UN Charter envisaged the role of

the 'secretariat' (Chapter XV; Articles 97-101) as a fulcrum around which the entire edifice of the organisation would revolve. During his seven years as the head of the Secretariat, Guterres has been a trailblazer and sought to walk-the-talk as liaison officer for all principal organs of the UN. Invoking a series of instrumentalities of annual reports, special reports, periodic updates, briefings, statements and as the most visible face of the UN, the Secretary-General (along with his team) has been fire-fighting all the time on literally any issue 'under the sun'.

The regular updates provided personally by the Secretary-General to the Council have become a stuff of legends. When Antonio Guterres walks into the hallowed chamber of the Security Council (or for that matter, the General Assembly), he brings along his lifetime experience as a statesman, including as the Prime Minister of Portugal, with him. The crisp statements, laden with facts, figures and relevant data as well as authentic updates from the ground speak for themselves. We have not seen in recent decades a Secretary-General speaking with such authenticity, sincerity and candour.

Guterres, especially during his second term, has shown that where is a will there is a way. He has drawn power, whenever required, as mentioned in the Charter. Invoking his 'implied powers', Guterres took an unprecedented step on December 6, 2023, by sending a letter to the President of the UN Security Council. This letter invoked Article 99 (Chapter XV) of the Charter. This rarely used provision can be construed as a repository of an extraordinary power conferred upon the Secretary-General since he can "bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security". The Secretary-General's 2023 letter was propelled by the "appalling human suffering, physical destruction and collective trauma across Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory."

All UN member countries need to exercise restraint and sobriety in consonance with highest standards of diplomatic etiquettes so as not to shoot the messenger but to pay heed to his words of wisdom and empathy that underscore that there is no substitute for peace.

Priyanka's debut

Wayanad marks a new chapter for Congress

PRIYANKA Gandhi Vadra's candidacy from Wayanad marks a significant development for the Congress party. Entering the electoral fray five years after her active political engagement began, Priyanka's nomination to contest the bypoll on November 13 is a step toward consolidating the Gandhi family's influence within Parliament. Priyanka's journey in the Congress has evolved from behind-the-scenes support to frontline leadership, showcasing her strategic acumen and ability to connect with the masses. She initially focused on strengthening the party's organisational base, especially in regions where it had weakened, such as Uttar Pradesh. Her successful campaigns in Himachal Pradesh and role in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, where the Congress improved its seat tally, have cemented her reputation as a key figure. Her Wayanad campaign leverages this approach, focusing on regional issues while presenting her as a familiar Gandhi figure. Posters declaring her as "Wayanadinte Priyankari" (Wayanad's beloved)



reflect growing local support. She has promised to continue Rahul's work in the constituency. Though the Congress adopted a "one-family-one-ticket" rule at its Udaipur Chintan Shivir in 2022, Priyanka's candidacy underscores the rule's flexibility for seasoned family members who meet the five-year party commitment criterion. This exception, also applied to Rahul, reflects the Congress's continued reliance on the Gandhis' influence.

The bypoll is significant beyond Wayanad as it tests the Congress's new direction with Priyanka at the helm. If she wins, her role could shift from family figure to influential political leader, strengthening the Congress's position to contest BJP policies. Her opponents in Wayanad include the BJP, which is aiming to expand its base in Kerala, and the CPI(M), which has a deep-rooted base in the Left-leaning state. Priyanka is poised to navigate these ideological challenges in her bid to redefine her role in politics and come out of the coat-tails of Rahul and Sonia.

Trouble at home, Trudeau hitting out at India

Trudeau's main grouse seems to be that India is cooperating with Washington but not with Ottawa. That is unreasonable since Canada has shared no details for a year.

Just when one thought that the spat with Canada's Prime Minister Trudeau couldn't get any dirtier, it did. Not only did his officials threaten sanctions on India, but also went wailing to the 'Five Eyes' partners — an intelligence grouping that includes Australia, the UK, the US and New Zealand — about the alleged actions of the Indian government and its diplomatic corps. Trudeau, battling the insecurities of a minority government and facing predictions from state intelligence about a public revolt over a dire economic situation, seems to be hitting out in all directions. India has now become a target, after he had dodged accusations about China's meddling in the 2022 elections. A recent report by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police on 'Foreign Interference' in Canada, while noting 'increased' Indian activity, also mentions China 33 times. But while Trudeau's Foreign Minister Melanie Joly has threatened sanctions on India, no such threat has been heard against China. That's unsurprising. Exports to China were about \$30 billion while imports were \$89 billion on a rising curve. With India, it's just about \$8.4 billion. Money talks.

Incidentally, the heavily redacted report also accuses another five or more states. Clearly countries vitally important to Canada. After a year of sitting quiet on evidence, Trudeau has escalated the matter, even as calls for his resignations increase. He is now calling out the 'Five Eyes' allies in a bid to gain support. The 'Five Eyes' is an 'Anglo-Saxon only' club. Oddly, all of these countries experienced a sudden surge of 'Khalistan' rampages last year, which coincided with the Amritpal Singh episode in Punjab. The media ran with the story and a 2021 report of a 'nest of spies' by India in Australia was regurgitated. The head of Australia's intelligence agency very properly refused to comment on it.

In the present crisis, Australia has issued a guarded statement, calling upon India to respect diplomatic immunity. Meanwhile, an Australian delegation is in Delhi for the '2+2' dialogue. That's the real world. Trouble dealt with, and then go on with the matter in hand, which is a rising China, now heavily involved in cyber espionage into Australian business and government circles. The UK Government, while backing the Canadian judicial system, has also been circumspect. It is worth noting that Canada has issued a travel advisory to the UK, as it was rocked by far right riots against Muslims. This is a tricky time to get into religious spats for London even as its Khalistani elements react to the new 'threat'.

New Zealand has only referred to support on the 'alleged' criminal activities by India. The main issue for India is the US reaction. The Washington Post, after running a routine report, later carried a damaging story which not only quoted Canadian officials naming Home Minister Amit Shah as party to the assassination, but also directly quoted from what was supposed to be a quiet meeting with NSA Ajit Doval. It claimed that he had first denied all knowledge of criminal Lawrence Bishnoi, accused by Canada of masterminding Hardeep Singh Nijjar's killing, but later 'rattled off' details on Bishnoi as being a person capable of doing anything. This is as mischievous as it gets. First, officials never quote sensitive meetings. Second, the spin on what the NSA said. It is all very unbelievable and would not have been cleared for publication without some



checking with US sources in the government. But the State Department seems to have other ideas. While its spokesperson Mathew Miller reiterated the 'serious allegations', he underlined that the arrival of an Indian team, led reportedly by the Deputy National Security Adviser from India on the case on Gurpatwant Singh Panun, was entirely 'coincidental' and had nothing to do with the Canadian charges. In another move, the tweet that had announced the arrival of an Indian team was quietly deleted. It also appears that the R&AW officer, who initiated a reckless and mysteriously unprofessional operation to hit Panun, has been arrested.

Trudeau's main grouse seems to be that India is cooperating with Washington but not with Ottawa. That is unreasonable since Canada has shared no details for a year. And given its dealings with sensitive intelligence meetings, no one is going to.

Besides, consider the holes in the story. Anyone with a basic knowledge of the bureaucratic system would know that a home minister does not order around the ambassadors. It is simply not his department. And if anyone says Jaishankar ordered the killing, Canada would be the laughing stock of much of the world. The accusation that Bishnoi carried out the killing of Nijjar at the behest of Indian agencies is even stranger. Apparently, Canadian intel

doesn't read the news that Bishnoi bumped off a politician whose party was in coalition with the Bharatiya Janata Party. It also accuses Indian intelligence of killing a known criminal, Sukhdeep Singh Gill, an alleged ally of Bishnoi, and his group's feud with the Bambiha group had been going on for years, with killings in both countries. Canada's inter-gang rivalry includes not just Sikh groups but also Mexico-based cartels, among others. Strangely, Gill's killing occurred a day after India's National Investigation Agency marked him as a wanted terrorist.

Best ways to decorate your space with Plants



Plants look just adorable and keeping them indoors not only brings life to the entire place but they also improve the air quality by reducing toxins existing in the atmosphere so make sure you are decorating your abode with plants nicely.

Myna Batavia, Founder of Green Carpet, and Preeti Narula, Founder of Living Balconies, list down ways to decorate your house with plants.

* Your living room is the best place to be decorated with a lot of greenery. Potted plants are the best choice to be kept in the living room. These pots are available in different sizes and colours to suit your requirements. Ensure that they are visible over the furniture kept in the living room.

* The dining area should be graced with plants such as money plants, bamboo plants, and ferns in glass bottles and vases.

* Embellish your bedroom with indoor plants such as Sansevieria which increases oxygen levels at night to have a sound sleep. You can keep small potted plants on bedside tables on either side of the bed.

