

PUBLISHED FROM Delhi, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Chandigarh, Himachal and Jammu

The Sikh Times National Daily

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Vol. 16 No. 170 RNI NO. DELENG/2008/25465 New Delhi, Thursday, 31 October 2024 sikhtimesindia@gmail.com 9654077232 12 pages ₹ 3



Happy Diwali May the lights of Diwali brighten your path and illuminate your life with peace and joy. Happy Diwali 2024!

Editor : Simmi Kaur Babbar

PM Narendra Modi hails launch of Vadodara aircraft unit in LinkedIn post

Simmi Kaur Babbar

New Delhi, Oct 30: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday said that the inauguration of the C-295 aircraft manufacturing complex in Vadodara was a watershed moment for India's defence and aerospace journey.

1,000 crore in 2014 to 21,000 crore in 2024. He also pointed out that over 12,300 items have been indigenised in



just 3 years, and over 27,500 crore has been invested in domestic vendors by Defence Public Sector Undertakings. Modi also hailed the defence sector say-

ing that our complete defence ecosystem is being transformed with indigenous warships patrolling our waters,

Aatmanirbhar in defence and is also working to be a top of the line defence equipment manufacturer," the prime minister wrote. Crediting the strengths and skills of "Yuva Shakti" and the efforts of his government, the prime minister said that we are now seeing reduced import dependency, job creation across the defence manufacturing sector, skill development for our youth and MSMEs getting a boost in the defence sector.

Wage stagnation, inflation & inequality will strangulate growth: Jairam Ramesh

Naresh Malhotra

New Delhi, Oct 30: Senior Congress leader Jairam Ramesh on Wednesday said the country's growth has slowed down in the past decade adding that there is a stagnancy of India's consumer demand growth.

of the Reserve Bank of India, has noted, the last decade has seen the emergence of 5 big



conglomerates, including the Adani Group, who are building monopolies in 40 sectors (including cement, chemicals, petrol, construction, etc.), the statement added.

Rs. 36 in profits to the same owner. The price rise of the last few years is directly attributable to the Government's cronyism and patronage of these conglomerates. This relentless increase in the cost of goods and services has eroded the common man's ability to increase consumption, especially given stagnant wages", he said.

Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi candidate Anees Ahmed misses filing nomination by few minutes

Nagpur, Oct 30: Former Congress leader and Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi (VBA) candidate Anees Ahmed speaks on phone upon his arrival to file his nomination for Maharashtra Assembly elections in Nagpur in Maharashtra on Tuesday.

3 pm deadline. His associates were sitting there with his token number but he was not allowed inside the RO's office, Ahmed claimed. Questions were being raised as to how the senior leader could miss the deadline and there were speculations that the Congress top brass made efforts to convince him not to contest.

MVA successful in placating rebels in 90 pc seats: Sanjay Raut

ST Correspondent

Mumbai, Oct. 30: Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut on Wednesday said the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) has succeeded in placating rebels on 90 per cent of the seats from where they filed nomination against the alliance's official candidates.



Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray, NCP (SP) president Sharad Pawar and the Congress leadership will try to placate the disgruntled aspirants. The last date to withdraw nomination papers is November 4.

CPI (ML) Liberation to be INDIA bloc's Left ally in Jharkhand

New Delhi, Oct 30: While Left veterans, CPI and CPM are going solo, CPI(ML) Liberation has been allocated three seats — Sindri, Nirsra and Bagodar — by INDIA bloc constituents in the Jharkhand poll, slated to take place next month.

Returned assets of Rs 185 cr to banks in loan fraud by Chandigarh firm: ED

Navdeep Singh Sahni

New Delhi, Oct 30: The Enforcement Directorate on Wednesday said it has "returned" assets worth more than Rs 185 crore to a State Bank of India (SBI)-led consortium of banks which were allegedly cheated through a loan fraud by a Chandigarh-based pharma company.

accounts of group companies and shell entities. This caused a loss of Rs 828.5 crore to the lending banks headed by the



SBI, it said. The "defrauding" company also used "forged" bills of lading, import invoices and documents of shipping line for issuance of Foreign Letter of Credits (FLCs) from the bank, it said.

after committing this alleged fraud and were declared "proclaimed offenders" by a Chandigarh court on July 10, 2017. The ED began its investigation and attached movable and immovable assets of the accused worth Rs 185.13 crore in October, 2022. It subsequently filed a charge sheet in the case on April 4.

Himachal's Bankhandi to become India's first zoo with IGBC certification: CM Sukhu

Tejinder Kaur Babbar

Shimla, Oct 30: Shimla, The upcoming 'Durgesh Aranya Zoological Park' at Bankhandi in Kangra district would become India's first zoo to receive certification from the Indian Green Building Council for its sustainable and eco-friendly initiatives.

and infrastructure development, the chief minister said, adding that once completed, Durgesh Aranya will not only be a tourist attraction, but also a model for sustainable infrastructure, blending



conservation with innovation. The first phase of the zoological park project will cover an area of 25 hectares with an estimated cost of ₹230 crore. It is slated to be completed by the third quarter of 2025,

the statement said. The entire project with a total outlay of ₹619 crore aims to establish the park as a cornerstone for boosting the tourism sector in Kangra and its nearby districts, Sukhu said. He also said the state government has secured permission from the Central Zoo Authority to establish 34 animal enclosures within the Van Vaibhav Path and Biodiversity Court of Durgesh Aranya Zoological Park as part of the project's first phase.

Govt steps up onion supplies via rail transport to control prices

New Delhi, Oct 30: The government on Wednesday said about 840 tonne of buffer onion arrived via rail at Delhi's Kishanganj railway station, as part of its multi-pronged strategy to control prices. This marks the second major rail delivery after 1,600 tonne reached Delhi on October 20 through 'Kanda Express', an official statement said.

News box

Congress ministers to hit campaign trail

BALLARI : The high command of the state Congress on Tuesday set up a publicity committee for the Sandur bypoll, in which sitting ministers, 25-30 MLAs, MPs, former ministers, MLCs, and KPCC working committee members were appointed to run the campaigns across various parts of the Sandur Assembly constituency. The ECI has announced that the by-polls for Sandur, as well as for Channapatna and Shiggaon, will be held on November 13. While the Sandur ST Reserved constituency is known to be a stronghold of the Congress, the BJP is also leaving no stone unturned to secure victory. Meanwhile, KPCC president and DCM DK Shivakumar released the names of over 70 people who will oversee the campaign trail for the Sandur bypoll. Labour Minister Santosh Lad, who steered a campaign in Sandur on Tuesday, claimed that while the BJP dreams of winning Sandur and the two other constituencies, the fact remains that the Congress will prevail. Besides Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, cabinet ministers will join the election campaign for Sandur party candidate E Annappaor Tukaram. Rajya Sabha member Naseer Hussain will also participate in the campaign soon. Other ministers who are part of the publicity committee include Priyank Kharge, KH Muniyappa, Sharan Prakash Patil, Rahim Khan, Shivraj Tangadagi, NS Boseraju, BZ Zameer Ahmed Khan, KJ George, and D Sudhakar.

Panel formed to procure ghee for temples in Andhra

VIJAYAWADA: Minister for Endowments, Anam Ramanarayana Reddy, has announced the formation of a high-level expert committee to recommend policy changes for procuring ghee used in temple offerings and other requirements in State temples, with a report due within 15 days. During a meeting at the office of the Commissioner of Endowments on Tuesday, representatives from various dairy associations and organisations gathered to discuss the logistics of supplying ghee to temples. Addressing the group, the Minister highlighted the need for approximately 1,500 tonnes of pure cow ghee annually for temple purposes. He emphasised that ensuring high-quality supply, correct quantities, and timely delivery is a primary objective. The discussion included a review of the State's current ghee procurement process, which shifted from direct dairy sourcing to a tender-based system in 2022. This change reportedly led some dairies to withdraw from participation due to stringent conditions in the tender process. Officials and representatives raised these challenges with the Minister. To develop a comprehensive ghee supply strategy, the Minister instructed the Endowments Commissioner to set up a committee comprising senior officials, dairy representatives, experts from SV Dairy College, and other specialists.

Andhra's population conundrum

VISAKHAPATNAM: Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu's appeal to the people, asking them to have more children has triggered debates far and wide. Decreasing birth rates and aging demography are reasons that Naidu has cited to highlight the need for larger families. With India set to conduct its long-delayed population census in 2025, TNIE takes a deep dive into the projections on fertility, mortality, population growth, and age distribution, shedding light on demographic shifts that could impact Andhra Pradesh's future.

According to the Population Projections for India and States 2011-2036 report, Andhra Pradesh's population is expected to increase slightly to 54.25 million by 2036 from 49.57 million in 2011. Further, the projections reveal that while birth rates, fertility rates, and overall population growth are steadily declining, the death rate is rising (see table 1). Explaining what the numbers mean, Professor B Muniswamy, honorary director of the Population Research Centre in Visakhapatnam, said, "The steady decline in the fertility rate reflects broader societal changes, including lifestyle shifts, environmental conditions, and urbanisation."

Stating that evolving socio-economic conditions also contribute to the declining fertility rate, he noted, "In today's fast-paced world, people pay less attention to health. Irregular eating and sleeping patterns, along with environmental factors, have impacted overall fertility." Highlighting that demographic shifts in Andhra Pradesh reflect broader changes in family structure and economic considerations, Prof. Muniswamy pointed out, "In the past, joint families were more common, providing a support system that is often lacking in today's nuclear families. People today value independence over communal living, which influences family planning decisions." He also remarked that rising living expenses deter many families from having more children. "Living costs are high, and while wealthy families often opt for fewer children, financially disadvantaged families, who may bear the economic burden, tend to have more children," he noted. Stressing that quality of life should be a priority, he said, "In the past, savings and investments were prioritised. Today, spending is more common, with less focus on long-term financial planning."

Releasing this November, a Malayalam encyclopaedia on AI

The content has been contributed by AI experts, researchers, and professionals from around the globe.

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM:

An encyclopaedia dedicated entirely to Artificial Intelligence (AI), that too in Malayalam. After the success of its AI-themed journal, the team at State Institute of Encyclopaedic Publications (SIEP) is gearing up to release an encyclopaedia featuring detailed, easy-to-grasp write-ups on 121 topics dealing with various aspects of AI. The work is nearing completion. In fact, 80% of it is finished, said editor Rajesh Kumar S. The release of the encyclopaedia, 'Nirmithabudhi', is slated for November. The encyclopaedia will offer readers insights into the science behind AI as well as its ethical and legal implications. It will explore a range of topics, including the history of AI, responsible AI, privacy, fairness, cognitive computing, AI in healthcare, smart homes, digital twins, predictive analytics, cloud



computing, and more. The team has high hopes the encyclopaedia will be well-received. Work on the encyclopaedia was launched in February. The content has been contributed by AI experts, researchers, and professionals from around the globe.

A 11-member advisory board, chaired by Professor Leena Mary of Indian Institute of Information Technology (IIIT), Kottayam,

oversaw selection of topics. One of the major challenges, according to the editorial team, was finding AI experts who could write in Malayalam. "We wanted to ensure the information is accessible to the public. So we chose writers who could present complex topics in a simplified manner," said Rajesh Kumar S, SIEP sub-editor and editor of the encyclopaedia.

Out of the five concise encyclopaedias planned this financial year, 'Nirmithabudhi' will be the second to be released. The book, spanning approximately 230 pages, is being printed in a first batch of 1,000 copies, with additional copies to be printed based on demand. The layout and final touches are in progress. The cost is yet to be fixed.

Discussions on audiobook version release underway

Besides written articles, the encyclopaedia will also feature AI-generated images and QR codes that would link readers to video

talks on topics uploaded on 'Arivu', the SIEP's YouTube channel.

The encyclopaedia does not have a specific target audience. "Anyone passionate about learning can benefit from it," Rajesh said. He noted their AI-themed journal released earlier this year received positive response, suggesting there is a broad interest in the topic.

Muse Mary George, SIEP director, acknowledged the difficulty of translating some technical terms into Malayalam.

"Popular technical terms were left untranslated to avoid confusion, but we're open to updating the vocabulary based on feedback from readers," she said. There are also discussions on producing an audiobook version, though it may be released a year later to avoid affecting the sales of the printed version. "If we do an audiobook, it wouldn't be the complete version. The narration would be adapted to make it engaging for listeners," Muse Mary George said.

Madras HC frees 20-year-old girl from marriage with elderly man done under compulsion

CHENNAI: The Madras High Court has come to the rescue of a twenty-year-old

girl who was forced into marriage by her teacher who is about twenty years elder to her. The court, using its extraordinary powers under Article 226 of the Constitution, revoked the registration of their marriage taking into account the 'special circumstances' and the 'consent of the couple' to separate and stay away. "In view of the consent expressed by the petitioner and the detenu for annulling the marriage, we are inclined to set aside the registration of marriage made before the Registrar of Marriages at Puducherry in 2024 and the parties are at liberty to submit this order before the Registrar of Marriages at Puducherry for effecting necessary

entries cancelling the marriage in the marriage register," a division bench of

her before the court and direct her to go with him as she was kept under the illegal custody of her parents.



Justices SM Subramaniam and V Sivagnanam said in a recent order. The teacher approached the High Court with the habeas corpus petition (HCP) praying for orders to the police to produce

Accordingly, she was produced before the court along with her parents. She told the court she signed the marriage registration papers under compelling circumstances and without understanding the consequences. She also told she was not willing to go with him and wanted to pursue higher education. The petitioner, after realising his mistakes, agreed to give up the marriage relationship and promised not to interfere with the affairs of the girl or her family members. The bench directed the Registry of the court to communicate the copy of the order to the Registrar of Marriages in Puducherry so as to make necessary entries in the register regarding cancellation of the marriage.

EKA eyes leadership in global electric commercial vehicle market

BENGALURU: EKA Mobility, the electric vehicle arm of Pune-based Pinnacle Industries, aims to become a global leader in electric commercial vehicles, spanning the entire sector. With the backing of a strong parent company—an automotive industry veteran—and support from global equity partners, EKA has crafted a multi-faceted strategy that includes a diversified product range, expanded manufacturing capabilities, and entry into new markets. The roadmap is underpinned by a \$100-million investment to drive growth. "We intend to operate across the entire commercial vehicle arena, including passenger and cargo," said EKA Mobility Chief Growth Officer Rohit Srivastava. "For passenger movement, our vision is a six-seater people mover. We're also targeting high-end buses."

EKA's product portfolio is being rolled out in phases. While part of its coach and bus range has already been introduced, further products are planned for release in Phase 3, scheduled for 2026-27. In August, the company unveiled the EKA 9, a fully electric city bus offered in two variants,



featuring 650mm and 900mm platform options, alongside the EKA K1.5, an electric light commercial vehicle (eLCV) designed for enhanced range and reduced operational costs. Leveraging Pinnacle Industries' in-house capabilities, EKA benefits from integrated support in seating solutions and structural design. "With our in-house design, we maintain control over quality, supply chain reliability, and costs," Srivastava noted. In December last year, EKA entered a partnership with Dutch firm VDL Groep and Japanese giant Mitsui & Co., Ltd. This collaboration brought in over \$100 million in phased investment, combining internal accruals

and equity backing.

"Mitsui's financial support allows EKA Mobility to scale up its manufacturing and expand its product line," read a company statement. "Mitsui will assist EKA in export efforts to select emerging markets, while also helping establish essential systems and processes. VDL Bus & Coach will provide EKA with technology to produce electric buses in India for the Indian market." This investment also fuels EKA's manufacturing expansion. "Our Koregaon Bhima facility already has two production lines operating, and we're quickly completing additional setup," said Srivastava. "Our Chakan plant is also progressing well. It will handle small CV and coach assembly, along with hosting a dedicated R&D centre." In line with its global expansion plans, EKA is adopting a 'Smart Lean Factories' approach, enabling cost-effective assembly unit setups in various locations. "We can support local assembly units by sharing technology and sending essential components from here, allowing partners to produce other components on-site with their own value additions," explained Srivastava.

Picking up children from school and aid to elderly, K4 Care does it all

KOCHI: Kerala's rapidly changing demography has led to an increasing demand for various services, especially patient care and palliative care. Though there are many private agencies providing home nurse services, many times, people are hesitant to use them. Considering this, Kudumbashree launched 'K4 Care', a project aimed at providing reliable and safe care services, towards the end of 2023. It has now expanded into services that include dropping and picking up children from schools by trained K4 Care executives, accompanying elderly to banks, government offices, and the like. "As of now, the first batch of 499 executives has passed out. Of them, 297 are yet to be placed. The rest have completed their service period at least once," an official with K4 Care told TNIE, adding that their executives have been in huge demand across the state since the launch of the service. The official said the oft-demanded K4 Care services are patient and palliative care. As for the districts having higher demand for the services, the

official said, "It was highest in Palakkad, Thrissur and Ernakulam. We anticipated more demand from Pathanamthitta and Kottayam, but the number of requests was, surprisingly, low in comparison."