* In the open space or balconies, install a shelf or hanging flower boxes along the railings to make it look attractive from outside. Also planter in sync with wall colours and embellishing the place with animal artefacts will increase the beauty

Here are few ways to decorate your house with plants. You can keep small potted plants on bedside tables on either side of the bed. Use your old crockery set for planting to decorate your kitchen, living room, and even bathrooms.

quotient of these areas.

* Also just to fill in the empty area of your apartment, you can try keeping big plants in colourful pots.

* Decorate your living space with indoor plants as they make any area feel bright,

lively, calm and beautiful.

* Place your plants on shelves or wooden pallets to create a mini indoor garden.

* One can also hang indoor plants like Chinese money plant, Staghorn ferns, snake plants and weeping fig in the balcony.

* Use your old crockery set for planting to decorate your kitchen, living room, and even bathrooms.

* Make your own terrarium with succulents to create a decorative piece in your kid's room or dining table.

At home with Ultra Violet



Complex and contemplative in equal parts, ultra violet is often associated with mindfulness practices. A reason why you are likely to spot purple-toned lighting in meditative spaces. The colour is said to fill people with energy and positivity and inspire connection. Why not embrace the hue to bring some happiness and tranquility into your home?

UV ways

Decor expert Astha Khetan says that

ultra violet adds a certain depth to a space. Whether you are using a statement pillow, painting, accent wall, a few sprigs of lilac or a vintage rug - a simple touch of the magical hue is all you need to transform your space. Her advice: "The easiest way to start decorating with a new colour is to take baby

steps and not go overboard."

Ultra violet, with its bold and vivid blue, is a perfect match with raw materials such as concrete and natural wood. For statement corners, try ultra violet in different combinations; with sage green, lemon yellow, or vermilion. "In small spaces, avoid using ultra violet vertically like in curtains and walls. Use in small accessories on floor and below eye level," suggests decor expert Vaishnavi Pratima. In large spaces, experiment with walls in ultra violet juxtaposed against contrasting furniture.

— Additional inputs from decor expert Anuja Joshi

How to go UV?

Pick jewel tones for a strong visual punch. But the idea is to make an impact without being garish

Make sure your colours stay sophisticated by choosing shades from the same family that are not all too bright Mix dark and romantic purple with other super-saturated dark colours and rich fabrics like velvet

Use flowers like pansies, iris, phlox, hydrangea, petunia, verbenas, freesia, and columbin

Use vases made in violet assortment A tricky hue for homes, if you play it right UV can be the pop of colour that your house needs.

Violet can be used in dining couture too. Think a white table with UV napkins. Bring in violet accessories like candle stands, lampshades, vases to add a splash of colour



5 cheap and easy ways to get rid of ants

Even though they are tiny, ants are irritating and create lot of destruction with their presence in the house. Their long trail leads to a burrow into the ground or kitchen counter-tops and then there is no way you can get rid of them. They march in hundreds and aim at your favourite food left open making you run for its life. They appear in numbers from nowhere and attack at the eatables left unattended. Did you know that some of the queen ants can give birth to millions of babies. Whoa! Doesn't that sound scary? Though killing ants is not a great idea but you can definitely avoid their excursion to your home. Here are few easy hacks that will solve the purpose and are also not expensive methods. Take a look:

Vinegar

Vinegar is the king of all home remedies and you must have it stocked up all the time at your home. Mix white vinegar and water in equal quantities and wipe down your kitchen counter-tops, cupboards and places where you generally spot ants. Keep repeating throughout the day. Ants hate the smell of vinegar and the solution also removes their scent trails.

Borax

You can mix Borax and sugar and place the mixture where ants can find it. But be careful if you have little kids and pets at home, the mixture can be toxic. Borax damages the digestive



systems and outer skeletons of ants resulting in death.

Citrus peels

Leave citrus peels like cucumber peels in the areas known to ants. These peels are toxic to the types of fungi that ants feed on, so ants do their best to avoid them. You can also use the citrus peels of lemon and oranges.

Flour

Ants repel flour and hence you can sprinkle some of it at the back of the kitchen shelves and the entry-points of the ants. Yes, it is true!

Salt

Sprinkle salt across the door frame or on their path and see the difference. Ants will be discouraged from crossing the barrier created.

Five decor trends that are making a comeback

If you are someone who is fond of warm, comforting and old-fashioned styles, especially when it comes to doing up your home, its definitely time for you to rejoice. The upcoming year, 2018 is expected to see some old, overdone and overused decor styles making a comeback with a vengeance and once more, to grab its position in the limelight.

Though trends and style are ever-changing and ever-evolving concepts, many will agree that the bottom line will continue to be the same always — any kind of decor works only when it can make a house feel like home.

Here's looking at a few dated trends that are expected to be a hit next season...

Metal and more

Using brass in fixtures, table lamps and furniture accents has been around forever, and this trend is surely not going anywhere soon. So pick up stylish chandeliers, floor lamps in shiny golden metal



who are cooped up in studio apartments; however, big and extra-large furniture is sure to take up space in the top hottest decor trends list for the coming year. If not all, opting for at least one statement x-large piece of furniture could help you be in vogue.

Gold and greens

The avocado green was a big hit in the 70s. Home decor professionals say that this colour is all set to take up center stage once more. You could choose to use it on walls or furnishings, all the while balancing it with golds. Bright golds and yellows can make your home look brighter and warmer all the while adding a certain fresh charm to the room.

Framed forever

Displaying a cluster of pictures all over one wall has been done to death. But the fact that filling a wall with pictures that matter to you will never really go out of style. Gallery walls are expected to make a comeback next year, say experts.

Choosing monochrome

The sheer sophistication of monochrome will always ensure that it never goes out of style. The statement a stark black and white decor can make is unparalleled and will appeal to you if you are a follower of the minimalist style. This decor trend is holding on to its position at the top for a long time presumably.

Extra-large luxe

The luxury of space might not really be for many Mumbaikars

Top court closes Isha Foundation case: Proceedings can't be to malign institutions

While closing the matter, Chief Justice DY Chandrachud pulled up the Madras High Court over its orders for a police inquiry, and said proceedings cannot be used to malign people and institutions.

New Delhi. The Supreme Court on Friday closed proceedings in an illegal confinement against Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev's Isha Foundation following statements from two women who said they are voluntarily residing at the organisation's ashram without coercion. While closing the matter, the bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud pulled up the Madras High Court over its orders for a police investigation on a habeas corpus (produce the body) plea. "These proceedings cannot be to malign people and malign institutions," the Chief Justice remarked during the hearing. The habeas corpus plea, originally filed by the parents of the two women aged 39 and 42, alleged that they were being held against their will at the Isha Foundation's ashram in Coimbatore. The Madras High Court called for a police inquiry and questioned the women, which led to the current Supreme Court review. Despite their statements



affirming they were free to leave, the case lingered in the courts. The Tamil Nadu Police also raised broader concerns about the Isha Foundation. In a counter-petition, the police highlighted missing persons cases linked to the foundation. According to Coimbatore Superintendent of Police K Karthikeyan, six missing persons cases have been registered at the Alandurai Police Station over the past 15 years, with five cases closed and one still

under investigation. During the hearing on Friday, senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, representing Isha Foundation, informed the top court that the women had voluntarily joined the ashram when they were 24 and 27 years old and that the claims of illegal confinement were unfounded. "The women even participated in public events, like a 10 km marathon, and are in regular contact with their parents," Rohatgi said.

After a virtual interaction with the two women, Chief Justice Chandrachud said the court had spoken to both women and recorded their statements. He stated that the case should have been dropped after both women testified that they were living at the ashram of their own free will. "We have spoken to both individuals, who have clearly expressed their voluntary stay at the Isha Foundation. Once that is established, no further direction is needed in this habeas corpus case," he said.

Central agencies to rope in VPN providers in probe into bomb threats to flights

Central agencies will rope in VPN service providers to trace the origins of the bomb threats that were received by around 20 Indian flights this week.

New Delhi. Central agencies in India are set to approach VPN service providers in an effort to trace the origins of recent bomb hoax calls targeting Indian flights. Sources from the Civil Aviation Ministry revealed that many of these threatening calls have utilised virtual private networks (VPNs), complicating the tracking process. The agencies have expressed concern over the increasing frequency of these hoax threats, which have reportedly been linked to IP addresses located in countries such as London and Germany.

This trend has prompted authorities to seek cooperation from VPN providers to help identify the original source of the calls.

This comes after 20 flights of Indian carriers — both domestic and international — received bomb threats this week. On Monday, three international flights were threatened, followed by 10 more on Tuesday, and at least six additional threats were reported the following day. All threats were later declared false after thorough security checks. In the wake of multiple bomb threats to Indian flights, authorities have identified a suspect linked to an X handle, 'schizobomber777'. The handle was created just days ago and has since been suspended after posting seven hoax messages that triggered significant air security alerts. The suspect allegedly used VPN services to obscure their location, with IP addresses traced back to London and Germany. This routing made it challenging for investigators to pinpoint the exact origin of the threats, as the IP addresses "bounced off" various countries. Multiple agencies, including the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) and the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In), are collaborating to identify the individual behind the X handle. They are also exploring connections to other recent hoax bomb threats that have targeted flights.