Idukki, Thiruvananthapuram and Malappuram too have reported lower demand. "We will be focusing on increasing our customer connect programmes in the districts," the official said, adding that all aspects of the services are handled very professionally. "There is no scope for lapses from the executives. They are monitored constantly and even customer feedback is collected through a dedicated call centre set up by Kudumbashree," she said.

The executives comprise men and women aged between 18 and 55, from the Kudumbashree ayalkoottam, auxiliary group and those who have cleared Class X, said the official, adding that K4 Care aims to utilise the care economy to help members of Kudumbashree community development societies (CDSs) earn employment while



providing good care to customers. "All trained executives have undergone screening," said the official. "Thirty people in each district are trained at hospitals with 100-bed capacity for 15 days, and are deployed only after certification from the business consultancy entrusted with training them," she said.

A customer from Palakkad, who did not wish to be named, said, "I contacted K4 Care to get the dressing on the wound on my father's

hand changed.

THE SIKH TIMES

Edited, Printed, Published
Owned by Simmi Babbar
N - 31, Dr. Mukherjee Nagar
Delhi-110009

Printed at Qaumi Patrika Printing
Press, A-4/A-14, Tronica City
(Loni), Ghaziabad (Uttar Pradesh)
Corporate Office:
5, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg,
Press Area, ITO, New Delhi

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News box

50-yr-old cheats people with job offers abroad, lands in police net

Noida: A 50-year-old man who allegedly cheated people by promising them jobs abroad in exchange for money through a call centre was arrested on Tuesday. Puran Kumar Timothy, a resident of Sector 34, promised people jobs abroad and aid to obtain passports and visas, primarily for Canada, by calling them and running advertisements on social media platforms, police said. "He has cheated people of a total of Rs 50 lakh. The exact number of targets is being ascertained," deputy commissioner of police Rambadan Singh said. Puran, who hails from Tehri Garhwal in Uttarakhand, was arrested after a case was registered at the Sector 58 police station, claiming the accused cheated the complainant's daughter of Rs 2.5 lakh after promising her a job in Canada. "The suspect identified himself as the managing director of Christian Global Net Services Pvt Ltd. Investigation revealed the alleged company ran a call centre in the city," the DCP said. He would charge each target Rs 2-6 lakh but did not deliver on any of his promises. DCP Singh said Timothy told police he ran the fake company Christian Global Net Services under the name Varina Travels along with a partner. He would contact people through social media and lure them by promising jobs. He changed his staff after every two-three months, the accused said. The accused has been charged under relevant sections of the BNS.

1kg stale paneer, 275 litres of 'desi' ghee seized in raids

Noida: In the run-up to Diwali, the food safety department is conducting inspections across Noida and Ghaziabad to prevent the sale of adulterated products. The Noida food department seized 275 litres of 'desi' ghee from a manufacturing unit in Greater Noida on Monday after the operator failed to provide documentation verifying the origin of the raw materials used. Similarly, over 1,000kg of paneer worth around Rs 2.9 lakh was seized from vendors in Ghaziabad. Seized products were found unfit for consumption, officials said. Officials said that samples of the seized items have been sent to state laboratories for further analysis to confirm the extent of contamination and verify possible adulteration. The two districts have ramped up vigilance amid the festive season, when the demand for milk-based sweets, snacks and other food items surges. Raids are being conducted on food-processing units, sweet shops, and local dairies to ensure compliance with safety standards.

Pet dog left at Noida boarding found dead when family returns 2 weeks later

Noida: Milo, a five-year-old spaniel whose family had entrusted him to the care of a boarding facility at a residential area in Sector 122, was found dead when they returned from their trip two weeks later. Police said they have registered a case against the boarding facility's owner after a complaint on animal cruelty was filed by the Delhi-based family. The family said on Tuesday they had dropped off Milo to the boarding facility, Paw's Point, on Oct 4 as they were visiting their son who lives in Vadodra, Gujarat. They returned by Oct 21 and were supposed to bring Milo back to their house in Delhi's Mayur Vihar. But they got a call from the facility's owner who said their pet dog jumped out of the window of a car while he was being taken for grooming and was missing since then. Less than 24 hours later, the family said, some dog walkers informed police about Milo's body lying on the roadside near Unitech Unihome society in Sector 117. Suspecting something amiss, the family approached police who accessed CCTV footage from nearby sectors. In the video, two men are seen dragging the spaniel who is tied with a leash to a two-wheeler. They then flog him with what appears to be rope or the leash. The dog is apparently tired and injured as they then drag him again. "Milo's death was not natural. It happened because of the evil actions, negligence, and cruelty by employees of Paw's Point. They said that our dog had escaped from their car, which was a lie. They were instead transporting him via a two-wheeler without our knowledge. Why they did this is an answer we don't have," said Milo's owner, a retired teacher (60). She said Milo's body was decomposing by the time they found it on the night of Oct 22. "It was smelling foul, suggesting he had died at least 24 hours ago," the retired teacher added. Police said an FIR was registered at the Sector 113 police station and Paw's Point owner Swati was booked under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act. "Investigation is underway," the SHO said. On Tuesday, Paw Point's owner Swati Sharma denied the allegations. She said the two motorcycle-borne men were not her facility's staffers. But she admitted that one person hit the dog, and said it was in response to his "aggressive behaviour". "I assisted the pet owners in their search for Milo after the incident," Sharma said. The facility at Unitech Unihome is among numerous pet boarding facilities that have come up in Noida over the years. There have been several complaints about pets being mistreated at these facilities. Most of them aren't legal, and don't have permits to operate a commercial facility from a housing society, experts say. A simple search found ads for pet boarding facilities in societies and residential areas, including in sectors 83, 116, 121, 122 and 163 of Noida. There are similar facilities in Greater Noida's 11th Avenue and Gaur City. Ankur Sharma, a Noida resident, said he had left his pet dog at a boarding facility in Lotus Panache society in 2023. "My dog was neglected and Another dog brutally attacked him. It was so awful that my dog needed a surgical procedure. It took a month for him to recover," Sharma said. Dr Pranab J Patar, a pet owner, said that boarding facilities are mushrooming across the city as business is brisk and there are no norms to adhere to.

Cops lathicharge lawyers amid chaos in Ghaziabad

Ghaziabad: Even for those who had seen it all, this was a first – a group of lawyers striding into a courtroom mid-session and demanding that the judge hear their case first, and a police lathicharge to remove them when they protested and refused to budge. Such were the bizarre scenes on Tuesday morning as pandemonium took over the district and sessions court compound here, the confrontation in the courtroom – during which the lawyers, according to eyewitnesses, threw chairs and tables in anger – spilling into vandalism outside as the protesting group set fire to furniture in the court's police post, damaged three surveillance cameras and the CCTV server. A group of around 50 lawyers interrupted proceedings in district and sessions judge Anil Kumar's court around 11.30am, court officials said. Led by advocate Nahar Singh Yadav, they wanted the judge to stop hearing the case he was attending to and take p theirs immediately. "The judge was taken aback by this intrusion," a lawyer present in the courtroom during the incident told TOI. "The judge advised them to wait for their turn. 'Why should I hear the issue before the current matter',

he asked." A lawyer from the group that had barged told the judge to transfer the case to another court if he did not give their case priority," the witness added. "After this, they began raising slogans against the district judge. The judge stood



up, removed his robe and went to the resting room attached to his chamber. The court staff informed police," the witness added. Police were initially trying to escort the lawyers out, but the melee worsened when the protesting lawyers tried to force themselves into the judge's chambers and police stopped them. Sources said a senior police officer was manhandled, after which the lathicharge

began. Police safely escorted the judge out. Three lawyers got injured and were taken to hospital for treatment of head injuries.

Police said they had deployed additional forces on the compound, which houses 50 courtrooms and has the special CBI court in an adjacent building.

The case the lawyers wanted the judge to take up involves a land transaction in which a couple of them had been cheated and the accused, named in an FIR after a court order, had got bail. The lawyers wanted this case heard first. Additional commissioner of police Dinesh P Kumar said, "Advocate Nahar Singh Yadav, former president of the bar association and a Samajwadi Party functionary, along with his son advocate Abhishek Yadav, advocate Dinesh Yadav and others, tried to exert pressure on the district judge. Police intervened and dispersed using mild force. At that time, some advocates went to the police chowki inside the court premises and torched it." Nahar Singh Yadav told TOI they had only "requested the judge to hear a case of cheating in which a lawyer was a party". "But the judge did not address our concern and called the police. I also

received injuries," he said.

DCP (city) Rajesh Singh said that on the basis of complaints made by a court staffer and a sub-inspector, two FIRs had been filed against Nahar, Abhishek, Dinesh and others.

The FIRs invoke identical BNS Sections 3 (5) (common intention), 61 (2) (criminal conspiracy), 121 (1 & 2) (voluntarily causing hurt or grievous hurt to deter public servant from duty), 191 (2) (rioting), 191 (3) (rioting, armed with deadly weapon), 324 (4) (mischievous causing damage), and 326 (G) (mischievous by fire or explosive substance with intent to destroy house). Sections of the Seven Criminal Law Act 1932 and Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act were also invoked against the lawyers. The land dispute stems from a deal Abhishek and his lawyer friend Jitendra Singh had finalised for a plot worth Rs 1.5 crore at Dasna. According to a police complaint filed by Jitendra, the plot measures 1.8 acres and the deal finalised on Feb 2 this year. After this, he and Abhishek paid Rs 90 lakh -- Rs 50 lakh cash and Rs 40 lakh online -- to the sellers, but didn't get possession. Later, they later came to know a part of the land being sold to them was govt property and heavily encroached on. But the sellers refused to give them a refund. They moved court as a result.

All lifts must be registered in 6 mths, Noida DM tells RWAs

Noida: Building owners and RWAs will have six months to register the number of lifts on their premises with the district administration. The decision was announced on Tuesday by district magistrate Manish Verma after an inaugural meeting of the district-level committee that was constituted recently as part of the UP Lift Act. "Building owners must register their lifts within six months. Non-compliance will result in penalties, and lifts will not be allowed after 30 days post that. Lift manufacturing companies must also get themselves registered under the Lift Act," the DM said. Chaired by the DM, the panel has the local development authority's CEO, additional DM (finance/revenue), municipal commissioner or executive officer, and

PWD executive engineer. The panel will meet every quarter to review reports. The meeting on Tuesday was attended by the additional DM (finance), officials of the PWD, deputy director of the electricity department, and representatives of the CEOs of Noida and Greater Noida authorities. DM Verma specified that it was mandatory for every building or society to get their lifts registered. "In housing societies, RWAs and AOs will be responsible for registering lifts under the Act. In societies without an RWA or AOA, the maintenance agency or developer will handle the registration," he added. The district administration, Verma added, will issue a notification regarding the implementation of the Act next week. "Owners who do not

comply with the norms will be issued notices and fines ranging from Rs 100-10,000. After a 30-day grace period, lift operations will be suspended until the fine is paid. Lift manufacturers must also obtain registration," he said. For lift accidents, the victims or local residents must file complaints at the office of the ADM (finance and revenue). Teams led by deputy director of electricity and SDM will investigate the complaints and submit findings to the committee. Failure to fix lift defects following notices will lead to an FIR against the parties concerned. Under the Act, lift operators must also maintain an accident logbook, which can be shared with the administration or electrical safety officer when requested.

Selling on Instagram, Facebook: Revolver for Rs 50,000, katta for Rs 5,000

AGRA: UP police has busted a gang quite audaciously involved in selling arms online -- via Instagram, Facebook and WhatsApp -- and apprehended seven people, including two buyers. The gang was arrested while they were delivering a revolver in Muzaffarnagar on Tuesday. They used to sell 'katta' (country-made pistols) for Rs 4,000-5,000 while an imported revolver was available for Rs 40,000-50,000, police said, adding weapons were delivered at desired locations after payments were made. Five country-made guns, three imported pistols, around two dozen bullets, a bike and a car were seized from the possession of the accused. Muzaffarnagar SP (city) Satyanarayan Prajapat said, "This arrest marks a crucial step in our crackdown on

illicit digital weapon networks in the state. Preliminary probe suggests they have links with other gangs in adjoining districts. They used online platforms such as Instagram,



Facebook and WhatsApp to attract buyers. After striking a deal online, they would receive payment via bank accounts before delivering the 'package'. Prajapat added, "After receiving a tiff-off, circle officer (city) Viyom Bindal formed a team and laid a trap on Tuesday. When the suspects arrived to deliver the

consignment to two buyers, they all were nabbed." A case under the Arms Act was registered at Khalapur police station against the seven men -- Azam Rizvi, Vivek Nagar (both from Meerut), Prateek Tyagi, Manish Kumar, Rishabh Prajapati, Vishal and Pradeep Kumar (all from Muzaffarnagar). Vishal and Prateek had come to receive the revolver. They all were sent to jail. During interrogation, the accused told police that "dealing in pistols or bullets online was relatively safer and did not require much travelling to seal a deal." Revealing their modus operandi, the accused said they would first send the required weapon's photographs and its features. Once the deal was clinched, they would get the payment transferred to their bank accounts, and then deliver the "package".

Noida changes rule, registering flat with govt now must during purchase

Noida: Signing a tripartite 'sale agreement' at the time of purchase will be mandatory for builders and homebuyers in all new housing projects in the city. The Noida Authority board on Saturday made a basic change in the way real estate transactions are conducted in the city, through which it will know who a flat has been sold to at the time the first payment is made and not at the time of completion, like it is now. The decision, announced by CEO Lokesh M after the board meeting chaired by the chief secretary Manoj Kumar Singh concluded, will remove opacity at the transaction stage and will help stop dubious sales in a city whose real estate sector is the most troubled and marred by some of the most high-profile malpractices in the country. It will, said officials, protect homebuyers' interests, boost govt's stamp

duty revenue, and ensure better oversight of project development. The 'sale agreement', in essence a registry before the actual registry, will be drawn up in line with Section 13 of RERA, which mandates that a promoter cannot accept more than 10% of an apartment, plot, or building's cost as advance payment or application fee without first entering into a written agreement for sale. "In light of this, a decision has been taken that a tripartite agreement between the buyer, builder and Noida Authority will be executed in the registry department once the homebuyer pays 10% of a property's amount," Lokesh M said. During this agreement, 2% of the stamp duty will be paid upfront, with the remaining amount to be paid at the time of possession and final registry. While the govt-certified agreement will give buyers concrete

proof at the time of the first payment about them being authentic buyers of the property with their name going into stamp and registry department records, it will prevent developers from reselling the same unit to multiple buyers or cancelling the sale on arbitrary grounds like payment delays, missed project timelines, industry watchers said. In the past, there have been cases where developers have fraudulently sold the same flat to multiple buyers, the issue only coming to light when buyers tried to take possession. Transactions under the radar can also happen the other way -- a buyer may sell a unit back to a builder or another entity before taking possession without paying stamp duty, allowing the same unit to be resold without the govt receiving taxes. This, said an official, will also not be possi-

ble to do once a tripartite agreement is signed. Sale agreements once a deal is struck are signed even now, but those are between a builder and a buyer. What buyers and developers typically do now is enter into an initial agreement on a Rs 100 stamp paper. Govt's involvement in the registration process, through Noida Authority, only begins after

the developer has obtained an occupancy certificate (OC) and completion certificate (CC) for the property.

NAME CHANGE
I, Suresh Garg S/O Om Prakash Garg R/O House No 60, Second Floor Rohini Sector-1, Block-E West Delhi Rohini Sector 7, Delhi have changed my name to Suresh Chand Garg for all future purposes

BEDAKHAL
My client MANMOHAN SINGH S/O LT RANJEET SINGH & GURCHARAN KAUR W/O MANMOHAN SINGH both R/O 40/6, CHURCH ROAD, BHOGAL, DELHI, have severed relations with his son JASKARAN SINGH & his wife GURSHREEN KAUR CHADHA KANDHARI and disowned them from all movable/immovable property, because they are not obedient of my client. Any person having dealing with them shall do so at his own risk. My client shall not be held responsible in any manner.
Advocate: SANDEEP SINGH
Mobile No:-9810699694

NAME CHANGE
I, PINKY BHADORIA Wife of No-17012416H, Rank-SEP, Name-VIJAY KISHOR, Permanent address H NO-15, VILL-GANESH NAGAR, NARIYAL, KHEDA, POKAROND, TEH-HUZUR, DIST-BHOPAL, MADHYA PRADESH-462001 have changed my name from PINKY BHADORIA to PINKI BHADORIA for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 30/10/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NORTHERN RAILWAY
E-TENDER NOTICE
Dy.CSTE/Works/LDH acting for & on behalf of President of India invites E-tenders in Two packet system from the experienced & established contractors having sufficient experience in similar work and satisfying minimum eligibility criteria for the under noted work:

1. Name of Work	Provision of Electronic Interlocking (EI) based Automatic Signaling in Ludhiana-Jalandhar City section and provision of double distant signal in Jalandhar City-Beas-Goidwail Sahib & Beas-Amritsar section of Firozpur division.
2. Approx. Cost of the work	Rs. 34,03,01,163.59/- (Rs. Thirty Four Crore three lacs one thousand one hundred and sixty three and Paise fifty nine only)
3. Earnest Money	Rs. 18,51,500/- (Rs. Eighteen lacs fifty one thousand and five hundred only).
4. Completion Period	Twelve Months from the date of issue of acceptance letter/telegrams.
5. Closing Date	11.00 Hrs. on 26.11.2024.
6. Validity of offer	90 days from the date of opening of tender.