NEW LEGISLATION TO PENALISE HOAX CALLERS SOON?

The government is reportedly working on new legislation to deter people from making hoax calls and penalise those found guilty. Concerned over an alarming rise in the number of bomb hoaxes, the government is discussing multiple solutions, including adding the accused to a 'no-fly list'.

Terrorists kill non-local in Jammu & Kashmir's Shopian, security forces on spot

New Delhi. A migrant worker from Bihar was allegedly killed by terrorists in south Kashmir's Shopian district. The locals found the body with wounds on the roadside on Friday morning. He was immediately shifted to a nearby district hospital. Indian Army personnel and Jammu and Kashmir Police arrived at the scene to begin an investigation into the killing. The incident occurred just two days after National Conference (NC) leader Omar Abdullah took the oath as the Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir. The killing of non-locals by terrorists has been a troubling pattern in the region. In April, two non-local labourers were killed by terrorists.

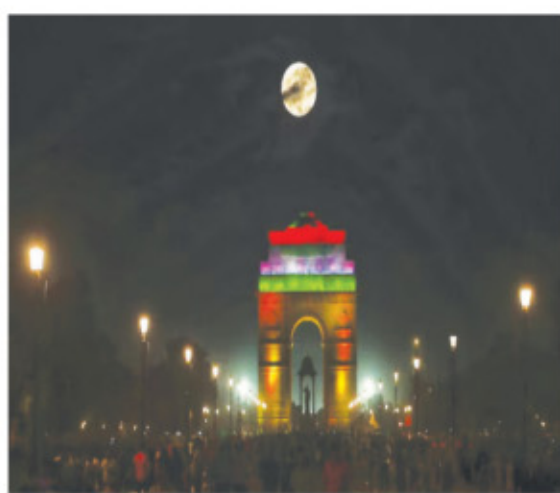
A migrant worker from Bihar was allegedly killed by terrorists in south Kashmir's Shopian district. The body of the victim has been sent to a hospital. The security forces arrived at the spot and began an investigation into the matter.

Earlier this month, an Indian Army soldier was found dead, with bullet injuries on his body, after being kidnapped by terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir's Anantnag district, police sources said on Wednesday, October 9.

Year's largest and brightest supermoon dazzles the night sky

The Hunter's Moon, the year's largest and brightest moon, was witnessed from different parts of India on October 17.

New Delhi. The mesmerising view of the Hunter's Moon, the year's largest and brightest moon, was witnessed from different parts of India on October 17. A supermoon occurs when the Moon is at its closest point to Earth. The celestial event coincided with the auspicious night of Sharad Purnima on October 17. On Thursday night, the moon was just 351,519 kilometres away from Earth, appearing about 14% larger and 30% brighter than usual. Several social media users took to X to post pictures of the supermoon as it dazzled the night sky.



This multiple exposure image captures the supermoon above India Gate, as seen from Kartavya Path in New Delhi. The supermoon was also witnessed in Madhya Pradesh's Raipur city from its clock tower. This phenomenon was also observed in other parts of the world, including New Zealand, Japan, and Australia. **WHY IS IT CALLED THE HUNTER'S MOON?** The supermoon seen on Thursday is known as the Hunter's Moon as it is the time of year when leaves start to fall, heralding the onset of winter. Ancient communities would increase hunting at this time of year. The next full moon on 15 November is the 'Beaver Moon' as it is linked to the time that beavers start to take shelter ahead of winter. This will also happen to be a supermoon.

Personal laws can't prevail over Child Marriage Act: Court issues guidelines

The Supreme Court said marriages involving children violate the free will to have a life partner of choice. The top court was hearing a petition that alleged a rise in child marriages in the country.

New Delhi. The Supreme Court on Friday held that personal laws and traditions cannot prevail over the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act and issued a host of guidelines to achieve the "whole purpose" of the legislation.

The Supreme Court bench, led by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud, said marriages involving children violate the free will to have a life partner of choice. The Supreme Court was hearing a petition that alleged a rise in child marriages in the country and non-implementation of the law in "letter and spirit". Calling for community-driven approaches, the court said

preventive strategies should be tailored to different communities. "The law will only succeed when there is multi-sectoral coordination.



Training and capacity building of law enforcement officers needs to be there," the CJ said. The top court said authorities must focus on child marriage prevention and

protection of minors while penalising offenders as a last resort. However, the court pointed out that there were certain gaps in the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act.

The CJ noted that the law said nothing about the validity of such marriages.

"Legal questions are kept open to be decided by the constitutional court. Interlinking of personal laws with the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act is a point to be looked at," the court said.

A bill to amend the law to give overriding effect over personal laws is pending before a parliamentary committee. The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act came into force in 2006 to prevent child marriage and ensure the eradication of the practice. The Act replaced the Child Marriage Restraint Act of 1929.

Enforcement Directorate raids Muda's office in Mysuru, team of 12 officials on spot

ED officials are conducting a meeting with MUDA officials, including Commissioner AN Raghunandan, and are likely to seize documents in connection with the land allotment case.

ED officials are conducting a meeting with MUDA officials, including Commissioner AN Raghunandan, and are likely to seize documents in connection with the land allotment case.

New Delhi. A team of 12 Enforcement Directorate officials raided the office of the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) on Friday in connection with the land allotment case, in which Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah is also named. The officials conducted a meeting with senior MUDA officials, including Commissioner AN Raghunandan. The officials are likely to seize documents pertaining to the case following the meeting. The probe agency will question all MUDA officials to ascertain their involvement in the land allotment case. The

development comes a couple of days after K Marigowda, believed to be a close aide of Siddaramaiah, resigned as MUDA chairperson citing health reasons. Speaking to the media after resigning, Marigowda dismissed claims that he resigned due to political pressure. However, he claimed that he resigned at Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's direction. "I have met the minister and submitted my resignation. The Chief Minister instructed me to resign, and following his directions, I did so," he said. "There was no pressure on me to resign. My



health is genuinely not in good condition, so I am stepping down voluntarily. I have known the Chief Minister for more than 40 years. He appointed me as district president and never asked me to do anything illegal, including anything related to MUDA. I am resigning for personal reasons. I have suffered two strokes and cannot continue," he added. The

Opposition has demanded Siddaramaiah's resignation after the Karnataka High Court dismissed his petition, challenging the legality of the Governor's decision to prosecute him over alleged irregularities in the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) scheme. The case against the Chief Minister pertains to allegations that compensatory sites were allotted to his wife, BM Parvathi, in an upmarket area in Mysuru that had higher property value as compared to the location of her land that had been acquired by MUDA.

Supreme Court order paves way for Gurmeet Ram Rahim's trial in sacrilege cases

The Punjab and Haryana High Court had stayed proceedings against Ram Rahim in the sacrilege cases involving the desecration of Guru Granth Sahib.

New Delhi. The Supreme Court on Friday lifted the stay imposed by the Punjab and Haryana High Court on the trial against Dera Sacha Sauda chief Gurmeet Ram Rahim Singh in three sacrilege cases dating back to 2015. A bench of Justices BR Gavai and KV Viswanathan also issued a notice to Ram Rahim, requiring his response within four weeks. The court was hearing an appeal by Punjab against a ruling of the High Court that stayed proceedings against Ram Rahim in the sacrilege cases involving the desecration of the Guru Granth Sahib, the holy scripture of the Sikhs. The cases relate to the theft of a copy of the Guru Granth Sahib in Bargari, Faridkot district, in 2015. The torn pages of the holy book were later found in Bargari, triggering widespread protests in Faridkot. As the protests turned violent, the police

opened fire, killing two people in Behbal Kalan. Several others were injured in Kotkapura.

In February 2023, the Supreme Court transferred the trial against Ram Rahim and seven Dera Sacha Sauda followers from a court in Faridkot to Chandigarh. The move came after a Dera follower, an accused in the case, was shot dead. In December 2021, Ram Rahim moved the High Court demanding that the CBI probe the three sacrilege FIRs of 2015. The sacrilege issue, along with police firing on protesters, became major election issues in Punjab in the 2017



Assembly polls, which saw the Shiromani Akali Dal-BJP failing to return to power. Ram Rahim is already serving a 20-year sentence after being convicted of murder and rape. He remains lodged in Sunaria jail in Rohtak even though he has been granted paroles and furloughs on several occasions.

Hoax bomb threats: Delhi Police asks social media sites for details of accounts

NEW DELHI. Intensifying its probe on the hoax bomb threats received by several domestic and international flights, Delhi Police on Thursday wrote to social media platforms seeking details of the accounts that posted threatening messages. Delhi Police on Wednesday registered an FIR in connection with the bomb threat to a Bengaluru-bound Akasa Air flight carrying 180 people and also launched a probe in seven other similar cases reported at Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport this month. A senior police officer said a dedicated team has been formed to probe bomb threat cases. A team of cyber cell of Delhi police, Intelligence Fusion & Strategic Operations (IFSO) has also been roped in for the probe.