Bidders will be able to submit their original/revise bids up to closing date & time only. Bids are to be submitted online only. Manual bids/offers are not allowed against this tender, and any manual offer received shall be ignored. The tenderers must be registered on the Indian Railway E-Procurement system (IREPS) site i.e., www.ireps.gov.in for participating in the e-tender system. Necessary charges, Corrigendum / addendum, if required, would be posted on this web site only. No. NR-SNT-W-LDH-81 DATED: 29.10.2024

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NEWS BOX

US Judge declines to recuse from Donald Trump assassination attempt case

World. A US judge on Tuesday declined to recuse herself from presiding over the criminal case against a man who is facing charges for trying to assassinate former president and Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump. US District Judge Aileen Cannon, who was appointed by Trump to the bench in 2020, said in her ruling the attorneys for Ryan Wesley Routh did not present a valid basis for her to step aside. Cannon has faced criticism in the past over her rulings in two high-profile cases involving Trump, including criminal charges brought by Special Counsel Jack Smith that Trump mishandled classified documents after leaving the White House and obstructed the Justice Department's



investigation. In July, Cannon dismissed the charges against Trump, saying Smith was unlawfully appointed to his role and did not have the authority to bring the case.

The Justice Department is appealing that decision, which it said goes against decades of rulings by other federal courts. Routh, who is charged with staking out Trump's golf course with a rifle, has pleaded not guilty. He faces up to life in prison if convicted. His attorneys said Cannon's favourable rulings for Trump, the fact that he nominated her to the bench, and the prospect for Trump to nominate her to a higher court should he win the November 5 election all could create an appearance of partiality in the mind of the public. Cannon said none of these issues created the need for her to recuse. "I have never spon to or met former President Trump except in connection with his required presence at an official judicial proceeding," Cannon wrote.

Not for long: Israel's message to Hezbollah after new chief's appointment

World. Hezbollah named Naim Qassem as its new leader, following the death of Hassan Nasrallah in an Israeli airstrike on September 27, prompting Israel to dub it a "temporary appointment".

In a statement, Hezbollah announced that Qassem's appointment follows the established mechanism for choosing a secretary general. He has been a prominent figure in the organisation, often serving as a spokesman during cross-border hostilities with Israel. Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant responded to Qassem's appointment with scepticism, posting on X, "Temporary appointment. Not for long," alongside a photo of the new leader. Israel's government later echoed this sentiment, suggesting that Qassem's tenure may be brief, stating, "His tenure in this position may be the shortest in the history of this terrorist organisation if he follows in the footsteps of his predecessors." The Israeli government emphasised its stance that the only solution for Lebanon is the dismantling of Hezbollah as a military force. "There is no solution in Lebanon except to dismantle this organisation," it declared. Qassem's leadership comes at a tumultuous time for Hezbollah, particularly after the deaths of Nasrallah and Hashem Safieddine, another senior figure considered a potential successor. Since his appointment, Qassem has made several televised addresses, including one on October 8, where he expressed support for efforts to establish a ceasefire in Lebanon. Qassem was appointed as Hezbollah's secretary general in 1991 by the armed group's then-secretary general, Abbas al-Musawi, who was killed by an Israeli helicopter attack the following year.

Trump to visit battleground states for last-minute rallies week before election

World. With just a week left for the US presidential election, former President and Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump is preparing to address last-minute rallies in battleground states as polls show a tight race between him and his Democratic opponent and Vice President Kamala Harris. Trump, on Tuesday morning, gave his remarks at his Mar-a-Lago resort in Palm Beach, Florida. He will then head to Allentown in the battleground state of Pennsylvania for a planned rally. At the location in the Keystone state, there are around 300,000 eligible Puerto Rican voters. Interestingly, the planned event comes just days after comedian Tony Hinchcliff cracked a poor joke, offending numerous Puerto Ricans, and overshadowed Trump's Madison Square Garden rally in New York. Hinchcliff joked that Puerto Rico, the US territory, is similar to a "floating island of garbage" and added that Latinos "love making babies", drawing a huge backlash. Kamala Harris's campaign, too, reacted to the controversy and rebuked Hinchcliff for his poor choice of humour. Additionally, many Democrats and some Republicans also slammed the joke, calling it plain offensive and racist.

The Trump campaign was quick to elaborate that the comments made by the comedian did not reflect the former president's views, reported CBS News. The damage, however, had already been done. Hours after the derogatory comments were made, Puerto Rican superstar Bad Bunny threw his support behind Harris.

Both Republicans and Democrats have been fighting to get the attention of the Latino voters this election cycle. In recent years, the Latino vote has leaned Republican, but a good portion still vote for Democrats.

Cars swept away as roads turn into rivers in Spain rain fury, several missing

The intense rainfall is attributed to a phenomenon known as 'gota fría' or 'cold drop', which occurs when cold air moves over warm Mediterranean waters.



World. Southern and eastern Spain experienced devastating flash floods on Tuesday, with some areas receiving a record 12 inches of rain in just a few hours. Footage from Valencia showed mud-colored water flooding streets, sweeping away parked cars and tearing down walls. Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez reported that an unspecified number of people are missing, urging citizens to exercise "great caution" and avoid unnecessary travel. The rainfall estimates in some locations exceeded expectations. For instance, Chiva, east of Valencia,

recorded 320 mm (approximately 12.6 inches) in just over four hours, according to the European Severe Weather Database. AEMET, Spain's Meteorological Agency, had issued red alerts for extreme rain, warning of the potential for 200 mm (about 8 inches) of rain in less than 12 hours. As the flooding

worsened, Carlos Mazon, the leader of the Valencia region, confirmed that several bodies had been discovered in affected areas.

"Dead bodies have been found, but out of respect for the families, we are not going to provide any further data," Mazon said. The flash floods have severely impacted

transportation, leading to the diversion of twelve flights from Valencia airport and the cancellation of ten others.

High-speed train services between Madrid and Valencia have also been suspended due to storm damage to rail infrastructure. Emergency services have been inundated with calls for help, and many roads remain inaccessible. The intense rainfall is attributed to a phenomenon known as 'gota fría' or 'cold drop', which occurs when cold air moves over warm Mediterranean waters. This creates atmospheric instability, causing rapid formation of cumulonimbus clouds and heavy rain. In response to the crisis, Prime Minister Sánchez emphasised the importance of adhering to emergency advice, saying, "Be very careful and avoid unnecessary trips." Emergency services continue to rescue individuals trapped in floodwaters, utilising helicopters and drones to navigate the dangerous conditions. Scientists warn that extreme weather events like these are becoming more frequent and intense due to the climate crisis, raising concerns about future weather-related disasters in Spain and beyond.

Canada opposition leader cancels Diwali event, slammed for 'discriminatory act'

World. Canada's opposition leader Pierre Poilievre has cancelled the Diwali celebrations, slated to take place at Parliament Hill, amid the ongoing diplomatic row with India. The Overseas Friends of India Canada (OFIC), the event's organiser, received no explanation for the cancellation of the Diwali celebration, originally set to be hosted by Conservative MP Todd Doherty on October 30. The ties between India and Canada hit an all-time low after Ottawa alleged Indian diplomats were involved in collecting information and using criminal gangs for targeting members of the pro-Khalistan movement. India recalled its top envoy to Ottawa and expelled six Canadian diplomats from the country. OFIC president Shiv Bhasker wrote a letter



to Pierre Poilievre, expressing dismay over the decision. In a letter to Pierre Poilievre, Bhasker wrote that several political leaders, who had attended the event in previous years, suddenly withdrew this year, leaving the community "feeling betrayed and unjustly singled out." OFIC President has called for an apology from Pierre Poilievre, condemning what he described as an "insensitive and

discriminatory act."

He emphasised that while tensions between New Delhi and Ottawa are serious, they should not lead to unfair treatment of Canadians of Indian origin, who have no ties to the Indian government. At the November 2023 Diwali celebration, Poilievre and then-High Commissioner of India to Canada, Sanjay Kumar Verma, were among those who addressed the gathering, which saw around 540 guests in attendance. "This is not just about a cancelled Diwali event or an event where the politicians renege on their commitment to attend; it is about a much deeper and insidious problem.

Racism and discrimination are thriving in Canada, and this latest development has laid bare the systemic biases that still exist," Bhasker wrote.

Republican lawsuit targeting Pennsylvania overseas ballot dismissed by US judge

World. US judge on Tuesday dismissed a Republican lawsuit seeking to force election battleground state Pennsylvania to strengthen its procedures for verifying ballots submitted by military and overseas voters. Six Republican members of the US House of Representatives seeking re-election on November 5 had sued Pennsylvania's top election officials on September 30. The Republicans had argued that the state was improperly exempting overseas voters from a requirement that their identity documents be verified, creating a vulnerability for fraudulent votes to be submitted. Pennsylvania is one of a handful of closely contested states that are expected to decide the outcome of the US presidential race pitting Republican Donald Trump against Democratic Vice President Kamala Harris. US District Judge Christopher Conner dismissed the case in Harrisburg, deciding that the plaintiffs



had waited too long to file their complaint given that Pennsylvania's procedures had been in place for years. The suit was one of dozens around the country in which Republicans have challenged voting procedures or sought to purge voter rolls in what they call a push to ensure that people do not vote illegally. That legal blitz has been faltering. In the past three weeks, Trump allies have been dealt at least 11 court losses. Conner also said Erick Kaardal, a lawyer for the plaintiffs, had not provided evidence that there had been foreign influence over Pennsylvania's overseas ballots. The

judge wrote that when he pressed Kaardal for such evidence during an October 18 hearing, the lawyer "effectively conceded that all he had was concerns." Plaintiffs cannot rely on phantom fears of foreign malfeasance to excuse their lack of diligence," Conner wrote. "We don't want votes from Iran or Russia or invalid vote counting," Kaardal had told the hearing in Harrisburg federal court over a motion to dismiss the case filed by the Democratic National Committee and Pennsylvania's top elections official. Kaardal did not immediately respond to a request for comment on Tuesday. Judges in the election battleground states of Michigan and North Carolina this month also rejected lawsuits filed by the Republican National Committee seeking to block votes from some Americans living overseas. In those cases, the Republicans argued the states improperly allowed U.S. citizens living abroad who had never lived in those states to vote there.

Canadian officials confess to leaking 'intel' against India to Washington Post

World. Two senior officials of the Justin Trudeau-led government have confessed to leaking intelligence and sensitive information against India to the Washington Post even before the Canadian police publicly alleged that their probe into the murder of Khalistani terrorist Hardeep Singh Nijjar revealed links between agents of the Indian government and "homicides and violent acts" in Canada. Nathalie Drouin, Trudeau's national security and intelligence adviser, told a parliamentary panel on Tuesday that a top ranking official in the Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government was behind the plots to attack Sikh separatists in Canada, according to a report in The Globe and Mail. She also said that she did not require Trudeau's authorisation for leaking the information and insisted that no "classified intelligence" was provided to the Washington Post the day before India withdrew six of its diplomats on Thanksgiving Day. The intelligence adviser said the leak was "part of a communications strategy" that she and

Deputy Foreign Minister David Morrison came up with to ensure that the American media outlet got Canada's version of the ongoing diplomatic row. She added that the communications strategy was overseen by Trudeau's office. "We provided non-classified information on the actions we had taken to co-operate with India and explained how the evidence showed links to the government of India conducting illegal activities against Canadians, including threats to their lives," the adviser was quoted as saying. Diplomatic ties between the two nations nosedived after New Delhi expelled six Canadian diplomats on October 14 in a tit-for-tat move after Ottawa, earlier that day, named India's High Commissioner and a few other diplomats as 'persons of interest' in the Nijjar murder probe. Canada's move



came just hours after top RCMP officials publicly made the big allegations against India at a press conference. Meanwhile, in a report published on October 13, the Washington Post said that India's National Security Adviser Ajit Doval held a secret meeting with his Canadian counterpart in Singapore. During the meeting, Canadian officials revealed alleged evidence showing that India had enlisted networks of the Bishnoi gang to

not only kill Nijjar but also carry out attacks against Sikh separatists in Canada, the newspaper added. Speaking about the alleged meeting,

Drouin said that it took place on September 12 and was attended by herself, Morrison and Deputy RCMP Commissioner Mark Flynn. She claimed that they offered a "number of ways" to resolve the ongoing row, but Doval "refused to acknowledge any links and denied everything we presented." "Serious crimes committed in Canada include homicides, assassination plots and perpetuated extortion and other extreme violence. Given how alarming the evidence was, we knew we had to act and to act quickly," the intelligence adviser was quoted as saying. The parliamentary panel, however, came down heavily on Drouin and Morrison about why Trudeau, his cabinet ministers and the RCMP did not share the information with the public.

News box

Andhra CM to launch trial run for seaplane in November

KURNOOL: The State government, led by the Andhra Pradesh Airports Development Corporation Limited (APADCL), is enhancing its tourism strategy with the launch of a new seaplane service. A project report and feasibility study are currently underway, with a trial run scheduled to begin mid-November under the direction of Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu. This new route will connect Prakasam Barrage in Vijayawada with Srisailem Patalaganga in Nandyal district, offering a quicker and more convenient travel option. Nandyal District Collector G Raja Kumari recently inspected the Pathala Ganga boating point to review preparations and directed officials to ensure safety and cleanliness at the site. She stressed the importance of maintaining the ropeway area and requested decorative improvements, including cleaning and painting to make the infrastructure more visually appealing for tourists.

The initiative could substantially increase tourism revenue by capitalising on Andhra Pradesh's natural landscapes and enhancing connectivity. The service also has the potential to expand beyond tourism, offering assistance during medical emergencies and natural disasters. Union Civil Aviation Minister K Ram Mohan Naidu has been involved in bringing the seaplane project to the State. Following the Central government's seaplane policy, the State has made all necessary arrangements to ensure the service's success.

Telangana HC rejects decision to denotify government land

HYDERABAD: Justice K Lakshman of the Telangana High Court has set aside the Ranga Reddy district revenue officials' decision to allow land registrations on a portion of the 52-acre tract in Survey No. 63, Guttala Begumpet village, Serilingampally mandal. The court found that the district's move to de-notify the land from the list of prohibited properties under Section 22A of the Stamps and Registration Act lacked sufficient legal grounding. The case has reignited concerns over government oversight on valuable public lands, particularly land previously designated "kancha sarkari" (government land) in the 1950s. The Telangana High Court had previously ordered a status quo in 2018, affirming that any changes to the property's designation required judicial review.

Justice Lakshman questioned the rationale behind the Ranga Reddy district collector's decision in August 2022 to de-notify 52 acres within Survey No. 63/2, permitting certain registrations on the land. The decision left the remaining 24 acres still restricted under Section 22A. Justice Lakshman expressed concern over the basis on which the government deemed the land non-governmental, remarking on the administration's relinquishing of its claim to the disputed land without court approval.

The case was brought before the court by Bukthar Khan, Nusrat Yar Khan, and other claimants, asserting their rights as Inamdars with ownership rights confirmed under Occupancy Rights Certificates (ORCs). They petitioned the high court to restrict any private registrations until their legal claim to the land is resolved, citing that the district's actions compromised their rightful ownership.

Lifestyle changes can reduce stroke risk in 90% cases

BENGALURU: In India, heart strokes affect 145 individuals, in every 1 lakh population each year with a stroke every 20 seconds. Without treatment, 30% of these individuals unfortunately succumb and 30% are left with severe deficits. Only 1% of these patients receive the standard of care, said Dr Sunil V Furtado, HOD and Senior Consultant at the Department of Neurosurgery, Ramaiah Institute of Neurosciences, Ramaiah Memorial Hospital. He highlighted the lack of awareness of symptoms of stroke among the general population, inadequate infrastructure in primary hospitals, and non-referral of such cases to comprehensive stroke treatment centres. "The World Stroke Association uses a theme every year to create awareness. This year the World Stroke Campaign will leverage the emotional power of sports and physical activity to raise awareness about stroke and encourage action on prevention and rehabilitation," said Dr Sunil, adding that strokes can occur at any time and location. Acute stroke is a highly treatable neuro-emergency.

Factors like heart disease, diabetes, hypertension, high cholesterol, smoking, alcohol consumption, and a sedentary lifestyle increase the chances of strokes. Active physical activity, cessation of smoking, and moderation in alcohol consumption can reduce the risk of stroke in 90% of cases, he said.

Medicover Hospital Whitefield observed World Stroke Day on October 29 by launching an extensive Stroke Awareness Programme, uniting healthcare professionals, survivors, families, and the community in the critical fight against stroke. Consultant Neurologist Dr Poonam C Awatara said, "With strokes affecting both the young and old, lifestyle adjustments and routine screenings become essential, especially for high-risk individuals. Prevention remains the most potent line of defense."

Play it safe this Deepavali, do not self-treat eye injuries, say doctors in TN

There are three types of eye injuries due to firecrackers. It can be due to chemicals from the firecracker, mechanical impact on the eye, and heat from the firecrackers.

CHENNAI: The first advice by doctors to people, mainly kids, while bursting crackers is to wear protective glasses and not to rub the eyes in case of any irritation. Ophthalmologists also stress that in case of any injury, do not indulge in self-treatment, rather approach a healthcare provider immediately. Around 45% of the ocular injuries in children occur at home, of which 10% are cracker injuries. These can be from minor abrasion to serious corneal tear which can lead to eye loss if not treated early, say doctors. "Usually we see around 5 to 10 cases of eye injuries during Deepavali season. Use protective glasses and avoid contact lenses while bursting crackers because the smoke will cause irritation and damage to the eye. In case of any irritation, don't rub the eye, that is the first precautionary measure one has to take," said Dr R Kaladevi, zonal medical head, Dr Agarwal's Eye Hospital.

Some of the common types of firecracker eye injuries are burns, abrasion, corneal

tear, bleeding, detachment, and rupture. Burns can damage the conjunctiva and cornea. Burns can also affect the eyelids, eyelashes, and surrounding skin, said Dr Mohan Rajan, chairman and medical director, Rajan Eye Care

creates a hole in the retina leading to fluid accumulation under the retina. Detachment can cause defective vision, flashes of light, floaters, or loss of peripheral vision. Another injury is rupture of the eye. This is called a globe rupture and is one of the most severe and devastating forms of eye injury. Rupture can cause severe pain, bleeding, swelling, and loss of vision, the doctor added.



Hospital. Abrasions can also lead to visual impairment and cause light sensitivity. "Corneal tear is a surgical emergency and needs to be repaired immediately. Sometimes, when a firecracker fragment or debris hits the eye, it ruptures blood vessels and can lead to bleedin inside the eye," said Dr Mohan Rajan. Detachment can occur when a firecracker fragment or debris

There are three types of eye injuries due to firecrackers. "It can be due to chemicals from the firecracker, mechanical impact on the eye, and heat from the firecrackers. Only the doctor can decide the treatment," Dr Kaladevi said. Dr Thangarani Rajasekaran, director, Government Ophthalmic Hospital, Egmore, said, the hospital usually gets around 100 cases of firecracker injuries during Deepavali every year. This year too, the hospital is well prepared to handle any type of injuries and surgery cases immediately. "We also have a backup team of doctors."

Two Vizag-bound IndiGo flights receive hoax bomb threats

VISAKHAPATNAM: Just a day after a Hyderabad-Visakhapatnam-Mumbai IndiGo flight received a hoax bomb threat, two Visakhapatnam-bound IndiGo flights received bomb threats on Tuesday. The regional security head alerted the airline's Station Manager regarding the threat after taking note of a post on X (formerly Twitter) made under user name 'AdamLanza202'. The two flights, which received hoax threats, were heading Vizag from Chennai (6E917) and Bengaluru (6E969) respectively. The message, which was posted at 5.36 pm, warned of explosives in the aircraft.

While the Chennai-Visakhapatnam flight departed for its destination at 4.39 pm, the one from Bengaluru left for the port city at 4.12 pm. "In response to the threat, both flights, which had landed safely at the Visakhapatnam International Airport, were immediately moved to an isolation bay as a precautionary measure. Security teams at the airport conducted thorough checks on both the aircrafts in accordance with standard operating procedures for such situations," Airport Director Raja Reddy told TNIE.

After an extensive inspection, security personnel found no suspicious items aboard the flights and subsequently cleared both them for operations. Following the security clearance, both flights returned to Chennai and Bengaluru at 5:50 pm and 6:25 pm respectively. While the flight to Chennai was delayed by 2 hours and 10 minutes, the one to Bengaluru landed 1 hour and 35 minutes late.

Active and agile, age is just a number for 67-year-old elephant Selvi

COIMBATORE: At first look, Selvi's agility will make one think that she is as young as any other elephant at the Kozhikamuthi elephant camp in Anamalai Tiger Reserve (ATR). Only after inquiries with her mahout or camp officials will you realise that she is well past her retirement age and giving the others a run for their money. While the average life span of an elephant in the wild is 50-52 years, captive elephants can live up to 60 years. In most cases, such elephants suffer from poor vision and other health problems. But not Selvi, who is pushing 60s. She is strong and is often deployed in perambulation work inside the forest, a task in which young female elephants are used. Touchwood! Selvi was captured when she was six years old, and was eventually paired with Kaleem, who is one of the best Kumkis in Tamil Nadu. She delivered Gomathi, a female elephant, at the Kozhikamuthi camp, who was gifted to the Sankaranarayanamsamy temple in



Sankarankovil in Tirunelveli two decades ago by then chief minister Jayalalithaa. NS Manoharan, former additional director of veterinary services of Tamil Nadu and forest veterinary officer, who

has closely worked with captive and wild elephants over 20 years, said, "Round-the-clock care by mahouts, strictly following the diet prescribed by veterinarians, availability of water and grazing grounds in abundance in Kozhikamuthi have ensured the well-being of Selvi." "I was worried when Selvi once left the camp at night to graze and did not return till morning. After searching, we found her roaming with another herd near Sethumadai. We asked her mahout and cavadis to bring her back to the camp as she is very obedient and follows her mahout's instructions. However, the mahout told us to leave her with the herd and assured us that she would return to the camp soon.

She returned to the camp as he had predicted, showing how the mahout understands her. That's why the elephant camp in Kozhikamuthi and Theppakkadu are one of the best camps in the country," said Manokaran.

Cabinet move on internal quota likely to impact bypolls

BENGALURU: The state cabinet's decision to set up a single-member commission headed by a retired high court judge to review implementation of internal reservation, classifying the quota for the Scheduled Castes, is likely to have its impact on the November 13 byelections to the Legislative Assembly from Channapatna, Shiggaon and Sandur constituencies. Happy with this decision, Congress leaders, especially from the SC left (Madiga) community, including Excise Minister RB Thimmapur, former minister H Anjaneya, and former RS member Dr L Hanumanthiah, met Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Tuesday and expressed their gratitude. According to sources, these leaders, who have been assigned the task of ensuring the victory of Congress candidates in the byelections, are expected to work enthusiastically in these constituencies. On an average, each of these constituencies have 30,000-35,000 SC voters. While Channapatna is dominated by SC (right) voters, Sandur and Shiggaon

have a large number of SC (left) voters. E Annapoorna of Congress, which won Sandur in the last Assembly elections,



seems to have an edge over candidates of other parties. But in Shiggaon and Channapatna, where BJP and JDS won, respectively, in the last Assembly elections, Congress candidates may give them a tough fight with the backing of voters from the SC (left) community, according to a leader

from the community. "We pressured the CM that if the community has to back Congress in the coming bypolls, his cabinet must take the decision on internal reservation and he just did it," a leader from SC (left) community told TNIE.

"Madigas stand by Siddaramaiah who helped improve their economic status. We are with him. This will be made known in the coming byelections. Everyone in our community will work for the victory of Congress candidates in the three constituencies," said Anjaneya. "It was a victory for the internal reservation struggle. This was made possible by Siddaramaiah," said Thimmapur. "The Madiga community has been fighting for internal reservation for decades. Now, the Supreme Court has also given its verdict. We have to implement it. There are 101 Scheduled Castes. It is important to take everyone into confidence. Although it is not possible to keep everyone happy, a decision has to be taken to satisfy 90% of these communities. Our government will do this," Siddaramaiah said.

Thanks to Tilakan, the crusader, soon commuters can sit comfortably at Kerala bus shelters!

KOCHI: For the last 30 years, C S Tilakan, a Kodungallur native, has been fighting for the rights of commuters, often bringing relief to hundreds to his never-say-die attitude. Thanks to this 78-year-old crusader's latest endeavour, passengers can now sit comfortably at bus shelters. It was so far a common practice in the state to set up round steel rods in bus shelters as seating facilities for passengers waiting for buses. However, the same was only posing difficulty to commuters, who couldn't sit properly and many got scared of slipping and falling down. The steel rods soon became a subject of trolls in the social media, with many wondering their usage to passengers. Tilakan, the Secretary of the Applicants and Consumers Forum, took up the issue and made a sustained campaign to put an end to the practice. He finally wrote to M B Rajesh, Minister for Local Self Governments, which finally caught the attention of the authorities. As a result, the LSGD Principal Secretary issued a Government Order, which directs to replace the "unscientific" round steel rods at bus stops with alternative seating arrangements.

"I came to know about the issue when I came across the trolls on social media. During my travels, this issue caught my attention numerous times. Most of the bus stops in Kodungallur and in towns in Tripunithura were having such round steel rods. Our forum took up the issue and began the campaigning. I wrote a letter, highlighting the issue, along with the picture of such bus shelters," said Tilakan, who is now a Director Board member of the Pullut Cooperative Bank, Kodungallur.

"It's been directed to give direction to the local self institutions concerned to take necessary action to replace the steel pipes in such bus shelters with alternative seating arrangements that are comfortable to commuters," the order signed by Semi Gopinath G, Deputy Secretary, read.

"The passengers could easily slip and fall, especially if they are wearing polyester clothes. Most of such bus shelters are built using the funds of local self institutions, besides that of MLAs and Mps. The order makes it clear that they should take up the corrective work at the bus shelters that they build. I've written a letter to Kodungallur MLA Adv V R Sunilkumar who took the initiative in ensuring that the new bus shelter being built before the mini civil station has comfortable chairs," a beaming Tilakan said. The crusader's fights in the past too led to fruitful actions. "My first successful campaign was to set up a new telephone exchange in Kodungallur nearly 30 years ago. Then there was no mobile phone and all. I could bring the issue to a central minister and a telephone exchange was set up here," he quipped. He was also instrumental in the allotment of two gas agencies in the area. "There was a time when people had to wait for weeks altogether for getting a gas cylinder. The demand was twice that of the supply."

Film development corporation winds up operations in Kerala; artist pensioners left in lurch

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: After a nearly three-and-a-half-decade stint, it's curtains down on the lone branch office of the National Film Development Corporation (NFDC) in the state. The Mumbai-headquartered central agency, established for the development and promotion of films, is winding up all operations in the state before October 31, on the grounds that its Kerala branch office, located in Thiruvananthapuram, has not been 'generating revenue'. Besides a regional office in Chennai, NFDC's only other office in south India is located in Kerala. NFDC's branch office in Kerala was established in 1990 after a special initiative by former Chief Minister K Karunakaran to support budding filmmakers and provide them with national and international exposure. The branch office was instrumental in the production of many Malayalam films, including Farook A Rahiman's Kaliyachan and T V Chandran's Mangamma. Besides liaising with the headquarters for arranging production funds for films from the state, the Kerala branch also handles work related to monthly pensions for cine artists who have fallen on hard times. In 2012, there were attempts to shift the NFDC branch

office to another state. But the move was averted following the intervention of Thiruvananthapuram MP Shashi Tharoor.



The Union Information and Broadcasting Ministry had informed the government that NFDC could continue operations if it provided facilities such as land and office space. The government then accommodated NFDC in KSFDC's Chitrangali studio complex to retain the agency in the state. However, NFDC

headquarters continued to neglect the Kerala branch, with the Chennai regional office being assigned to directly deal with the filmmakers in the state.

Besides, the scripts of around 10 Malayalam films have been awaiting approval for funding from the NFDC headquarters. "The scripts were kept pending for many years prompting filmmakers to either shelve the projects or seek other alternatives," a source said. The NFDC headquarters has also not given any directions on the alternative arrangements for the 65 indigent artists who receive pensions, after the shutdown of the Kerala branch office, which carries out annual mustering of the pensioners and verification of pension-related documents. Calls and text messages from TNIE to NFDC MD Prithul Kumar remained unanswered. "The next annual mustering is due in December and pensioners have not received any communication from NFDC. Most of them are above 75 years of age and it is not possible for them to travel to Chennai for pension-related matters," said N P Radhakrishnan Nair, general secretary of All Kerala Cinema-Serial Artists & Workers' Association.

J&K elections break the political stalemate

THE Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) swept the polls in the 2024 Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir. Of the 49 seats in the Kashmir Valley, the National Conference (NC) won 42, the Congress six and the CPI(M) one. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Independent candidates scored a duck in the Valley. In the Assembly elections held in 2014, when Jammu and Kashmir was still a state, the NC had won only 15 seats.

The BJP fared poorly in this election despite the bifurcation of the erstwhile state, the gerrymandering of legislative seats to increase the political weightage of Jammu and the provision of nominated seats given by the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act in Parliament. As per the latest delimitation of the Assembly seats, six seats were added to Jammu and only one to the Valley. But none of these tactics has worked as there is acute unhappiness with the downsizing of the state, loss of jobs and removal of Article 35A, allowing outsiders to purchase land and invest in large projects in Jammu and Kashmir.

All this has heightened the perception of political dispossession, compounded by economic dispossession, leading to severe local dissension. The local economy and livelihoods have also continued to suffer under pressure of militancy and turmoil in the region. Elections held this autumn signal the first sign of political change after the loss of statehood on August 5, 2019. Elections, even with the restricted powers of a union territory, have been widely welcomed as an elected government is obviously better than a rule by the Centre and an appointed Lieutenant-Governor, given the administrative dispossession it entails. Kashmiri voters took an active part in the polls as boycotting them might have given the BJP a political advantage. They chose to participate in the electoral process because they saw it as their first chance to voice their dissatisfaction with the removal of Article 370. But the restoration of Article 370 is not really a big issue for now. Both the parties and people are focused on the restoration of statehood, which is more attainable than the restoration of Article 370. There is serious discontent with the BJP despite the Central government having managed to bring about a semblance of normalcy to the state. During a recent visit to Kashmir, we did see signs of normalcy even though it was impossible to ignore the widespread perception that "normalcy is enforced" by suppressing dissent and protest. Schools and colleges are open; shops, stores and cafes are doing brisk business; shikaras are in full swing; tourists are milling around the Residency Road, Polo View, Dal Lake and the magnificent Mughal Gardens — Nishat, Chasma Shahi, Pari Mahal, etc. All this, however, has not added up to a tourist boom, as claimed by official spokesmen. But there are enough tourists to sustain trade and business, and there is hope that more would come in the winter months.