On Wednesday, police approached the social media platforms to suspend the handles that posted threatening messages and remove the posts. "It is suspected that the handler used VPN (Virtual private network) or dark web browser to set up the accounts on X and then posted the messages from more than one account," the officer said. "To get the IP addresses, we have written to the social media platform," the officer said, adding they have also contacted Mumbai Police as they have also registered an FIR in the matter. Deputy Commissioner of Police (IGI) Usha Ranganani on Wednesday said, "Airport police has responded to eight incidents involving reported bomb threats this month. After thorough verification and inspection, all threats were confirmed to be hoaxes."

Decorating Home walls in Stencils



It is true that ideas of themed wallpapers or memorable picture frames invariably dominate our minds when doing up our homes but the one trend that has recently become a viable option in home decor is wall stencilling. Interior designer Husnain Heptulla and Delhi-based creative director, Vandana Khosla, guide us on the nuances of this form of decoration and give us necessary tips to try stencilling on our own.

What is wall stencilling: It simply means replicating an image on a wall surface either

by using a permanent marker free-hand or else a stencil that serves as a template for outlining. Paint colours are later filled into the spaces for a complete picture. Popular designs and patterns: Depending on the texture of the wall whether in tiles, bricks or regular, selecting a suitable stencil design assumes the initial step toward wall stencilling. For a relaxing and calming effect in the room, Husnain recommends nature-inspired themes or arboreal designs to create a landscape-like feel in the house. Floral, damask (woven fabric), nursery,

classical and border can be your first time wall art pick. A stencil can also be self-designed complimenting one's taste and preference but that needs skill and right technique only experts are confident with. So you can add depth to your paint by stencilling a design in a contrasting colour over the basecoat. Other techniques such as ragging, sponging, or feathering can be done using another colour over the basecoat. For living area and bedrooms: Every room has a distinct characteristic of its own. Styling a living room for instance cannot be similar in

approach to designing a more intimate space like a bedroom. Abstract designs that follow a grid-repetition pattern in pastel colours add a spiritual feel to the living room setup. With bedrooms, a little whimsical and cheerful attitude is accepted feels Husnain. "Using scenes from a memorable trip abroad, snowflakes and picket-fence themes give a more personal flavour to the room shared by a married couple," he informs. Coming to the kids' room, the surroundings should not be overpowering that put them ill-at-ease. The motive is not to turn a child's room into another study but to do it up in a manner that soothes the mind of the child and not burden it. Replicating a scene from the child's favourite book or animated illustrations are some of the quirky templates parents can experiment with. What's stencilling in the kitchen? Cooking is an art and kitchen is the space of culinary execution; so why not outline its walls in stencilled strokes? Vandana Khosla suggests, "Use stencils on cabinets or floors in a unique way and surprise your guests with your expertise in this art. If you have a cabin in the hardwoods, use stencils of black bear, moose or deer, going one per cabinet centre. To add contrast to wood walls opt for white cabinets and stencil black-and-white checkerboards along the edges." Colours and background: The surface or the base is the backbone of good stencilling. The background colour is a decisive precursor to a wall stencil. The contrast could be subtle, like in the living room or the library, or it could be pronounced in a bedroom or entertainment area. Mauve, peach, grey, sandy brown and chocolate brown work well as subtle hues; while shades of blue, red and green act as contrasting agents. The colours should be used in a healthy proportion or else they might end up having a jarring display.

Why stencilling? A stencilled room has a charm of its own. It can highlight existing features such as arches and fireplaces, and make featureless interiors more interesting. More than being a current home decor trend, wall stencil is more original, innovative and cost-friendly than designer wallpapers that have limiting

customising options. Interior designers believe stencilling is far more fun and leads the league than wallpapers, textured surfaces and feature-wall type of paint jobs. With the correct atmospheric and lighting a stencilled wall adds novelty and lasts long too.

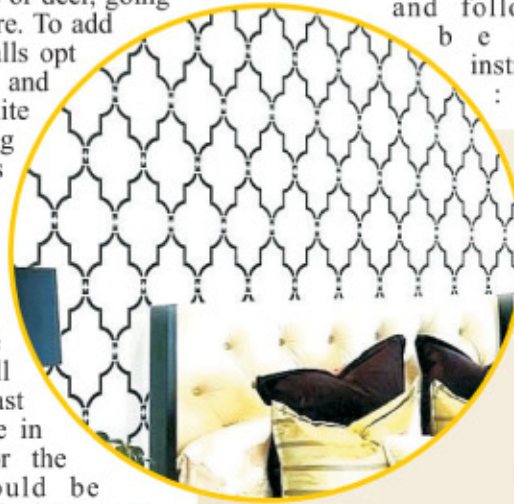
Try wall-stencilling at home: Here are some easy steps for beginners that Vandana Khosla simplifies:

-First decide the walls you want to stencil. Then select stencil type the desired position.

-Choose the colours. If the background wall colour is to be changed, keep the new colour in mind while preparing the stencil colour scheme.

-Paint the base wall colour (if it is to be changed), or touch up any dirty areas if the colour is to be retained. The wall must be clean before you move on to the next step. -Use a laser level to identify the correct spots where the stencil will be taped. Mark the areas clearly with a pencil. If the stencil is only to be used sporadically, or in one area, you may still want to use the laser level to determine a straight line for taping the stencil into place.

-Tape the stencil into place and follow the below instructions:



There is an artist in each one of us that yearns to indulge in creative pursuits. Wall stencilling is one activity that encourages even amateur artists to sketch designs on the canvas of home walls.

1. Using a stencil brush and paint, begin stencilling in one colour at a time. Follow the directions provided for the type of stencil paint you've purchased.

2. Continue stencilling until all the colours have been completed. Let the paint dry thoroughly before you remove the stencil from the wall. If necessary, move the stencil onto the next area of the wall. Continue until the entire wall is complete.



Ways to increase Positivity in home

Here are some tips from a Vastu and Feng Shui expert for a life full of harmony.

- In the present complex scenario, we do not find time for ourselves to analyse the various reasons that lead us to failures in health, wealth or relationships. Most of these problems are connected to major Vastu and Feng Shui defects. Dr Snehal S Deshpande lists some commandments which may help you to increase positive energy in your home:
 - Always stand in the centre of your house with a compass in your hand to find out the directions of your house. The main entrance is the mouth of a house which brings in the energy. Avoid a property which has a door facing south-west, as it is the entry of the devil energy and brings in struggle and misfortunes. If your house already has one, fix two Hanumanji tiles outside the door and see the difference.
 - Mandir or altar is the king of all Vastu rules — place it in the North-East and everything will

- start falling in place. Also, face the East while praying.
- Kitchen is the symbol of prosperity and should be ideally placed in the southeast. Kitchen in the North or North-East may bring financial and health problems. In this case, hang three bronze bowls upside down on the ceiling but do not hang over the stove.
- Master bedroom is the key to enter the door of stability and it must be in the South-West. You should sleep with your head in the South or West. But a breadwinner must never sleep in the North-East. Bathrooms and toilets have the energy of 'hell' which are best in West or South. But should never be in North and North-East or they bring financial, health and educational problems.
- Centre is the nose of your house from where your house breathes. It must be open and clutter-free. A wall here gives stomach and financial problems so fix a zero watt blue bulb on this wall and keep it on 24x7.

- Cuts in any direction make a house paralyzed, mainly cuts in South-West, North, North-East and South-East give serious problems. There are many mysteries and secrets regarding the cuts and their cures. Now, a rapid-fire round of cures Never use too much of bright colours such as red and purple for decorating your house or they may enhance sickness energy in the house, if any.
- Do not keep pictures of water or



- a fountain in your bedroom. It might adversely affect you.
- Do not keep your mandir/temple under any beam or cupboard or you will be always under stress.
- Do not keep heavy objects in the North East and North or it may block your finances.
- Do not keep bonsais in the house or they will hamper the growth in the respective area of your life.
- Mopping the floor twice a week with sea salt water will help you clean your house of negative energy.
- If arguments are the main ruling energy in your house, play a musical CD four-five times in a day and experience the calmness in the house.

Stay hot and stylish this winter. It's easy



"Winter is the time for comfort, for good food and warmth, for the touch of a friendly hand and for a talk beside the fire: it is the time for home." — Edith Sitwell

The winters are here. And what better a way to welcome the new-year! Time for endless conversations with friends & family over cups of hot beverages, curl up around warm memories and painting the joyful city roads fashionable with your wardrobe of warm, bright and colourful woollens.

These are cherished winter-wears that you've carefully handpicked ... for their color and style-quotient. These woollens not only keep you warm but also define everything that's uniquely you, your winter style statement.

Although there's an enormous amount of care and selection that goes in choosing and buying woollens, we often fail to take as much care when it comes to maintaining them properly.