It was clear from our conversations in Srinagar that the most striking feature of this election was the rejection of the BJP's 'Kashmir project'. The vote was against the BJP, and not necessarily for the NC. Voters supported the NC because it was the only viable option to prevent the BJP from coming to power. The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) was not a worthy option because it had aligned with the BJP to form a government in the state in 2014-15. But if the NC fails to deliver on its poll promises, the PDP remains a default option. Hopeful of sweeping Jammu, the BJP's strategy was to bank on some 'Independent' candidates to reach the majority to form a government. The Kashmiris saw through these machinations and united behind the NC to avoid a situation in which smaller players could be used to downsize the dominant political formations. This time, they were determined to not fall victim to these tactical divisions through the creation of new political factions and

Airbus-TASL venture to give boost to aviation ecosystem

Return to pre-Galwan patrolling protocols is a prerequisite for satisfactory disengagement

THE Ministry of Defence (MoD) signed a Rs 21,935-crore contract with Airbus Defence and Space in September 2021 for the procurement of 56 C-295 transport aircraft as a replacement for the IAF's ageing Avro fleet. The deal entailed the delivery of the first batch of 16 aircraft to be manufactured and delivered from its final assembly line in Seville, Spain. The subsequent 40 will be manufactured and assembled by Tata Advanced Systems Limited (TASL) in India under an industrial partnership between India and Spain. It is the first-ever collaboration of this kind to manufacture transport aircraft in India. The foundation stone for the TASL final assembly line facility in Vadodra, Gujarat, was laid by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on October 30, 2022. The first aircraft in flyaway condition was delivered to the then IAF chief, Air Chief Marshal Vivek Ram Chaudhari, at Seville on September 13 last year. The C-295 aircraft was formally inducted into the IAF on September 25, 2023, by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh at Air Force Station, Hindon, Ghaziabad. The first IAF squadron to be equipped with six of these aircraft was Vadodra-based 11 Squadron, also known as 'the Rhinos'. The C-295, a versatile military transport aircraft with a proven track record, has the capacity to carry 9.5 tonnes of payload and 70 passengers or 49 paratroopers. It will give a tremendous boost to the IAF's capability. Having the ability to operate under all weather conditions, both during day and night, the aircraft is used worldwide by various air forces. The Airbus C-295 comes with a slew of capabilities that span across a wide range of missions, including military transport, air logistics, paratrooping, medical evacuation, search and rescue, maritime patrol, anti-submarine warfare, environmental monitoring, border surveillance, water bomber and airborne early warning. Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez, who is on an official visit to India, and PM Modi inaugurated the TASL manufacturing facility in Vadodra on October 28. Set to be the first private military aircraft manufacturing facility in India, the first 'Make in India' C-295 aircraft is set to roll out in September 2026, with the final aircraft expected to be delivered by August 2031. This project would give a much-needed impetus to the aerospace ecosystem in India wherein several micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) across the country

would be involved in manufacturing certain parts of the aircraft. As many as 29 MSMEs have already been identified by Airbus. The production for certain components of the aircraft has commenced at the TASL's Main Constituent Assembly facility in Hyderabad. The electronic warfare systems provided by Bharat Electronics Limited and Bharat Dynamics Limited have been integrated into the aircraft. However, due to the delays in contract negotiation and finalisation, these would need to be upgraded. The importance of indigenous electronic warfare systems cannot be overemphasised. This programme, according to a statement by the MoD, will act as a catalyst in employment generation in the aerospace segment. It will create 600 highly



skilled jobs directly and more than 3,000 jobs indirectly. There will be an additional 3000 medium-skill employment opportunities, with more than 42.5 lakh man-hours of work within the aerospace and defence sectors in India. Other than aeroengine and avionics, sourced by Airbus from other OEMs (original equipment manufacturers), the other structural parts will mostly be made in India. Of the nearly 14,000 detailed parts used to make one aircraft, 13,000 would be fully manufactured in India.

The real test, however, will be the timely production of 40 aircraft by TASL. At present, most of the production activities are being driven by Airbus, with TASL just executing them. The focus must shift to local production and quality control through the Directorate General of Aeronautical Quality Assurance and future certification by the Centre for Military Airworthiness and Certification. Indigenous testing and evaluation are necessary for the Indian aerospace ecosystem to flourish.

Sustained government efforts in the last decade have enabled the defence sector to grow exponentially.

This is reflected in the defence production figures: they have grown from Rs 43,726 crore to Rs 1,27,265 crore, of which 21 per cent is contributed by the private sector. Defence exports, which were less than Rs 1,000 crore just 10 years ago, increased to over Rs 21,000 crore last year.

Some of the policy reforms that have helped the country achieve these figures include the provision of the Indigenously Designed, Developed and Manufactured (IDDM) category being accorded the highest priority in the Defence Acquisition Procedure 2020 for the procurement of capital equipment. As much as 75 per cent of the modernisation budget has been earmarked for procurement through domestic industries in the current financial year. Various other initiatives taken by the government include the launch of the Self-Reliant Initiatives through Joint Action (SRIJAN) portal and Positive Indigenisation Lists (PILs), innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) and the establishment of defence industrial corridors in Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, with a potential investment of Rs 50,083 crore, as of September 2024. Much, however, still needs to be done for the speedy clearance of projects by the Defence Acquisition Council and the subsequent contract negotiations, as it took nearly six years for the MoD to ink the contract with Airbus after the request for proposal (RFP) was issued in May 2013.

The Airbus-TASL partnership for the joint manufacturing of C-295 military transport aircraft in India serves as a beacon of hope and inspiration for the beleaguered aviation ecosystem in India. However, it remains to be seen whether the TASL will expand on the versions of this aircraft as a civil-certified version is also available. Production in India and future exports need to be factored in to realise the full potential of this collaboration.

Even as the road ahead for Atmanirbharta may appear arduous, the journey has been initiated by the Airbus-TASL partnership, which needs to deliver on its promise by the timely production of 40 aircraft by TASL. Experience shows that the public sector has not met the IAF expectations. This project, if executed successfully, could set the ball rolling for the private sector's further participation, without whose support India would not be able to realise its dream of a Viksit Bharat by 2047.

Paddy predicament

Israel keeps West Asia on the boil

THE Centre's assurance to Punjab farmers on Sunday that "every single grain" of paddy will be procured could not have come at a more critical time. Tensions have been simmering in the state, with mandis overflowing with paddy and farmers facing delays in government procurement at the promised Minimum Support Price (MSP). Union Food Minister Pralhad Joshi's statement on adequate storage capacity and a commitment to timely action signals an effort to quell fears, but the broader issue remains: a chronic mistrust between the Centre and Punjab's agricultural communities.

The farmers' scepticism is understandable. For over a month, they have borne the brunt of political brinkmanship between the BJP-led Centre and the AAP government in Punjab. Due to the procurement lag, and with the rabi crop sowing season looming, many farmers had no choice but to sell paddy below the MSP, deepening their



financial woes. It is high time that the government's pledges go beyond promises to effective, transparent

action that can build genuine trust. The farmers deserve better than becoming collateral in an ongoing power play that repeatedly sees their interests sidelined.

The wave of protests that erupts almost every harvest season, bringing life to a standstill with road and rail blockages, is a symptom of this chronic neglect. Each protest is followed by predictable events: high-profile meetings, assurances of resolution and announcements of new policies. Yet, these promises are left unfulfilled as the next season's problems arise. This cycle, fuelled by ad hoc responses from both Central and state governments, has only exacerbated farmers' frustrations and contributed to the public's mounting fatigue. If the Centre can indeed deliver on its procurement promises at MSP and address systemic issues that delay and disrupt the process, it could replace lingering distrust with stability.

Dummy schools lay bare the deep rot

The coaching industry is colonising the consciousness of youngsters and their parents

MY neighbour once told me, "My child doesn't waste his time and energy going to school. Instead, I send him to a coaching centre which prepares him for what really matters — I mean the acquisition of the 'skills' for cracking the tests like JEE and NEET. And there is an arrangement with his school. Even if he is absent throughout the year, he can sit for the board exams. The school manages it." During my conversation with him, I realised the intensity of his instrumental reasoning — his belief that the only thing that matters in life is 'success', and there is no higher or nobler goal of education. He is not alone; in fact, the rationale of standardised tests for getting admission in medical/engineering colleges has been allowed to invade our consciousness and shape our notion of "practical" education, giving birth to what we seem to have normalised — the existence of 'dummy schools' and simultaneous glorification of coaching centres in almost every locality. Not solely that. We are also encouraging our children to internalise the fundamentals of corruption as they realise that if there is a proper 'setting' or some sort of 'adjustment' between schools and coaching centres, they can appear in the board exams even if they do not attend a single class.

Without radical measures, it would be really difficult to save education from the lucrative business of gigantic factories. Of course, the CBSE and state boards are aware of this malpractice, and occasionally, we hear about some raids or punitive measures against these dummy schools. But then, this corruption cannot be combated unless we do something deep and substantial about the following:

First, it is important for us — adults and parents — to educate ourselves and widen our understanding of education or the meaning of 'success' we desire for our children. Of course, it is good if our children learn

physics, chemistry, mathematics and biology. There is also no harm if they learn how to solve the riddles of these disciplines — quickly, instantly and smartly. But then, this 'skill' is only a fragment of what all great pedagogues would regard as truly meaningful, holistic and life-affirming education. At a deeper level, education is about the cultivation of all the major faculties of learning, seeing and making sense of the world one lives in — say, the power of intellectual cognition and reasoning for sharpening critical thinking; the development of artistic and aesthetic sensibilities for a deeper understanding of human emotions and feelings; the spirit of working together and appreciating the worth of comradeship, cooperation and solidarity; and above all, the art of relatedness to the larger ecosystem. But then, when we want our children to forget everything else, become purely one-dimensional, adopt only the strategic techniques for cracking standardised tests, we cause severe damage to their physical, psychic and moral health. They become solitary/egotistic competitors; and they lose what is really important for evolving as sensitive and dialogic beings — the company of good teachers who act as catalysts, the experience of working together with peers and exploring the world through books and craft, theatre and football, and theory and praxis. Well, my 'pragmatic' neighbour might say that everything is 'settled' if his son joins one of the IITs and eventually manages to get an attractive

'package'. But then, what is the meaning of this 'success' if from deep inside he remains wounded, broken and alienated? This is not to suggest that our schools are necessarily capable of providing the kind of holistic education I am talking about. In fact, barring remarkable exceptions, our schools fail to



inspire our children to celebrate the ethos of a creatively nuanced and critically engaged education. Instead, with the burden of the official curriculum, the tyranny of the time table, the monologue of the teacher in the overcrowded classroom, the hierarchisation of academic disciplines in terms of science vs humanities, the ritualisation of weekly tests and annual exams, and above all, the same goal of producing 'toppers' — our schools often fail to provide a truly substantial alternative to what branded coaching centres are designed to do.

Possibly, the coaching centres, as pragmatic parents like my neighbour think, do it better simply because these shops entertain no illusion of nurturing the child's holistic development, and concentrate only on the techniques of solving the MCQs for cracking the tests like JEE and NEET. Is it the reason why our schools are surrendering and witnessing with utter helplessness how the coaching industry is colonising the consciousness of youngsters and their parents? The growth of dummy schools, it seems, is irresistible.

Even if there are good schools gifted with a life-sustaining culture of learning, it would not be possible to resist this trend, unless we alter the mode of selecting youngsters for professional and higher academic courses. The importance attached to hugely problematic standardised tests like JEE, NEET and CUET has led to the devaluation of what one learns and how one performs in schools. It is, therefore, important to give equal weightage to one's school performance. Furthermore, it is necessary to replace these standardised tests with a fairly decentralised and qualitatively different mode of examination that, far from remaining contented with the MCQ-centric 'objective' questions, seeks to evaluate one's interpretative skills, one's ability to deal with a complex problem and entertain ambiguities or plurality of possible solutions, one's mental orientation or aptitude for pursuing a career in engineering/medicine/foundational sciences/liberal arts, and one's interest in good books and new ideas. Without these radical measures, it would be really difficult to save education from the lucrative business of the gigantic factories and resist the normalisation of dummy schools.



Happy Diwali Festival In India



"Diwali", the festival of lights, illuminates the darkness of the New Year's moon, and strengthens our close friendships and knowledge, with a self-realization!

Diwali is celebrated on a nation-wide scale on Amavasya - the 15th day of the dark fortnight of the Hindu month of Ashwin, (October/November) every year. It symbolizes that age-old culture of India which teaches to vanquish ignorance that subdues humanity and to drive away darkness that engulfs the light of knowledge. Diwali, the festival of lights even to-day in this modern world projects the rich and glorious past of India. Every year on the dark nights of Diwali the sound of firecrackers announces the celebration of the favorite festival of Indians. Homes are decorated, sweets are distributed by everyone and thousands of lamps are lit to create a world of fantasy. Of all the festivals celebrated in India,

Diwali is by far the most glamorous and important. Enthusiastically enjoyed by people of every religion, its magical and radiant touch creates an atmosphere of joy and festivity.

The ancient story of how Diwali evolved into such a widely celebrated festival is different in various regions and states of India. In the north, particularly in Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Bihar and the surrounding areas, Diwali is the day when King Rama's coronation was celebrated in Ayodhya after his epic war with Ravana, the demon king of Lanka. By order of the royal families of Ayodhya and Mithila, the kingdom of which Sita was princess, the cities and far-flung boundaries of these kingdoms were lit up with rows of lamps, glittering on dark nights to welcome home the divine king Rama and his queen Sita after 14 years of exile, ending with an across-the-seas war in which the whole of the kingdom of Lanka was destroyed.

On the day of Diwali festival, doorways are hung with torans of mango leaves and marigolds. Rangolis are drawn with different colored powders to welcome guests. The traditional motifs are often linked with auspicious symbols of good luck. Oil diyas are arranged in and around the house. Because of these flickering lamps, the festival has acquired its name : Dipawali or Diwali meaning 'a rows of lamps'. On this day, people buy something for the house or some jewelry for the women of the house. It is auspicious to buy something metallic, such as silver.



Whatever may be the fables and legends behind the celebrations of Diwali, all people exchange sweets, wear new clothes and buy jewelry at this festive time. Card parties are held in many homes. Diwali has become commercialized as the biggest annual consumer spree because every family shops for sweets, gifts and fireworks. However, in all this frenzy of shopping and eating, the steady, burning lamp is a constant symbol of an illuminated mind.

Diwali Puja Process



Diwali is the festival of Laxmi, the Goddess of prosperity and wealth. It is believed that Goddess Laxmi visit everyone during Diwali and brings peace and prosperity to all. On the night of Diwali "Lakshmi-Pujan" is performed in the evenings. A traditional Pujan is performed after sunset in all the homes. Five pieces of ghee diyas (lamps) are lit in front of the deities, naivedya of traditional sweets is offered to the Goddess and devotional songs are sung in praise of Goddess Laxmi. After Deepawali Puja people light diyas (lamps) in their homes to usher in light and clear the darkness from the world.

In villages cattle are adorned and worshipped by farmers as they form the main source of their income. In south, cows are offered special veneration as they are supposed to be the incarnation of Goddess Lakshmi and therefore they are adorned and worshipped on this day.

Step By Step Diwali Pujan:
First clean the Puja room and then Bathe each Deity (Lakshmi & Ganesh) first with water, then with panchamitra/or rose water, followed by water once more. Now put Deepak (Lamp) in front of the Deities - As the tiny diyas of clay are lighted to drive away the shadows of evil spirits. Make a Panchamitra with 5 ingredients of milk, curd, ghee (clarified butter), sugar & Honey. Place Few mithais, snacks & fruits as a prashad. Make offerings of flowers, Abir (red colour), Sindoor (vermillion) and Haldi (turmeric). Light the Agarbatti (incense sticks) and lamps filled with Ghee.

Now make offerings of Fruit, Sweet dishes (mithai), Salty snacks (Mathis, Ghatia, Namakpare) and offer Dakshina (token money), which could be given to the poor. In the end offer paan (betel leaves), cloves. Now pray to the deities to seek their blessings.

Ganesh Pooja : Ganesh Puja is a must for deepawali Puja. (Lord Ganesh is to be worshipped in all pujas before any other God or Goddess.) (Ganesh Aarti is sung)

Laxmi Pooja : Place Lotus and other flowers at her feet as an offering. A silver coin is placed in front of the Goddess during the puja. Now perform Aarti with flowers in hand (Lakshmi Aarti is sung). After Deepawali Pujan have the Prasad and go out to burst Diwali Crackers.

Diwali Pooja Thali Decorations



Innovative and attractive craft items, beautifully decorated pooja thalis are meant both for the home and for gift giving. Pretty pooja thalis are specially decorated for the festive season of Diwali. Available in lovely shapes, these Diwali Pooja 'Thalis' make for pretty festive gifts. The range is wide, the price varies with the commodity and the quality is to be vouched for. Creativity, innovation and decoration is the key for such business ventures. Embellished with beautiful designs these pooja thalis helps one perform Dipawali Pooja with great style and grandeur. The Diwali Pooja Thali contains all the essential accessories for a pooja, a bell, small katauri, a matka, a om coin and a leaf shaped tiny box to hold roli chawal. Idols of ganesh and laxmi, the great deities associated with wealth and prosperity, are also included in the set. Pooja thali come in different shapes and sizes with varied decorated motifs such as floral and animals like elephant, and can be crafted in a wide range of metals from brass to silver and gold.

Diwali Recipes

Besan ki Barfi

Ingredients
Besan 1 kg
Sugar 1 kg
Water 1/2 liter
Ghee 1 kg
For garnishing:
Pistas,
Almonds
Preparation :
1. Fry besan in ghee on low flame for about 30 mins till



it becomes pink and ghee separates.
2. Mix sugar and water into a syrup. 3. Add this syrup to the besan and mix well. 4. Pour this mixture into a greased tray. 5. When it cools cut into cubes and garnish with pistas and almonds.

Mushrooms in Onion Gravy

Ingredients : 200 gm Mushrooms 3 Onions 2 Tomatoes, finely chopped or pureed 3 Green chillies, finely chopped Coriander leaves Salt as per taste Red chili powder as per taste A pinch of garam masala powder A pinch of cardamom powder Oil
Preparation : 1. Slice mushrooms, boil them and keep aside. 2. Make a paste of the onions. 3. Heat oil in a wok and add the onion paste; cook till the paste turns golden brown. 4. Add the tomatoes, green chillies, salt and red chilli powder. 5. Cook the tomatoes till the gravy leaves the sides of the wok. 6. Add water if required. 7. Add the mushrooms and cook for a while. 8. Season with garam masala powder, cardamom powder and coriander leaves.



Malpua

Ingredients:
1/2 kg maida.
750 gm sugar.
1/2 ltr.milk.
1 cup grated coconut.
6 bananas.
25gm dry fruits.
5-6 ilaichi.
1 ltr. Refined oil.
Process

1 Boil the milk and stir it till it becomes thick. Then cool it.
2 In the milk add maida, sugar, dryfruits , coconut and ilaichi powder. Stir it till it becomes a paste.
3 Make banana paste and add it into the maida paste.
4 Hot oil in a pan. Make round shaped balls of the paste.
5 Fry these till they turn red.

GUJIA

Ingredients : Flour 250 grams
Khoya 500 grams Raisins a few
Almonds 100 grams (finely chopped) Cooking oil 3
tablespoon Water 100 ml Sugar 250 grams
Preparation : Mix the oil and flour properly to form a binding consistency of breadcrumbs. Add some water and knead lightly the entire mixture. Make it soft dough and set it aside with a damp cloth covering it. Fry the khoya in cooking oil till it becomes light brown and then mix the sugar in it properly. Add the almonds and

raisins, and fry for a few more minutes. Remove from fire and let it cool. Make small thick chapattis out of that kneaded dough. Fill half of the chapatti with the khoya mixture and, rolling it, seal the sides of the chapatti keeping the khoya inside it. Make the sealing look decorated by giving a look of hemming. Deep-fry these gujias until it becomes light golden brown, keeping the flame at low. Take out the gujias on a newspaper and let the oil get soaked. Serve hot or store it in an airtight container for using it on that special day.

Lawrence Bishnoi: How a law student became a dreaded gangster

► But how did Lawrence Bishnoi, who had once enrolled to study law, become such a dread criminal? India Today's Arvind Ojha gives us a detailed insight into Bishnoi's journey.

NEW DELHI: Lawrence Bishnoi, the dreaded gangster who rose to prominence for making numerous threat calls to Bollywood actor Salman Khan and also for plotting the murder of Punjabi singer Sidhu Moose Wala, has returned to the limelight again. Despite being lodged in Gujarat's Sabarmati Jail since 2014, his gang was allegedly linked to the October 12 murder of NCP leader and former Maharashtra minister Baba Siddique in Mumbai. A member claiming to be from the gang said on social media that the Bishnoi gang had carried out the killing. But how did Lawrence Bishnoi, who had once enrolled to study law, become such a dread criminal? India Today's Arvind Ojha gives us a detailed insight into Bishnoi's journey during a podcast with Aaj Tak Radio.

BISHNOI'S TIME AS LAW STUDENT
Born on February 12, 1992, in Punjab's Fazlika district, Lawrence Bishnoi's real name is Balkaran Brar. His father was a Punjab Police constable. Interestingly, the father of fugitive underworld don Dawood Ibrahim, who Bishnoi is compared to often, was also a cop. As per Bishnoi's interrogation report, he took admission in Panjab University in 2007



to study law, but quickly became engaged with student politics. The following year, his friend, Robin Brar, contested the student council elections. Bishnoi, however, used Brar's licenced pistol to threaten the latter's rival and fired at him. As a result, Bishnoi was jailed and a case under section 307 (punishment for attempted murder) was lodged against him for the first time. He was released two months later.

When he was in jail, it is believed that he became associated with some top criminals. Robin Brar also lost the polls. In 2010, he contested to become chairman of the student council, but lost. The winning candidate was beaten up by Bishnoi's associates. After that, he went to

prison again. The next year, he won the post of chairman and this is when he formed a close association with Goldy Brar, who also became a notorious gangster and a senior member of the Bishnoi gang. Together, they started contesting small scale elections in Punjab. In 2012, Bishnoi graduated and, in an effort to stay relevant in student politics, he formed a gang, which included his friend Sampat Nehra, a gangster from Haryana. In 2018, Nehra travelled to Mumbai to kill Salman Khan.

HIS TRANSFORMATION INTO A GANGSTER

In 2013, at a state-run college in Muktsar, Punjab, when the candidate backed by Bishnoi lost the student elections, he ordered the murder of the winner. Bishnoi also ordered the killing of the candidate who contested the Lucknow Municipal Corporation against his friend's relative. In 2018, Bishnoi first made plans to kill Salman Khan and asks Sampat Nehra to carry out the murder. Despite carrying out a ruse of the actor's residence at Mumbai's Galaxy Apartments, Nehra was unable to fulfil the plan since he did not possess a long-range weapon.

No Delhiite will benefit from Ayushman scheme, says AAP; calls it 'biggest scam'

Responding to PM Modi's allegations regarding the implementation of the Ayushman scheme, AAP Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh explained that the scheme won't benefit people in Delhi and that it is a 'scam.'



NEW DELHI: Disputing Prime Minister Narendra Modi's accusation that the governments of Delhi and West Bengal are neglecting the Ayushman Bharat scheme due to 'political interests', the Aam Aadmi Party countered on Tuesday by arguing that the central scheme's eligibility criteria would prevent 'a single resident' in the national capital from benefiting.

"If you own a refrigerator, a motorcycle, or have an income above Rs 10,000, you cannot avail of Ayushman Bharat benefits," Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh argued. He said the scheme was "one of the biggest scams in BJP-led states," and called for an analysis of data from Haryana and Uttar Pradesh to uncover the alleged fraud.

"A thorough investigation would reveal large-scale mismanagement within Ayushman Bharat, leading to significant waste and misuse of resources in these states," he alleged.

Ayushman Bharat, the government's flagship programme to achieve universal health coverage (UHC), was launched in 2018. The scheme has two inter-related components: health and wellness centres and the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY) that aims to provide a health cover of Rs 5 lakh per family per year for secondary and tertiary care hospitalisation to over 12 crore families that form the bottom 40% of the population.

Addressing a public gathering at New Delhi's All India Institute of Ayurveda, Modi said he was disappointed with the state of free healthcare for the elderly in the two states. He called it a missed opportunity to serve the senior citizens.

"I apologise to all the elderly above 70 years in Delhi and West Bengal. I hear your pain, but due to the state government's decisions, I cannot help you," he stated.

Modi launched development projects worth over Rs 12,850 crore on the occasion of Ayurveda Day and the birth anniversary of Dhanvantari, the Hindu god of medicine said that during this year's general elections, he had promised that people of 70 years and above would be brought under the Ayushman Bharat.

High-level committee formed to probe digital arrest scam, take immediate action

NEW DELHI: The Union Ministry of Home Affairs has formed a high-level committee to investigate digital arrest scam cases and cyber fraud. The committee has been instructed to take immediate action against the perpetrators. According to sources, the committee will be monitored by the Secretary of the Home Ministry's Internal Security. The Ministry's Cybercrime Coordination Centre, also known as 14C, has contacted police of all states and union territories to inform them of the committee. So far this year, more than 6,000 digital arrest complaints have been registered, with the 14C blocking 6 lakh mobile numbers in connection to the scam, which targets unsuspecting individuals by falsely implicating them in drug and money laundering cases.

The Cybercrime Coordination Centre has also blocked at least 709 mobile applications. The sources said that authorities have ordered the freezing of 3.25 lakh fake bank accounts related to cyber fraud. In the wake of a sudden spike in the number of digital arrest cases across the country, Prime Minister Narendra Modi also warned people against such scams, noting that they have hit all sections of society. In his "Mann ki Baat" radio broadcast on Sunday, he requested people to "stop, think and take action" when faced with such a scam. The Prime Minister stressed that there was nothing called "digital arrest" in law.

WHAT IS DIGITAL ARREST

Digital arrest is a new method of cyber fraud in which fraudsters pose as law enforcement officers and threaten people on audio or video calls and hold them hostage digitally on the false pretext of arrest. Earlier this week, the Computer Emergency Response Team of India (CERT-In) shared a list that talks about more than a dozen ways in which online scams are being perpetrated by fraudsters in the country, including "digital arrest" to dupe people by stealing their money and private data.

7 Elephants Found Dead In Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve In Madhya Pradesh

New Delhi: Seven elephants have died in Madhya Pradesh's Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve and three others are receiving medical treatment, wildlife officials have told. The cause of death of the seven is not yet known; a post-mortem is being conducted at Jabalpur's School of Wildlife Forensics and Health, with veterinarians from the state's Pench and Kanha forests assisting. Sources told NDTV farmers sprayed pesticides on crops and that could have caused the deaths. The health of the 11th and 12th members of the herd are normal at this time.

Senior wildlife officials, including the Assistant Inspector-General for the National Tiger Conservation Authority's Central Zone, Nandakishore Kale, are on the spot. And, amid concerns of elephant poaching, the



Delhi-based Wildlife Crime Control Bureau has set up a committee to investigate the deaths. Simultaneously, a state-level inquiry is also on. The crisis erupted Tuesday after two elephants were found dead during regular patrolling of the reserve area. Five more of the gentle giants were found nearby and in an unwell condition. The Bandhavgarh reserve was in the news in August after a spate of tiger deaths prompted a major administrative shake-up. A special report - highlighted by NDTV on August 1 - pointed red flags in the department's handling of tiger deaths, including procedural lapses and negligence by officials. NDTV's reportage helped shed light on the worrying increase in tiger deaths in Bandhavgarh and the Shahdol forest area between 2021 and 2023. As many as 43 tigers died in this period. Some deaths were linked to poaching and others to negligence by wildlife officials.

India to launch tri-services exercise in eastern sector after LAC disengagement

NEW DELHI: In a strategic move following the recent disengagement along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh, India is set to conduct a significant tri-services military exercise named 'Poorvi Prahaar'. Scheduled to begin on November 8, this exercise aims to showcase India's integrated defense capabilities along its eastern frontier.



The Poorvi Prahaar exercise will involve coordinated efforts from the Indian Army, Navy, and Air Force, demonstrating their combat readiness. The Army plans to deploy Infantry Combat units, Artillery Guns, Light Combat Helicopters (LCH), and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs).

The Indian Air Force (IAF) will activate key air bases in Kolkata, Hashimara, Paanagarh, and Kalaikunda, utilising its fleet of Su-30MKIs, Rafales, C-130Js, Hawks, and various helicopter units. Additionally, the Indian Navy's

elite MARCOS commandos will participate, emphasising joint operational capabilities. defence official said, "The exercise is aimed at testing the synergy among the Army, Navy, and Air Force, strengthening our operational preparedness and defence posture in the eastern sector."

The timing of Poorvi Prahaar is strategically important as India enhances its military positioning along the Arunachal Pradesh border. Following successful disengagement in eastern Ladakh, negotiations with

China are ongoing to de-escalate tensions in the eastern sector. These talks include efforts to restore patrolling rights in the Yangtze region of the Tawang sector, which saw restrictions after a clash with the PLA in December 2022. Along with ongoing dialogue with China, India is upscaling its joint combat capabilities along the LAC," sources told India Today. "This dual approach strengthens

India's leverage for a peaceful resolution while showing our readiness to defend our sovereignty.

"Defence Minister Rajnath Singh is expected to visit the Tawang sector during Diwali, highlighting the government's commitment to bolstering defences in the region. His visit will coincide with preparations for Poorvi Prahaar, symbolising India's determination to protect its borders and maintain readiness for any contingencies along the LAC.

RSS leader claims corruption in Waqf boards, calls for reforms amid bill row

► RSS leader Indresh Kumar claimed that Waqf boards were involved in massive corruption and called for reforms, saying it was leading to illegal occupation of properties.

NEW DELHI: RSS leader Indresh Kumar on Tuesday alleged that there was widespread corruption in Waqf boards across the country, resulting in illegal occupation of properties. The remarks come amid a tussle between the ruling party MPs and the opposition during Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) meetings on the Waqf (Amendment) bill. Calling for reforms to Waqf boards, Indresh Kumar, a prominent figure in the Muslim Rashtriya Manch, an RSS-affiliated organisation, urged the Muslims to come together to safeguard their properties. He was speaking on the occasion of Dhanteras at Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya Dargah in Delhi, where people from the Muslim community participated in large numbers. The government introduced the bill in the



Lok Sabha on August 8, saying the law was aimed to streamline the Waqf Board's work and ensure the efficient management of Waqf properties. It was sent to a Joint Parliamentary Committee after opposition parties and Muslim organisations expressed concerns, claiming that the bill targeted the community and was an

infringement on its constitutional rights.

'BURST FIRECRACKERS IN A RESTRAINED MANNER'

Indresh Kumar also expressed concerns about the growing pollution in Delhi and appealed to the people to burst firecrackers in a restrained manner. He said, although it was the festival season, people should celebrate by not causing harm to the environment. Vouching for women's empowerment, Kumar hoped that no women from the Muslim community fell victim to triple talaq or other unjust traditions. The RSS leader stressed the need to protect the rights of Muslim women and provide equal opportunities so that they can also establish their identity in society. The Waqf bill proposes inclusion of two women members on all state Waqf boards as well as on the Central Council.

25 lakh diyas to be lit in Ayodhya on 1st Diwali after Ram Temple inauguration

New Delhi: Ayodhya is set to host its first Diwali this Wednesday since the consecration of the Ram Temple this January, with preparations underway for a celebration unlike any seen in previous years. The government aims to break last year's Guinness World Record by lighting 25 lakh diyas along the banks of the Saryu River. A team of 30, led by Guinness World Records consultant Nischal Barot, has already begun counting the diyas using drones across 55 ghats.

Officials have ordered 28 lakh diyas from local artisans to ensure they meet their target, factoring in potential losses based on experience. To ensure public safety, approximately 10,000 security personnel have been deployed throughout the city, with half in plain clothes. A special arrangement includes 80,000 diyas arranged in the shape of a swastika at ghat no. 10, a symbol of auspiciousness and a central attraction for the event. Deepotsav Nodal Officer Sant Sharan Mishra confirmed that preparations are complete,



with accommodations for 5,000 to 6,000 guests at the ghats. Forty jumbo LED screens will broadcast live coverage for those unable to attend. The diyas are scheduled to be lit at a designated time in the evening. The celebration will feature cultural performances from artists representing six countries - Myanmar,

Nepal, Thailand, Malaysia, Cambodia, and Indonesia - as well as a Ram Leela presentation from Uttarakhand. In an eco-friendly initiative, the Animal Husbandry Department will light 150,000 'Gau Deep', a gesture presented to Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. Special lamps designed to minimise soot and pollution

will be used at the Ram temple to protect its structure. Over 30,000 volunteers are expected to assist in decorating the ghats, which will be adorned with flowers and lights, conveying a message of environmental awareness. The state information department has arranged for a live broadcast of the event, with LED walls and vans positioned throughout Ayodhya to ensure visibility.

Security measures include the closure of 17 routes leading to Ram Ki Paidi, allowing access only to pass holders. Anil Mishra, a trustee of the Ram Janmabhoomi Trust, highlighted the detailed planning for illuminating every section of the temple complex.

To maintain cleanliness, wax lamps will be used outside the main building. Senior Superintendent of Police Rajkaran Nair has conducted meetings to discuss security arrangements, including the deployment of ATS, STF, and CRPF commandos to secure the temple and surrounding areas.



Malavika Mohanan's

Good Hair Day Can Be Your Next Go-to Style

South actress Malavika Mohanan is known for her impeccable skills in acting, thanks to her notable features like *Beyond The Clouds* and *The Great Father*. Malavika is not only a commendable actor but she also has a significant presence on social media, where she updates her fans on new projects and delights them with new photoshoots. Her latest post captures her in a casual fit, looking like the



best version of herself. Malavika Mohanan took to her official Instagram handle to share the new shoot; the images looking to be set at the vintage camera filter. The actress has opted to wear a white ganji, which is knotted at her waist and seems to be paired with black slacks. While she has accessorized her look with a single necklace. The highlight of the images is her hairstyle, as the hair falls to her back in long, wavy tresses. She has aptly captioned the post, "#goodhairday."

Fans in share their support and love for the photos in the comment section below. The first user wrote, "Your clothing, your smile, everything is amazing!" A second user wrote, "Blessed to live in a part of the world in which you also live." While a third fan stated, "Looking so pretty." And a fourth user shared, "So sweet looking." The post has been liked over 735,000 times on the platform.