Woollens are delicate natural fibres which need special care while washing and cannot withstand powder detergents. Powder detergents, how expensive they might be, contain SODA which makes the woollen fibres frail and discoloured. As a result the woollens can look worn-out and faded. What follows is a late realization that along with

powder detergents, the brightness, softness and style quotient of the woollens have washed out too ... that too, just in one wash. You can stop this from being your unhappy story. Your woollens need a specialist-care and not powderdetergents that treat even delicate natural fibres harshly.

Think taking care of your woollens is too complicated a job? Relax. It's actually easy. There's one name that you can blindly trust when it comes to taking care of your stylish winter wears.

Try the woollens' specialist- Ezee Liquid Detergent, Its No Soda, pH-neutral formula cleanses gently and makes woollens bright & fluffy, like new. Now be it the latest cashmere that your better half picked for you this year or your favourite sweater that has kept you warm for years, or the one that was knitted by your mother with soft wool and oodles of warm love, Ezee delivers expert care to all winter-wears!

Ezee No Soda formula keeps woollens 5X* safer, it gently cleans them without damaging the fibre and its unique fabric conditioner makes woollens bright and soft just like new!

Ezee has the prestigious Woolmark certification for adhering to international standards of being safe on woollens.

Did not run away, will return to India: Byju Raveendran amid insolvency crisis

New Delhi Byju Raveendran, the founder of troubled edtech giant Byju's addressed misconceptions surrounding his move to Dubai and reaffirmed his commitment to reviving the company, which has been facing severe financial and legal challenges.

Speaking during his first virtual press conference in four years, Raveendran refuted rumours that he had fled India to avoid the ongoing insolvency crisis.

"It's very unfortunate that people think that I ran to Dubai because I had to. I came to Dubai for a year for my father's treatment, which led to our ongoing stay. But let me be clear, I did not run away," said Raveendran as quoted by Moneycontrol in its report. In the candid discussion, he spoke about his plans to restore Byju's to its former glory, which once stood as a leader in the edtech industry. "I'll come to India, and I'll fill stadiums... The timing has not been decided, but it will be soon," he said.

Raveendran expressed optimism, even in the face of the company's current troubles. "I only need to see a 1% chance to make it work. I'm not worried about what order will come. Whatever comes, I'll find a way out," he added. "If they are willing to work with me, I am willing to give them money back before I take a single rupee out. We paid \$140 million but they wanted the entire \$1.2 billion which we had already committed or invested by then. There is no way we could have given them back for a long time. Most lenders wanted to settle but one or two wanted to make a killing out of it," said Raveendran as quoted by PTI.

Once valued at \$22 billion in 2022, Byju's has seen its fortunes take a sharp downturn due to mounting debts and legal disputes. The company is currently embroiled in a significant financial struggle with creditors over \$1 billion in unpaid loans, leading to insolvency proceedings in both India and the United States.

In June 2024, insolvency proceedings against Byju's were initiated after the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) alleged that the company had defaulted on a Rs 158.9 crore payment related to a sponsorship deal. US-based financial creditor Glas Trust also objected to a settlement between Byju's and the BCCI, claiming that funds had been misappropriated.

Sensex, Nifty decline in early trade; Manappuram Finance tanks 15%

New Delhi Benchmark stock indices dipped in early Friday trade, pressured by a decline in IT stocks after bellwether Infosys reported disappointing Q2 results.

The S&P BSE Sensex was down 400.17 points to 80,606.44 at 10:12 am, while the NSE Nifty50 declined 96.85 points to trade at 24,653. All the other broader market indices were also trading in negative territory as volatility dampened the mood on Dalal Street. IT stocks were the biggest losers after Infosys' weak forecast. The top five gainers on the Nifty50 were Axis Bank, Wipro, Eicher Motors, Tata Motors and HDFC Life. On the other hand, the top losers were Infosys, Tech Mahindra, ITC, BPCL and Nestle India.

Meanwhile, shares of Manappuram Finance tanked 15% after Reserve Bank of India (RBI) action against its subsidiary Asirvad Micro Finance. The RBI has asked it to stop sanctions and disbursements of loans. Dr. V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Financial Services, "The 6% correction in Nifty from the peak has made India an under-performer with only 13.83% return YTD in contrast to the 23.16% return in S&P 500 YTD. The Hang Seng index with 23.16% return YTD has been the best performing market in recent weeks assisted by massive buying by FIIs."

"The high valuations in India has been the main trigger for the sustained selling by FIIs, and recent developments like consensus downward revision of FY25 earnings estimates to below 10% and Bajaj Auto's concerns regarding weak demand during the festive season dampened the sentiments resulting in big selling in auto stocks," he added. "Trends indicate that FII selling and DII buying is likely to continue. A bounce back is likely in the next two or three days but it is unlikely to sustain since sentiments have turned weak," Vijayakumar noted.

RBI bars Asirvad Micro Finance, Navi Finance, two other NBFCs

MUMBAI Within a fortnight of issuing a stern warning and asking them to behave, the RBI on Thursday took stringent regulatory action against four non-bank lenders and a micro finance player, citing material, supervisory breaches, and has asked them to cease and desist from sanctioning and disbursing loans effective October 21. The lenders are the Chennai-based micro lender Asirvad Micro Finance, Kolkata-based micro lender Arohan Financial Services, and Delhi-based non-bank lender DMI Finance, and the Bengaluru-



headquartered non-bank lender Navi Finserv, the central bank said in a notification Thursday. Announcing the monetary policy on October 9, governor Shaktikanta Das had asked NBFCs to follow the 'compliance first' culture and also to behave. The RBI has been repeatedly flagging NBFC, MFIs and gold loan players in the past and has brought more or less complete parity in their regulations on par with commercial banks. Das warned them on October 9 when he had asked them to follow a 'compliance first culture' and has advised them to "self correct," else warning that the heavy hand of the regulator will be raised.

RBI takes action against Navi Finserv, 3 other NBFCs: What it means for customers

New Delhi The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has taken strict regulatory action against four Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs), halting their loan sanctioning and disbursement activities starting from October 21, 2024. The RBI said it has taken this step in accordance with Section 45L(1)(b) of the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934, and targets NBFCs like Asirvad Micro Finance Limited, Arohan Financial Services Limited, DMI Finance Private Limited, and Navi Finserv Limited. The directive comes in response to concerns over their loan pricing policies and other regulatory violations, sparking questions about the implications for customers.

WHY DID RBI TAKE REGULATORY ACTION?

The central bank flagged several issues in the pricing policies of these NBFCs, specifically related to their Weighted Average Lending Rate (WALR) and Interest Spread over the cost of funds.

According to the RBI, these institutions were charging excessive interest rates, going beyond the regulatory limits. This

non-compliance was seen as a violation of the RBI's Master Directions for Microfinance Loans, updated in July 2022, and the Non-Banking Financial Company—Scale Based Regulation guidelines, revised in March 2024.

"Over the last few months, the Reserve Bank has been sensitising its Regulated Entities through various channels on the need to use their regulatory freedom responsibly and ensure fair, reasonable and transparent pricing, especially for small value loans. However, unfair and usurious practices continued to be seen during the course of onsite examinations as well as from the data collected and analysed offsite," RBI said. Additionally, these companies failed to properly assess the household incomes of their borrowers or factor in their current or future repayment capacities. As a result, many microfinance loans were being sanctioned without adequate evaluation, risking both the financial health of borrowers and the long-term



sustainability of the lending companies.

IMPACT ON NBFCs and THEIR CUSTOMERS

For Asirvad Micro Finance, Arohan Financial Services, DMI Finance, and Navi Finserv, the RBI's move is a big setback. The NBFCs must now focus on compliance, reviewing their pricing structures, and ensuring that all loans are sanctioned in accordance with proper household income assessments and repayment ability evaluations. Until these corrective measures are implemented and

reviewed, the companies won't be allowed to resume loan disbursements.

However, it is important to note that this restriction doesn't prevent these firms from servicing their existing customers. Loan collection and recovery processes are still allowed, provided they comply with the current regulatory framework. The RBI has assured that it will lift the restrictions once these companies demonstrate compliance with guidelines, particularly in areas such as risk management, customer service, and fair pricing policies.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR EXISTING AND NEW CUSTOMERS?

For current borrowers of these NBFCs, the impact is minimal in the short term. Customers will still be able to continue their repayment schedules, and existing loans will not be affected. However, the halt in new loan disbursements could affect future borrowers, especially those reliant on microfinance loans from these institutions.

Explained: Why Infosys shares fell 5% after Q2 results

NEW DELHI. Shares of Infosys saw a sharp drop of 5% on Friday, following the release of its Q2 FY25 results. The stock price fell to Rs 1,869 as investors reacted to lower-than-expected financial performance and revenue guidance. Although Infosys raised its FY25 revenue growth guidance to 3.74%-4.5%, up from the previous estimate of 3%-4%, analysts mentioned that this fell short of market expectations. Domestic brokerage Motilal Oswal pointed out that while there was broad-based revenue growth, Infosys' cautious outlook on discretionary spending caused disappointment. The company highlighted ongoing challenges, particularly outside the US banking sector, with limited recovery in discretionary expenditures. Infosys also postponed wage hikes for the fourth quarter of FY25 and the first quarter of FY26, signalling uncertainties in the near term. Motilal Oswal said, "The guidance was



upgraded by just 50 basis points at the top end, despite a strong 3.5% compound quarterly growth rate (CQGR) in the first half of the year. This suggests a muted CQGR of approximately 0.5% for the second half of FY25. This indicates that while client pessimism may be stabilising, a significant rebound in discretionary spending is yet to materialise." There was some optimism, however, regarding the company's performance in smaller deals, those worth less than USD 50 million in total contract value. While Infosys refrained from calling

this a trend, Motilal Oswal believes it could signal early signs of business flow returning to both the company and the sector, potentially positioning it favourably for FY26. On Thursday, after the market closed, Infosys reported a profit after tax (PAT) of Rs 6,506 crore for the second quarter ending in September 2024. This represented a 5% year-on-year (YoY) increase from Rs 6,212 crore in the same period last year. However, the PAT figure was below the Street's expectations, which had forecasted Rs 6,700 crore. Revenue from operations grew by 5% YoY, reaching Rs 40,986 crore, compared to Rs 39,360 crore in the same quarter last year. In constant currency terms, revenues grew by 3.3% YoY and 3.1% quarter-on-quarter (QoQ). Infosys also declared an interim dividend of Rs 21 per equity share, with October 29, 2024, as the record date. The dividend is set to be paid on November 8, 2024.

Explained: Why European Central Bank cut interest rates again

New Delhi The European Central Bank (ECB) has reduced interest rates once again, marking the second consecutive cut as inflation in the eurozone cools more rapidly than expected. On Thursday, the ECB lowered its benchmark deposit rate by a quarter-point, following a similar cut in September. This move brings the rate down to 3.25%, after peaking at 4%.

This marks the first time the ECB has implemented back-to-back rate cuts since it began its current cycle of easing in response to falling inflation rates. The latest decision came after September's inflation data was revised downward, showing consumer prices in the eurozone rose by 1.7% year on year—slightly below the original estimate of 1.8%. The ECB said the latest data confirmed that inflation is cooling as expected, with prices likely to increase in the coming months before returning to the central bank's 2% target next year. The rate-setting committee met in Slovenia as part of its regular tour outside its Frankfurt headquarters, deciding to cut rates for



the third time since the peak. The ECB had previously raised rates aggressively in response to soaring inflation driven by the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's invasion of Ukraine. However, the recent lower-than-expected inflation numbers have reassured policymakers that prices are stabilising. Additionally, signs of weakness in the eurozone economy have further prompted the ECB to ease borrowing costs, providing some relief to households and businesses.

"Recent surprises on the downside in

economic activity indicators have increased confidence that inflation is headed toward the 2% target," the ECB stated. Analysts, such as ING's Carsten Brzeski, believe the swift rate cuts indicate the ECB is more concerned about the eurozone's growth outlook than before. There is now even a risk that inflation could undershoot the target, he warned. Economists suggest that Thursday's cut signals the ECB's urgency to bring rates down quickly. Although the ECB is taking a cautious "data-dependent" approach, meaning it will assess economic conditions before deciding on future rate cuts, analysts expect more reductions are likely in the coming months.

Christine Lagarde, the ECB's president, was expected to speak following the announcement, with her comments eagerly anticipated for hints on the future trajectory of interest rates. Some analysts predict the ECB may continue cutting rates until they fall to a "neutral" level of around 2% to 2.5% by mid-2025.

Amazon AWS CEO warns staff: Return to office or resign

Amazon AWS CEO Matt Garman defended the decision to implement a five-day in-office work week starting in January 2024.

NEW DELHI. Amazon Web Services (AWS) CEO Matt Garman has issued a clear warning to staff who are unhappy with the company's new return-to-office policy, reported news agency Reuters. Speaking at an all-hands meeting on Thursday, Garman defended the decision to implement a five-day in-office work week starting in January 2024. He made it clear that employees who do not support the policy have the option to leave the company. Garman's comments come after some employees expressed frustration with the change, which moves away from the current three-day-a-week office requirement. He explained that while most workers support the shift,



those who feel it is not suitable for them can seek employment elsewhere.

"If there are people who just don't work well in that environment and don't want to, that's okay, there are other companies around," Garman said, according to a transcript of the meeting reviewed by Reuters. He added that working in the office is important for innovation and collaboration, and the company has found it difficult to develop new products when employees are not physically present. The policy has drawn criticism

from some Amazon staff who argue that commuting is time-consuming and that the benefits of working from the office are not supported by independent studies. Many employees feel that the flexibility of remote work, which became more common during the pandemic, should continue. Amazon had previously been enforcing a three-day in-office policy. However, in August, Amazon's CEO, Andy Jassy, announced the shift to a five-day office schedule, emphasising the importance of working together in person

to "invent, collaborate, and be connected." This hard stance has created tension within the company. Some employees who were not following the previous three-day policy were informed that they were "voluntarily resigning" and were locked out of Amazon's systems. This action has led to increased dissatisfaction among parts of the workforce, particularly those who believe that working remotely is more efficient. Amazon, which employs more than 1.5 million people globally, has taken a stricter approach to the return-to-office mandate than many of its peers in the tech industry. Companies like Google, Meta, and Microsoft have adopted more flexible policies, typically requiring employees to be in the office two to three days a week. As the world's second-largest private employer, after Walmart, Amazon's decisions on workplace policies are closely watched. The company believes that being physically together in the office is essential for fostering creativity and collaboration, particularly as it works on new products and services.

NEWS BOX

Al Hilal CEO slams Netherlands coach Ronald Koeman over Saudi League comments

New Delhi. Al Hilal CEO Esteve Calzada has taken aim at Netherlands coach Ronald Koeman for underestimating the quality of the Saudi Pro League. The criticism follows Koeman's decision to exclude winger Steven Bergwijn from international selection after the player recently joined Al Ittihad from Ajax Amsterdam. Koeman publicly stated that Bergwijn's move to Saudi Arabia effectively closed the door on his national team opportunities.

In a press conference at The Summit, a prominent gathering of sports executives in London, Calzada defended the league's reputation, emphasizing that many high-profile players who have transitioned to the Saudi top-flight continue to be selected for their national teams. He pointed to examples such as Aymeric Laporte, who became a European champion with Spain after moving to the league, as well as Ruben Neves from Portugal and Cristiano Ronaldo, both of whom remain integral to their respective national squads. Calzada



expressed his disappointment with Koeman's remarks, stating, "In my opinion, those statements are unfair and lack awareness of the league's quality. If you look at the facilities and the level of play, it matches European standards." He lamented that such views could mislead fans and players alike, underscoring that the majority of players in the league continue to receive international recognition. Additionally, Calzada provided an update on Al Hilal's marquee signing Neymar, who has been sidelined for nearly a year due to a serious injury. He confirmed that Neymar has been training regularly with his teammates and is eager to return to action. Although Neymar is not yet registered to play in the local league, he will be eligible for the Asian Champions League, which adds to the team's competitive edge. Al Hilal, under the management of Portuguese coach Jorge Jesus, currently leads Group B in the Asian Champions League with six points from two matches. They are set to face Al Ain on Monday, further demonstrating the league's growing prominence on the international stage.

Carlos Alcaraz sends emotional message to Rafael Nadal after final

New Delhi. Carlos Alcaraz sent an emotional message to Rafael Nadal after beating the former World No.1 in the semifinals of the Six Kings Slam exhibition tournament on October 17, Thursday. Alcaraz defeated Nadal in straight sets to win the encounter 6-3 6-3 to progress to the final and set up a match with Jannik Sinner. After the match was done, Alcaraz took to Instagram to send a message to Nadal. The Spaniard it was a privilege to play the former World No.1 for the final time and thanked him for being an inspiration the younger generation. Alcaraz ended the message by saying he would see him very soon in Malaga, where the Davis Cup finals will take place. The tournament will serve as the final outing for Nadal, who announced his retirement earlier in the



month. "It was a privilege to play against Rafa one last time! Once again, thank you for your legacy and for being an inspiration to all of us! See you very soon in Malaga, but this time both wearing the colours of Spain," said Alcaraz.

How did Alcaraz vs Nadal unfold?