Malavika's upcoming projects include *Sardar 2* and *The Raja Saab*. *Sardar 2* is a sequel to the 2022 film *Sardar*, being made under the direction of P S Mithran. The cast includes Karthi, S J Suryah, Malavika Mohanan, Ashika Ranganath and Rajisha Vijayan. It is being produced by S Lakshman Kumar and Siddharth Srinivas under the banner of Prince Pictures. The music in the film is being done by Yuwan Shankar Raja. While *The Raja Saab* is a Maruthi directorial and stars Prabbas as the lead. The cast also features Nidhi Agerwal, Malavika Mohanan and Sanjay Dutt. T G Vishwa Prasad has produced the film under the banner of People Media Factory.

Bigg Boss 18's

Nyrraa Banerji

Calls Shilpa Shirodkar 'Manipulative', Says Her 'Game Is Dirty'

After the Weekend Ka Vaar episode, Nyrraa Banerji became the latest contestant to be eliminated from *Bigg Boss 18*. The actor was known for standing her ground and playing the game all by herself. In a recent interview, she called out Shilpa Shirodkar after she nominated her by saying that they share 'no bond.'

In a conversation with India Today Digital, Nyrraa Banerji reflected on her journey in *Bigg Boss 18*. She mentioned how she feels that engaging in fights is the only way to get screen space on the show. She talked about why she feels that Shilpa Shirodkar plays a dirty game. Banerji said, "I do not have a personal grudge against anyone but I feel she is extremely manipulative. And she does it very stylishly so that no one gets a whiff of her moves." She continued, "Shilpa ji doesn't like me but she never had the guts to tell this on my face. She nominated me saying we have no bond, which I never thought was the case. It just shows how dirty her game is.

On the other hand, Avinash Mishra may be called out for his anger, but he is true to his feelings. He never pretends or forms fake connections. And so is the case with Rajat Dalal. I have more respect for such people."

In the same conversation, Banerji mentioned that she considers Shehzada Dhama and Shrutika Arjun as her close friends on the show. She called her stint



in *Bigg Boss 18* a 'learning experience' which she does not regret. The actor has become the fourth contestant to be eliminated from the show after Avinash Mishra, Hema Sharma, and Muskan Bamne. *Bigg Boss 18* airs on Colors TV and is available to stream on JioCinema. The show is hosted by Salman Khan.

Sharaf U Dheen And Aishwarya Lekshmi's Hello Mummy Set For November 21 Release



Sharaf U Dheen and Aishwarya Lekshmi-starrer upcoming Malayalam film *Hello Mummy* gets a release date. *Hello Mummy* will hit screens on November 21. The makers recently shared the latest updates on their social media handles. Billed as a fantasy comedy, the upcoming film is written by Sanjo Joseph of *Falimi* fame and directed by debutant Vaishakh Elans. Taking to Instagram, Sharaf U Dheen, in a joint post, shared a poster and announced the film's release. The film poster featured Aishwarya sitting on a single-seater sofa while Sharaf is seen sitting on the sofa arm. The post's caption read, "Get ready to laugh and scream! *Hello Mummy* hits theatres on November 21! Don't miss out!" The post went viral in no time. It garnered several likes and comments from the social media users. Several fans also dropped heart emojis to express their love.

The fantasy comedy promises an entertaining and unique storyline. Earlier, the makers unveiled the first look of the film on social media. "Buckle up for a thrilling funny ride! Unveiling the First Look Poster of #HelloMummy," the caption read. The film featured both actors with drastically different lifestyles. The upcoming film is directed by Vaishakh Elans, a well-known ad film director making his feature film debut. The film's script has been penned by Sanjo Joseph, known for his work on the screenplay for *Falimi*. Notably, *Hello Mummy* is marking the Malayalam debut of Hindi actor Sunny Hinduja, who is well-known for his work in films and series like *Aspirants*, *The Family Man*, and *The Railway Men*. The film also features a talented supporting cast, including Jagadish, Johnny Antony, Sruthy Suresh, Adhri Joe, Joemon Jyothir, and Ganga Meera. The editing of the film is handled by Chaman Chacko, while the cinematography is by Praveen Kumar, with music scored by Jakes Bejoy. The film is produced by Jomin Mathew, Aibin Thomas and Rahul ES under the banner of Hangover Films and A&HS Production.

Bhavana Panday Says Shalini Passi Has 'Uncanny Similarities' To Ananya Panday's Call Me Bae Character



Fabulous Wives Vs Bollywood Wives has become the talk of the town ever since it premiered on Netflix. The *Bollywood wives* – Maheep Kapoor, Bhavana Panday, Neelam Soni, and Seema Sajdeh – were joined by the Delhi socialites – Shalini Passi, Kalyani Saha Chawla, and Riddhima Kapoor. After the show, Shalini emerged as Internet's favourite. In a recent interview, Bhavana mentioned how Shalini reminded her of Ananya Panday's character from *Call Me Bae*. Speaking to *Hindustan Times*, Bhavana Panday mentioned how she had received a call from Shalini Passi after Ananya Panday starred in *Call Me Bae*. She also mentioned how Shalini's scenes in *Fabulous Lives Vs Bollywood Wives* were



shot separately and she only saw them after the release. Bhavana mentioned that when she saw Shalini on the show, she was instantly reminded of Ananya's Bella from *Call Me Bae*.

Bhavana said, "A lot of Shalini's scenes were not done in front of us. When I watched her on screen, I watched for the first time. So I called her up and said, "Oh my god Shalini, you're Bae!" Bae is a wealthy girl with a soft and kind heart. And I think Shalini has that too. She comes from a very affluent family but has a kind heart. The similarities are uncanny, but Shalini herself told me she's Bae." She also mentioned how Shalini has done multiple courses just like Bella from the show.

In the same conversation, Bhavana mentioned how Ananya was 'entertained' by Shalini. She continued, "I think she sent a message to Shalini and told her how much she enjoyed her. Shalini is very unique. She's made for a show like this." Shalini and Bhavana are currently enjoying the success of *Fabulous Lives Vs Bollywood Wives*. Ananya, on the other hand, has kickstarted the shoot for the second season of *Call Me Bae*.

Sensex, Nifty in red as Q2 earnings dampen Diwali spirit; Adani stocks gain

New Delhi. Benchmark stock market indices opened in the red on Wednesday as Q2FY25 earnings fell short of investor expectations, dampening Diwali market cheer amid continued foreign selling pressure. The NSE Nifty 50 dropped 0.24% to 24,411.9 points, while the BSE Sensex declined 0.28% to 80,142.11 by 9:57 am. Seven out of the 13 major sectors showed losses, while small-cap and mid-cap indices performed better, rising 1% and 0.5%, respectively.

Pharma stock Cipla dropped 3.6%, extending its recent losses following broker downgrades. Despite beating quarterly profit estimates, concerns over delays in US drug launches and higher costs have led analysts to lower earnings projections for the next two fiscal years. Meanwhile, Maruti Suzuki India rebounded by 1.75% after a sharp 3.8% decline the previous day, driven by positive festive season sales data, which reported a 14% year-on-year increase. The Nifty 50 and Sensex have fallen nearly 7% from record highs reached on September 27, impacted by foreign outflows persisting for 22 consecutive sessions and a largely muted earnings season. With a 5.5% decline in October, Nifty is set for its weakest month since March 2020, when pandemic fears shook markets globally. Analysts anticipate increased volatility ahead of US non-farm payrolls data on Friday and the US presidential elections on November 5.

Dr. V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Financial Services, said, "In the near term the market will be influenced by two factors - one positive and the other negative. The positive is the sharp decline in FII selling to just Rs 548 crores yesterday. This is an indication that the FII tactical trade of 'Sell India, Buy China' is coming to an end. With more DII and retail money coming to the market and FII selling tapering off, the market may get a near-term boost, aided by the festive mood," he added.

Vijayakumar noted that with Nifty now trading at about 24 times FY25 estimated earnings, there is no valuation comfort in the market and indicated that this negative factor "will cap the rally driven by domestic money".

Afcons Infrastructure IPO allotment: Step-by-step guide to check status

New Delhi. The allotment for the initial public offering (IPO) of Afcons Infrastructure will be finalised on Wednesday, October 30, after having seen 2x subscription led by the Non-Institutional Investors (NII) category. After having seen a muted response from investors, Afcons Infrastructure IPO saw an overall bid of 2.77 times before closing for bidding.

The public issue saw a subscription of 0.99 times in the retail category. In the Qualified Institutional Buyers (QIB) segment, demand was higher, with subscriptions reaching 3.99 times. Meanwhile, the Non-Institutional Investors (NII) category recorded the strongest interest, with subscriptions at 5.31 times. Investors who have bid for Afcons Infrastructure IPO can check their allotment status online. They can log in to either the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) website or the website of Link Intime India Private Ltd, the registrar for the issue.

Meesho narrows adjusted losses to Rs 53 crore in FY24, achieves profitability milestone

NEW DELHI: SoftBank-backed Meesho reported a significant reduction in its adjusted losses to Rs 53 crore for the financial year ending 31 March 2024, mainly attributed to a reduction in general and administrative expenses. The company had previously reported an adjusted loss of Rs 1,569 crore in FY 2022-23. "Our Selling, General, and Administrative (SG&A) expenses as a percentage of Revenue from Operations declined sharply, driven by strong consumer awareness and organic traction, alongside the significant operating leverage that comes with a marketplace e-commerce model," the company stated. "Consequently, our adjusted losses have narrowed by 97 per cent, from Rs 1,569 crore to just Rs 53 crore, excluding Employee Share-Based Compensation expense," the statement added. Meesho's revenue from operations increased by 33 per cent, reaching Rs 7,615 crore in FY24, compared to Rs 5,735 crore in FY23. This growth was fuelled by a 36 per cent year-on-year increase in orders delivered, which rose to 84.3 crore from 62.2 crore in the previous fiscal year. The company became the first horizontal Indian e-commerce firm to achieve profitability within the year, as well as the first to generate positive free cash flow for the full year.

"Meesho has made impressive strides, with 145 million unique Annual Transacting Users (ATUs) in FY 2023-24, implying approximately 10 per cent of India has made a purchase through our platform," the company noted. It observed a shift in consumer behaviour, with customers not only purchasing multiple items within the same category but also diversifying their shopping basket across various categories.

TCS secures 15-year contract from Irish government

BENGALURU. Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) has secured a 15-year contract with Ireland's Department of Social Protection (DSP) to implement and support the country's new Auto Enrolment Retirement Savings Scheme, known as the My Future Fund. This initiative will provide a digital solution for automatic enrolment of nearly 800,000 workers in Ireland, the company said on Tuesday. Leveraging its TCS BaNCS platform and ecosystem, TCS will oversee administration of the scheme. Services will be delivered via TCS' Global Delivery Centre in Letterkenny, Co. Donegal, Ireland.

This project follows the passing of the Automatic Enrolment Retirement Savings System Bill in Ireland earlier this year and the conclusion of a rigorous tender process by the Department of Social Protection. TCS added in a statement. Though TCS didn't disclose the deal size, an Irish daily in June reported that the deal is valued up to EUR 150 million.

Explained: Why Maruti Suzuki share price gained over 2% despite weak Q2 results

Maruti Suzuki's quarterly report revealed a 17% year-on-year decline in net profit to Rs 3,103 crore, falling short of market expectations.

New Delhi. Shares of Maruti Suzuki rose over 2% in early trade on Wednesday, showing unexpected strength after the company reported weaker-than-expected second-quarter results. By 11:02 a.m., the stock was up 2.23% at Rs 11,293.65 on the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE), reflecting a mixed but cautiously optimistic response from brokerages despite ongoing challenges. In the previous trading session, the Maruti Suzuki stock had slumped over 5%. Maruti Suzuki's quarterly report revealed a 17% year-on-year decline in net profit to Rs 3,103 crore, falling short

of market expectations. Revenue from operations rose slightly to Rs 37,449 crore, though a deferred tax liability of Rs 1,018 crore impacted net profit, driven by regulatory changes affecting indexation benefits and tax rates on capital gains from debt mutual funds.

BUY, HOLD OR SELL?

Nomura took a conservative stance on Maruti, maintaining a neutral outlook with a target price of Rs 12,455, citing continued demand softness and margin pressures as likely short-term constraints. The brokerage anticipates that discounting could remain elevated in the near term, though improvements in Maruti's CNG mix and rising average selling prices (ASPs) could be positives.

Maruti's management is optimistic about a 14% year-on-year increase in festive season sales, which could alleviate inventory pressures and reduce the need for discounting in the coming months. HSBC echoed a cautious outlook, reiterating a 'hold' rating and adjusting its target to Rs 14,000. It attributed Maruti's Q2 margin contraction to a challenging



demand environment and elevated discounts, with Q3 also likely to see some pressures. However, HSBC remains hopeful for improvement by FY26, driven by demand recovery and new product launches. A potential tax reduction on hybrid vehicles could also support Maruti's future valuation.

Investec also expressed caution, retaining a 'hold' rating but lowering its target to Rs 12,385 from Rs 14,030. It cited operational challenges, particularly around margins, with weaker demand in entry-level models as consumers shift towards premium vehicles. The brokerage also highlighted concerns regarding Maruti's EV transition, given

its dependency on Toyota for technology. On a more optimistic note, UBS maintained a 'buy' recommendation with a target of Rs 14,800, slightly reduced from Rs 15,200. UBS acknowledged Maruti's Q2 earnings miss, noting that margin pressures weighed on EBITDA but pointed to festive season demand and controlled inventories as encouraging signs that could counterbalance near-term concerns. Maruti Suzuki also announced plans to launch a dedicated electric vehicle in January 2025. Management highlighted that this EV would be built on a high-spec platform designed specifically for electric use, unlike the retrofitted internal combustion engine (ICE) models seen in some competitors. Maruti's stock performance has been mixed this year. The stock has dropped 15% over the past month and about 12% in the last six months, but year-to-date, it remains up nearly 10%, reflecting both market concerns and some optimism as it navigates evolving consumer preferences and the EV transition.

RBI brings home 102 tonnes of gold from Bank of England on Dhanteras

New Delhi. The RBI recently relocated 102 tonnes of gold from the Bank of England's vaults to secure facilities within India. This transfer highlights the central bank's belief in keeping valuable assets of gold, demonstrating the RBI's preference for keeping more of its wealth within its own borders. With a total of 855 tonnes in reserves, the RBI now holds 510.5 tonnes within the country. This shift aligns with rising geopolitical risks and the government's goal of enhancing security by managing its assets domestically. The decision to bring home a portion of India's gold reserves comes amidst a backdrop of growing international tensions and economic challenges. According to government sources, holding these reserves within the country provides an extra layer of security. The transportation of this gold required strict secrecy and advanced security measures, involving specialised aircraft and secure protocols. This approach signals the



government's commitment to safeguarding sensitive information and assets, especially as the international situation becomes more complex. This is not the first time India has moved large quantities of gold back to its own soil. In May this year, India transferred 100 tonnes from the Bank of England to domestic vaults, marking one of the largest gold relocations since the 1990s. Back then, India's government had to pledge gold as collateral during a financial crisis. However, this time, the move is part of a proactive strategy to

secure the country's wealth rather than a response to an economic emergency.

Currently, 324 tonnes of India's gold reserves remain in the custodianship of the Bank of England and the Bank for International Settlements, both based in the UK. The Bank of England has long been a trusted custodian for central banks globally, offering a secure "bullion warehouse" since 1697. London's bullion market also provides liquidity advantages. However, sources suggest that India is unlikely to move more gold out of the UK this year.

Gold now accounts for 9.3% of India's total foreign reserves, up from 8.1% in March. This shift has been supported by a rally in global gold prices, with the current price at around Rs 78,745 per 10 grams in Mumbai. Analysts predict that prices may rise to Rs 85,000 per 10 grams over the next year, driven by increasing investor interest in gold during periods of economic uncertainty and conflict, particularly in regions like the Middle East.

Apple's iPhone exports from India jump 33% in April-September 2024; TN's Foxconn unit contributes half

NEW DELHI. Apple's iPhone exports from India witnessed a significant 33% surge between April and September 2024, compared to the same period last year. According to a report, the American tech giant exported iPhones worth \$6 billion during this period, with its Foxconn unit in Tamil Nadu contributing the most. The report suggests that the Tamil Nadu unit accounted for half of iPhone exports from India. Tata Group's electronics manufacturing arm exported about \$1.7 billion worth of iPhones from its factory in Karnataka during the six-month period. Tata had acquired this unit from Wistron Corp. last year.