Rafael Nadal earned plenty of respect from the Riyadh crowd despite his 6-3, 6-3 loss, with the spectators giving him a warm ovation as he left the court. The defeat sets up a much-anticipated showdown with Novak Djokovic in a third-place play-off on Saturday, reigniting one of tennis' greatest rivalries. Carlos Alcaraz wasted no time asserting his dominance, breaking Nadal to love in the very first game. While Nadal regained his footing and kept the first set competitive, Alcaraz seized a crucial advantage, winning a marathon game with four deuces on Nadal's serve to secure the opener. Nadal, a 22-time Grand Slam champion, came out strong in the second set, holding serve to love. However, Alcaraz quickly regained control, breaking Nadal with a stunning forehand down the line. Though Nadal offered flashes of brilliance, including a masterful backhand at the net, Alcaraz held his ground

Rafael Nadal open to advising Carlos Alcaraz: Ready any time he wants

← **Legendary Rafael Nadal has said that he is open to advising Carlos Alcaraz in the future. Speaking at the Six Kings Slam 2024, Nadal said that he knew Alcaraz was a special talent when he saw him in 2021.**

New Delhi. Legendary Rafael Nadal has said that he is open to advising Carlos Alcaraz, if the youngster ever wanted it. Speaking after his Six Kings Cup semi-final defeat against Alcaraz, Nadal said that the young Spaniard was in good hands, surrounded by able coaches and support staff. Nadal lost 6-3 6-3 to Carlos Alcaraz in the semi-finals on Thursday to set up a third-place match against the Serb, who was beaten 6-2 6-7(0)



6-4 by Jannik Sinner. World No.1 Sinner will meet Alcaraz in the final at Riyadh where the winner will take home \$6 million. "I think he doesn't need much advice. He has a great team, great family. He's gonna be going very well with what he has. He's learning all the time. We can see he's evolving in every way. But of course, I'll be ready any time he wants to call me,"

Rafael Nadal said in the on-court interview. The Spaniard was asked if he knew that Alcaraz was a special talent. Nadal said that when he saw Alcaraz play in the Australian Open 2021, he knew that the youngster was going to be a real force to reckon with in the future. "Well of course when you're in the tennis world, when someone comes from the same

country as you and he's winning, he's special. People told me someone very good is coming. I didn't have the chance to watch him till we practised in Australia in 2021. Something like this. Even if he was very young you see things you don't see in the others. You can see it now," Nadal said.

Rafa Nadal will have one last chance to face old rival Novak Djokovic before the Spaniard calls time on his illustrious career with the pair set to meet at the Six Kings Slam exhibition event in Saudi Arabia.

"To have Novak in front of me, it's like a nostalgic thing," Nadal told reporters. "We've played each other a lot, so it'll be fun to play each other again in this match."

The 22-time Grand Slam champion, who announced his retirement last week, has faced Djokovic in 60 matches - the most in men's tennis - and has triumphed 29 times to the Serb's 31. The last time Nadal faced 24-time Grand Slam champion Djokovic was in the second round of the Paris Olympics, where he lost 6-1 6-4.

Nadal, who also teamed up with Alcaraz in the men's doubles at the Games, could do so again at the Davis Cup Final 8 in Malaga from November 19-24.

Novak Djokovic vs Rafael Nadal one last dance: When and Where to watch live

New Delhi. Tennis fans around the world are in for an emotional ride as Novak Djokovic and Rafael Nadal meet for the final time at the Six Kings Slam in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. This match isn't just about winning third place—it's a farewell to one of the greatest rivalries in sports history. For over 15 years, Djokovic and Nadal have battled each other in epic contests, setting new standards of excellence in the sport. With Djokovic leading 31-29 in their 60 career meetings, their matches have always been about more than just the scoreline. This showdown is particularly meaningful for Nadal, who recently announced that he will retire after the Davis Cup Finals in Malaga next month. The 22-time Grand Slam champion has struggled with injuries throughout the past year, and 2024 marks his farewell season on the tour. After losing to Carlos Alcaraz 6-3, 6-3 in the semifinal of the Six Kings Slam, Nadal reflected on the joy of having such a long and fulfilling career: "To have Novak in front of me again is nostalgic. We've had so many great battles, and it will be fun to play him one last time."

Djokovic, who has 24 Grand Slam titles to his name, also heads into this match looking for some redemption after being edged out by Jannik Sinner 2-6, 7-6(0), 6-4 in the other semifinal. The Serbian is yet to win an ATP



Tour title this season, though he made a career highlight by capturing gold at the Paris Olympics. With young players like Alcaraz and Sinner dominating the tour, the tennis world will treasure this final encounter between two legends. Beyond the match, this contest symbolises the end of an era. Nadal's grit and Djokovic's precision have shaped tennis for more than a decade. This exhibition match is not just a farewell—it's a tribute to two warriors who pushed each other to greatness.

Injured Rishabh Pant fails to take field on Day 3, BCCI to monitor fitness

India vs New Zealand: Injured Rishabh Pant failed to take the field for India on Friday, October 18. Pant was injured on Day 2 of the Bengaluru Test after the ball struck him on his left knee. It was the same area where Pant had his surgery done after his road accident.

New Delhi. Injured Rishabh Pant did not take the field on Day 3 of the Bengaluru Test match between India and New Zealand. The Board of Control for Cricket in India appraised the situation at the start of play on Friday and said that the BCCI medical team were monitoring the wicketkeeper-batter.

The development comes after Rishabh Pant had to be carried off the field due to a left knee injury on Day 2 of the Test match on Thursday, October 17. The incident occurred during New Zealand's innings when Pant appeared to injure his left knee while attempting to collect a delivery in the 37th over. He was seen in visible

discomfort, prompting India's physios to rush onto the field. Despite their efforts, Pant had to be carried off and was replaced by substitute wicketkeeper Dhruv Jurel. At the end of Day 2's play, India captain Rohit Sharma spoke about Rishabh Pant. The Indian captain said that Pant had been hit on the area where he had his surgery done and his muscles were a bit tender.



"Unfortunately, the knee. The ball went and hit straight on his knee cap, the leg which he had surgery on. So, he has got a little bit of swelling on it. The muscles are bit tender at this point of time. It's a precautionary measure," Rohit stated during the post-match press conference.

The worry surrounding Pant's injury is compounded by the fact that he recently returned to competitive cricket after a 14-month rehabilitation process following the injuries he sustained in a severe car accident in 2022. Pant had been working hard to recover from a left knee injury, which required surgery. His return was eagerly awaited, making this new setback even more disheartening for the Indian camp. With a long cricketing calendar ahead, including crucial series like the Border-Gavaskar Trophy against Australia, the injury to Pant could pose serious concerns for India's plans. Captain Rohit Sharma and head coach Gautam Gambhir are likely to be on edge, considering how integral Pant is to India's lineup, both as a wicketkeeper and as an aggressive middle-

order batter.

Pant's exit has left a significant hole in India's setup, especially at a time when the team is already under immense pressure after a poor batting display. The injury to Pant adds to a growing list of concerns as India struggles to bounce back in the Test.

Tahlia feels Australia 'didn't show up' vs South Africa: Pretty hard to take

New Delhi. Australia's stand-in captain Tahlia McGrath felt that Australia 'didn't show up' in their semi-final clash against South Africa in the Women's T20 World Cup 2024. She admitted that the loss was going to be hard to take as the defending champions crashed out of the tournament with South Africa reaching the final for the 2nd straight time. South Africa beat Australia by 8 wickets to seal their final berth. Australia's 15-match winning streak in the Women's T20 World Cup also came to an end. It's going to be pretty hard to take. We just didn't really show up tonight. You can't afford to do that in tournaments like this. Full credit to South Africa, they outplayed us tonight. We have had this World Cup in our minds for a very long time now. We worked really hard over the off-season, fine-tuning some things. We really were prepped for coming here. Felt like we



left no stone unturned. Just didn't show up on the night," Tahlia said in the post-match presentation ceremony.

Australia's 15-match winning streak breaks

South Africa restricted Australia to 134 for 5 despite a late surge with Ellyse Perry and Phoebe Litchfield providing a strong finish. The Proteas women romped home by eight wickets with 16 balls to spare to make a

massive statement. Tahlia praised South Africa's batting and how they approached the chase. We found it quite tricky, South Africa bowled quite well, took the pace off, and they made it tough for us to take risks. At the halfway stage, we felt 140-150 was par, but South Africa batted so well and made it look like it was a totally different wicket."

"We got punished"

Tahlia admitted that the bowlers couldn't execute the plans as South Africa raced away in the chase with captain Laura Wolvaardt and Anneke Bosch sharing a match-winning stand between them. Their 96-run stand ensured South Africa registered their very first win against Australia in the Women's T20 World Cup.

"We were trying to keep it really simple on that wicket, and.

Manchester United lose Kobbie Mainoo for few weeks due to muscle injury

← **Manchester United suffered a big blow as midfielder Kobbie Mainoo has been ruled out for a few weeks due to a muscle injury. Mainoo is the latest key player for United to be on the sidelines.**

New Delhi. Manchester United confirmed on Thursday that midfielder Kobbie Mainoo will be sidelined for several weeks after sustaining a muscle injury during their recent match against Aston Villa. Mainoo had to

withdraw from England's Nations League fixtures against Greece and Finland due to the injury, as did teammate Harry Maguire, who is also out for a few weeks following his injury during the 0-0 draw with Villa. United's injury woes continue, with key players like Luke Shaw, Tyrell Malacia, Mason Mount, and Leny Yoro still sidelined. Their absences have compounded the team's struggles, as they currently sit 14th in the Premier League table with only eight points from seven matches. Mainoo has been a revelation for United since his breakthrough last season. In an official statement, United announced the setbacks to Mainoo and Maguire and also revealed that Shaw and Mount are making good progress in their rehabilitation. "Kobbie Mainoo and Harry Maguire were absent after picking up muscle injuries against Villa, and they are both



expected to be out for a few weeks." "Mason Mount continues his recovery from a knock sustained against Tottenham Hotspur, and Luke Shaw from a muscle injury, with both making steady progress in their

rehabilitations," read the statement. On a positive note for United, forwards Alejandro Garnacho and Amad Diallo, who had missed international duty due to injury and illness, are back in training and are expected to be available for the club's home game against Brentford on Saturday. Morocco international Noussair Mazraoui has also returned to training after being forced off due to illness at Villa.

United also announced that Tyrell Malacia was continuing his recovery and participated in the first part of the group session. "Tyrell Malacia continued his progress towards recovery from long-term injury by participating in the first part of the group session," read the statement. United will be aiming to make a quick turnaround in their results with the Brentford game.

Shraddha Kapoor's

Throwback Picture With Grandmother And Brother Siddhanth Is Nostalgic

Shraddha Kapoor, beyond her professional endeavours, is a dedicated family woman. Her latest Instagram entry is proof. The actress reshared her brother Siddhanth Kapoor's post on IG stories. The post included a touching throwback photo dedicated to the siblings' late grandmother. Also featuring young Shraddha, the nostalgic photo is too cute to be missed. The picture showcases Siddhanth in his childhood, waving at the camera. On the other hand, little Shraddha is a bundle of cuteness in a traditional nazar ka

looking in the opposite direction as their grandmother attempts to feed her. The candid shot perfectly encapsulates Shraddha's sweet childhood memories with her brother and their grandmother. Siddhanth Kapoor also added a heartfelt caption to the photo as he wrote, "Wanted to share this beautiful photo with all of you, my grandma, was my everything, all my morals and values in life are mostly from her always to be grounded, be respectful, never judge, love, be kind and honest... and of course a lotta music... very lucky and grateful, miss you heaps my Amma and Daddy, the best grandparents I could ever ask for. Also my little angelic sister Shra. Sweetest!!"

In terms of work, Siddhanth Kapoor has worked as an assistant director on popular films like Chup Chup Ke (2006), Bhool Bhulaiyaa (2007) and Bhagam Bhag. Later, he also forayed into acting with Sanjay Gupta's Shootout at Wadala wherein he shared the screen space with Anil Kapoor, John Abraham and Kangana Ranaut. Other projects credited to his name include Ugly, Paltan, Jazba, Haseena Parker and Bombairiya.

Meanwhile, Shraddha Kapoor is basking in the success of Street Dancer 3, the horror-comedy that went on to become one of the highest-grossing Hindi films in India, even surpassing the collections of Shah Rukh Khan's Jawan. Apart from Shraddha, the film also stars Rajkumar Rao, Aparshakti Khurana, Abhishek Banerjee and Pankaj Tripathi.



Esha Deol Drops An Adorable Photo With Mother Hema Malini, Fans Wish Veteran Actress 'Happy Birthday'



Veteran actress Hema Malini celebrated her birthday on October 16. She has been receiving a lot of wishes from all corners. Esha Deol also took to her social handle and dropped an adorable photo with her mother. She also wished her happy birthday. Even fans also reacted to it. Taking to her Instagram handle, Esha Deol shared the photo and wrote, "Happy birthday my adorable mamma. Love you." As soon as she shared the photo, it went viral. One of the fans wrote, "HEMA MALINI AUNTY JI HAPPY BIRTHDAY GOD BLESS FROM FILM JOURNALIST AUTHOR RAJESH GAUR, SON OF LATE FILM WRITER VRAJENDRA GAUR JI WHO WROTE FILMS LIKE LAL PATTHAR, JYOTI, ETC." Another wrote, "Happy birthday to the beautiful Dreamgirl."

Veteran Bollywood actor Hema Malini celebrated her 76th birthday with love and admiration pouring in from all corners. However, a moment that captured everyone's attention was when an elderly fan bowed down to touch her feet and present her with a bouquet at her birthday event. The heartfelt gesture, captured in videos circulating online, has since gone viral, with fans praising both the elderly man's respect and Hema Malini's gracious response.

In the video, Hema Malini, dressed elegantly in a soft, beige saree with delicate embellishments, is seen walking towards the fan. As she is greeted, the elderly man bends down in a humble gesture, leaving her momentarily taken aback. With a soft smile and folded hands, she gently acknowledges the gesture. The video of this touching interaction has left social media buzzing, with fans sharing their appreciation for her grounded nature. Hema Malini and Dharmendra, who have been married since 1980, celebrated their 44th wedding anniversary earlier this year. Their daughter, Esha Deol, shared a nostalgic photo of her parents, with a caption that melted hearts. "Happy anniversary to my papa & mamma. I adore you, I love you & I just want to hug you," Esha wrote alongside the photo.

Please Share Your Mobile Number': Salman Khan's Ex Somy Ali Invites Lawrence Bishnoi to a Zoom Call



Somy Ali, actor and former girlfriend of Bollywood star Salman Khan, has sparked controversy with her recent social media post directed at gangster Lawrence Bishnoi whose gang has threatened to kill the latter. Ali shared a picture of Lawrence Bishnoi with a caption directly addressing the jailed gangster. In the post, she referred to him as 'Lawrence Bhai' (brother) and expressed her desire to communicate with him via video call. She also stated her wish to visit his temple in Rajasthan.

This is a direct message to Lawrence Bishnoi. Hello, Lawrence brother, I have heard and also seen that you are making zoom calls from jail as well, so I want to talk to you. Please let me know how this can happen? Rajasthan is my favourite place in the whole world. I want to come to your temple for worship, but let's have a zoom call first and we can have some more talks after the worship. Believe me, these talks are for your benefit. It will be a great favour if you can share your mobile number. Thank you." Ali wrote on Instagram. Her post comes on the heels of the murder of former Maharashtra minister and NCP leader Baba Siddique, a close associate of Salman Khan. The Lawrence Bishnoi gang claimed responsibility for the attack, issuing a warning to anyone associated with the actor. Consequently, Salman Khan's security was tightened. According to the police, the animosity between Lawrence Bishnoi and Salman Khan first became public in 2018 when the gangster said during a court appearance in Jodhpur, "We will kill Salman Khan. Everyone will know once we take action. I have not done anything as of now, they are accusing me of crimes for no reason."

Since then, the popular actor has received multiple threats to his life, with the matter reaching a tipping point in April this year when gunshots were fired outside Salman's Bandra residence by two shooters reportedly belonging to the Bishnoi gang who were later arrested. The enmity stems from the infamous blackbuck poaching case involving Salman Khan which took place in 1998 during the filming of Hum Saath-Saath Hain in Rajasthan, irking the Bishnoi community which reveres the animal.

Radhika Apte

Flaunts Baby Bump At Premiere Of Film Sister Midnight, Fans Say Congratulations



Radhika Apte has grabbed headlines as she was seen flaunting her baby bump for the first time at the premiere of her latest film, Sister Midnight. The actress stunned fans as she stepped onto the red carpet. The photos have gone viral on social media. Radhika Apte tied the knot with British music composer Benedict Taylor in 2012 and the couple is expecting their first child after 12 years of marriage. Taking to her Instagram handle, Radhika shared the photos from the event. She wore a black bodycon dress. But what grabbed everyone's attention was her baby bump. This is the first time she is spotted with bump. Earlier, she did not share anything related to her pregnancy on social media. Fans were also quick to react and congratulated her. One of the fans wrote, "Omg!!! She's pregnant, how exciting!"

Another wrote, "Ah! Congrats on the premiere and your pregnancy! You are magnificent on the red carpet!" Guneet Monga also congratulated her.

In May, the actress has shared an Instagram post for her husband. He confessed to missing Benedict Taylor in a wholesome note attached to a throwback picture featuring them.

For her post, Radhika picked a hidden gem from her archives. The heartwarming picture captured the Andhadun star seemingly enjoying a vacation with Taylor. Draped in a towel over a white flowy dress, Radhika looked the cutest.

What stole the limelight was the way her husband wrapped her around his arms while posing for the picture. Additionally, the duo flaunted a bright smile and wore sunglasses in the cute frame. Along with the picture, she wrote, "Missing you my sweetest love!" Radhika and Taylor's paths crossed in London where she had travelled to study contemporary dance. In an era where even long-distance relationships fail, the couple is acing their long-distance marriage with immense love and dedication. Previously, in a conversation with Cosmopolitan India revealed the secret behind their healthy marriage. The Sacred Games star noted, "Bened (he hates being addressed as Ben, so I call him Bened) and we try to meet each other every month. Either he comes to India or I go to London, where he's based. It's really important to take time out to meet each other in a Long Distance Relationship."