This uptick in exports can be attributed to Apple's expanding component ecosystem in the country, along with subsidies provided by both state and central governments. Apple currently has three manufacturers in India, Taiwan's Foxconn Technology Group, Pegatron Corp., and India's Tata Electronics, all of which are located in the southern states. Meanwhile, Tamil Nadu is emerging as the host to all



major Apple suppliers, including Foxconn, Pegatron, Tata Electronics, and Jabil. Other notable Apple suppliers operating in Tamil Nadu include Salcomp, which manufactures chargers, and Corning, which supplies finished cover glass for Apple iPhones.

Apple has been diversifying its manufacturing base from China to India, largely due to geopolitical tensions. The company began manufacturing in India in 2017, initially producing older generation models such as the iPhone 13, iPhone 14, and iPhone 15 series. Apple is now manufacturing the entire iPhone 16 lineup, including the iPhone 16 Pro and iPhone 16 Pro Max, in India, just weeks after their global launch. Additionally,

Apple is increasing its retail footprint by opening two stores in Delhi and Mumbai, with plans to open four more stores in the near future. iPhones now account for the bulk of India's smartphone exports and have helped the product category become the top export to the U.S., valued at \$2.88 billion in the first five months of this fiscal year. According to Counterpoint Research, Apple holds the second spot in terms of value with a 22% market share, while a South Korean tech giant occupies the top spot with a 23% market share. Apple accounts for just under 7% of India's smartphone market. "Apple closely follows Samsung at the No. 2 spot with a 22% value share. The brand has aggressively expanded into smaller cities, driving significant value growth with an increased focus on newer iPhones. Strong shipments of the iPhone 15 and iPhone 16 ahead of the festive season have further enhanced Apple's performance," said Prachir Singh, a senior research analyst at Counterpoint Research.

From Rs 3 To Rs 2,36,000: Smallcap Stock Tops MRF To Become India's Costliest Share In A Day

Federal Bank's impressive Q2 results have investors buzzing as its shares jumped over 8% during Tuesday's trading session.

NEW DELHI. If you believe MRF Ltd is the highest-priced shares in the Indian stock market, then one must be proved wrong. The Rs 1.2 lakh tyre maker's stock is dwarfed by a microcap player with nearly double its price as of Tuesday. Interestingly, this stock was just a penny stock worth Rs 3.21 in July this year. Elcid Investments on October 29 overtook MRF to become India's most expensive stock. Thanks to BSE auction for price discovery of holding companies, each share of Elcid was valued at Rs 2.25 lakh. The smallcap stock created history on Dalal Street as its share price soared from Rs 3.53 to an astounding Rs 2,36,250 in one day, a jump of a mind-boggling 66,92,535%.

Meanwhile, on October 29, MRF shares on BSE closed 0.61% lower at Rs 1.22 lakh apiece. The highest traded value of Elcid was Rs 4.58 lakh, but price discovered was at Rs 2.25 lakh. BSE had conducted auction on October 28 for price discovery of holding companies.

Rs 1 lakh investment in this stock would have generated returns to the tune of a whopping Rs 670 crore in the span of a few months. A BSE circular, dated October 21, mentioned that relisting of select investment holding companies (IHCs) through a special call auction mechanism for a price discovery on Monday. The effective rates were settled on Tuesday, October 29 after the special provision. Elcid Investments was among one of them. Other companies included names like Nalwa Sons Investments, TVS Holdings, Kalyani Investment Company, SIL Investments, Maharashtra Scooters, GFL, Haryana Capfin and Pilani Investment and Industries Corporation. The promoters of Elcid Investments voluntarily made an offer for its delisting for a base price of Rs 1,61,023 per share. A special resolution was proposed for the same. However, the resolution failed due to non-receipt of

requisite majority of public shareholders. Elcid Investments, with 2,00,000 share capital, holds 2,83,13,860 equity shares or 2.95 per cent stake in Asian Paints Ltd, which is worth nearly



Rs 8,500 crore as of its previous close. This is the only reason that makes this stock so richly priced at the stock markets. There is still a catch. Hitesh Dharawat of Mumbai-based Dharawat Securities said that Elcid Investment has remained a buzz word on Dalal Street due its holding in Asian Paints. The stock has zoomed straight to Rs 2.35 lakh from Rs 3-4 a day ago.

However, the book value still remains higher than the current stock price, but it commands the holding company discount. Despite trading at Rs 2.36 lakh per share, the stock is still trading at nearly 45 per cent discount to its intrinsic share price value of Rs 4.25 lakh per share, based on its holding in the Asian Paints.

Before Tuesday's 190 share trade worth Rs 4.33 crore, the stock has barely seen any exchange of hands in the last few years. Kranthi Bathini, Director of Equity Strategy at WealthMills Securities said that such companies have business of holding stocks of other companies which direct the stock prices for investors. Putting money in such companies is purely based on individuals' risk appetite but one should note that these companies may have liquidity risks. "Investors should look at cash flows and the nature of the business of a company before investing. If it suits their risk profile, then only it makes sense to put in their money. Such companies may carry some value but investors should know a way to exit such counters to ensure liquidity for them," he cautioned.

More tariff increases to take place in telecom sector, says Airtel CEO

NEW DELHI. Bharti Airtel on Tuesday said there will be more tariff hikes in the telecom sector as current economic conditions are still quite poor.

Gopal Vittal, chief executive officer, while speaking at the earnings call of its second quarter FY 2024-25, also mentioned that there has been 31 round of tariff hikes, and more are to come to improve the industry.

"We have just gone through one round of repair. We should wait for it to fully settle. But clearly, there's more to be done in this market. I think the current economics are still quite poor and really need to improve dramatically," said Vittal.

In July 2024, Airtel increased tariff up to 25% in its prepaid plans. Subsequently, during the September quarter, Airtel lost nearly 2.9 million customers due to SIM consolidation triggered by the tariff hike. However, Vittal downplayed the impact of this subscriber loss, describing it as milder than previous instances. "In the mobility business, we experienced a loss of 2.9 million customers due to SIM consolidation triggered by the tariff repair. But this decline was milder than what we observed in earlier rounds. As we've seen in the past, these trends normalize over two quarters and we've already seen that normalisation happen," said Vittal.

Meanwhile, Airtel reported a robust financial performance for the second quarter. The company's consolidated net profit surged by 168% to Rs 3,593 crore compared to Rs 1,341 crore in the same period last year.

Additionally, average revenue per user (ARPU) increased by 15% to Rs 233. Airtel also announced that Shashwat Sharma, currently the chief operating officer, will take over as managing director and chief executive officer from January 1, 2026. Gopal Vittal will move to the role of executive vice-chairman, continuing to contribute to the company's growth and strategy. Vittal clarified that he remains committed to the Bharti Group and has no plans to pursue opportunities outside the organisation. He will assume additional responsibilities, including overseeing digital procurement, talent management, network strategy, and emerging growth areas. "I am fully committed to the Bharti Group, and I have no intention of taking on anything outside the group," Vittal added.

Current tariff rates are still quite poor: Vittal Gopal Vittal, chief executive officer, while speaking at the earnings call of its second quarter FY 2024-25, also mentioned that there has been 31 round of tariff hikes, and more are to come to improve the industry. "We have just gone through one round of repair. We should wait for it to fully settle. But clearly, there's more to be done in this market. I think the current economics are still quite poor and really need to improve dramatically," said Vittal.

NEWS BOX

Cristiano Ronaldo misses 96th minute penalty as Al Nassr exit King's Cup

Cristiano Ronaldo missed a last-minute chance to save Al-Nassr's King's Cup campaign, failing to convert a penalty as they fell to a surprising 0-1 defeat to Al Taawoun in the Round of 16 on Tuesday, October 29. In the dying seconds of stoppage time, with Al-Nassr trailing, Ronaldo's penalty soared over the crossbar, ending any hope of taking the match into extra time. The Portuguese forward's reaction told the story, as he walked away from the spot with his head in his hands, visibly frustrated. Al Taawoun had shocked the Al-Nassr faithful earlier when defender Waleed Al-Ahmed capitalized on a corner kick in the 71st minute, heading the ball in to put the visitors ahead. Al Taawoun then nearly doubled their lead, but the decisive moment came when Al-Ahmed fouled Al-Nassr's Mohammed Maran inside the box, handing Ronaldo a golden opportunity to



equalise from the spot. However, Ronaldo, typically reliable in high-stakes moments, sent the penalty off target, much to the dismay of Al-Nassr's fans and his teammates. You can see the full video below: This loss extends Ronaldo's wait for a domestic cup title with Al-Nassr, a competition they last won several seasons ago. Previously, Al-Nassr had twice finished runners-up behind Al-Hilal, leaving Ronaldo yet to secure a King's Cup trophy during his time in Saudi Arabia. The missed penalty marked a tough night for Ronaldo, who had only one other major chance on goal. Late in the second half, the 39-year-old took a free kick, skillfully aiming for the goalkeeper's side, but Al Taawoun's Mailson made a crucial save to deny him yet again. Mailson had been a thorn in Al-Nassr's side from the start, blocking an early attempt from Anderson Talisca, who fired a shot toward the goal in the third minute. Despite the defeat, Ronaldo and Al-Nassr will shift focus to the Saudi Pro League, where they currently sit in a competitive position.

Afghanistan star spinner Rashid Khan set for Test return after 3 years

New Delhi. Afghanistan's star spinner Rashid Khan is all set to make his return to Test cricket during the upcoming tour of Zimbabwe. The development was confirmed by Afghanistan Cricket Board's Chief Executive Naseeb Khan on Tuesday, October 29, right after the announcement of the tour was made.

Rashid last played a Test back in March 2021 against Zimbabwe and has been more focused on white-ball cricket ever since. After a back injury sidelined him from longer-format cricket on his doctor's advice, Rashid missed the Test series against New Zealand. The Afghanistan Cricket Board (ACB) later confirmed that he would be absent from Test cricket until November, with uncertainty around his inclusion in the



squad for the Zimbabwe tour. Despite this, Rashid remained available for the white-ball formats, a scenario expected to continue for Zimbabwe. Speaking to Cricbuzz, Naseeb Khan said that Afghanistan was confident that Rashid would play the Test series against Zimbabwe. The ACB chief executive said that the star spinner does look fine and ready to feature for the team in the longest format of the game. "We are confident that Rashid will play for us in the Test series against Zimbabwe," said Naseeb. "He (Rashid) had a long recovery due to his back surgery and we wanted him to recover fully before taking the load of playing Test cricket. Now he looks fine and ready to feature for us in Test cricket." Rashid has played just 5 Tests so far in his illustrious career and has good numbers for Afghanistan. During this time, the spinner has picked up 34 wickets at an average of 22.35 and has scored 106 runs, including one fifty. The series in Zimbabwe will open with three T20Is, scheduled for December 9, 11, and 12 at Harare Sports Club. Following the T20Is, the teams will compete in a three-match ODI series on December 15, 17, and 19 at the same venue. The tour will conclude with a two-match Test series in Bulawayo, with the first Test set for December 26 to 30 and the second from January 2 to 6.

At 7 feet, 9 inches, Olivier Rioux is the world's tallest teen, an intriguing basketball project

The Florida freshman, a happy-go-lucky Canadian who owns a spot in the Guinness record book as the world's tallest teenager, also will make basketball history when he plays for the 21st-ranked Gators this season.

GAINESVILLE. Walking from his apartment to classes and then to the University of Florida's basketball facility, Olivier Rioux poses for dozens — sometimes hundreds — of pictures a day. Vertical shots, of course. Rioux won't fit in the frame any other way. At 7 feet, 9 inches, Rioux is the ultimate BMOC. He's actually the Biggest Man On Campus — any campus. The Florida freshman, a happy-go-lucky Canadian who owns a spot in the Guinness record book as the world's tallest teenager, also will make

basketball history when he plays for the 21st-ranked Gators this season. The cheerful guy known as "Oli" will become the tallest to play college hoops, supplanting 7-foot-7 Kenny George of UNC Asheville (2006-08).

He's 2 inches taller than former NBA giants Gheorghe Muresan and Manute Bol, and 3 inches taller than popular big men Yao Ming, Tacko Fall and Shawn Bradley. "You get asked questions every day," said Rioux, who likes to draw in his spare time. "You don't have a single three seconds to yourself when you're outside, which I was fine with because my brother and my dad are tall. And, as a family, we used to go out. That's just how it was, and you can't change that because people are curious."

His college teammates have gotten used to it by now. "It's really weird looking up to someone," said 7-foot-1 center Micah Handlogten. "But being around him just about every day, it's just different when you're out in public with him. People normally ask me, 'You're so tall. Do you play basketball?' No one says a word to me (now). Everyone just looks to him. It's kind of crazy. He doesn't shy away from it."

Rioux actually embraces it. He welcomes the stares, the questions and all the requests. "It does help to be Canadian," he quipped.



"You just get used to it. Talking to people is nice because they are curious, and you can't change that." Rioux has worked hard to prepare for Division I basketball, but no one expects him to be a star at this level, certainly not right away. The Gators do expect Rioux to be a fan favorite, beginning with their season opener against USF on Monday night. Coach Todd Golden predicts it will be like nothing he's ever experienced, with chants for Rioux late in games. "That one we can see coming from a mile away," Golden said. "About 95% of my conversations with random people about our team are about him. It's the first time we've been ranked since 2019 and it's like, 'Hey, Coach, we're really excited to see Oli out there this year.' And I get it, man. He's a very unique

individual. "Rioux grew up in Terrebonne, Quebec, and realized at an early age he was different. He was taller than most of his teachers in elementary school, crossed the 6-foot mark by age 8 and topped 7 feet the summer before seventh grade.

His mom is 6-2, dad is 6-8 and his older brother is 6-9. "At my meemaw's house, we had the wall (where) me and my brother used to measure ourselves. And then one day, poof, my brother was gone," Rioux said, recalling the day he "officially" outgrew his entire family.

Back home in Canada, Rioux has a number of custom-made items to make life more comfortable, most notably his bed. On campus, though, he barely fits diagonally across a queen-sized mattress.

He has to duck to get through near every doorway and often hits his head. He wears a size 20 shoe, gets most of his wardrobe from team gear and won't dare ride a scooter because "I don't trust myself." And squeezing into a classroom desk is more comical than a point guard trying to box him out. He started playing basketball at age 5 and ended up at IMG Academy in Sarasota, about three hours south of Gainesville, for high school. He had offers from UC Irvine and Morehead State but ended up at Florida as a preferred walk-on.

ICC Test Rankings: Jasprit Bumrah loses No 1 rank to Kagiso Rabada

New Delhi. India pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah has lost his number-one rank after being overtaken by South speedster Kagiso Rabada in the latest ICC Men's Test Bowlers Rankings. Rabada's rise follows his impressive form in the ongoing ICC World Test Championship cycle, particularly highlighted by his nine-wicket haul in South Africa's recent victory over Bangladesh in Mirpur, which also marked his 300th Test wicket. Rabada's strong performance led the Proteas to a seven-wicket win, helping him leap past Bumrah, as well as Australia's Josh Hazlewood and India's Ravichandran Ashwin, to claim the No.1 ranking for the first time since early 2019. Rabada first ascended to the top in January 2018 and has remained a consistent presence in the top 10 ever since, only relinquishing his position in February 2019. Hazlewood now occupies the second spot, while Bumrah and Ashwin drop to third and fourth, respectively.

Bumrah recently regained the top spot after his stellar show in the Bangladesh series where he scalped 11 wickets along with Ashwin. However, the duo failed to replicate their good show in the ongoing series against New Zealand scalping just three and six wickets respectively averaging well above 40. Elsewhere in the rankings, Pakistan's Noman Ali made significant



strides with a career-high entry into the top 10, following his standout performance in Rawalpindi against England. His nine-wicket performance lifted him eight places to ninth. Fellow Pakistan spinner Sajid Khan also reached a career-best rating, moving up 12 spots to 38th after a 10-wicket showing. New Zealand left-arter Mitchell Santner surged 30 places to a new career-best of 44th overall after his 13-wicket haul in Pune against India.

No Harshit Rana debut: Abhishek Nayar says no additions to India 3rd Test squad

Harshit Rana's hopes to debut for India have been postponed until the Border-Gavaskar Trophy in Australia, as confirmed by assistant coach Abhishek Nayar ahead of the Mumbai Test. Despite impressing with recent performances, he remains a reserve for the New Zealand Test series.



joined the camp, sparking speculation about his potential inclusion in the lineup. However, he was present only as a net bowler. Recently, Harshit impressed with a five-wicket haul and a half-century for Delhi in their Ranji Trophy 2024-25 match against Assam. He has been part of the travelling reserves for the current Test series and will head to Australia next month as a member of the 18-player squad for the Border-Gavaskar Trophy 2024-25. Speaking at the press conference on Wednesday, October 30, Nayar would say that for India

every day will be critical heading into the WTC final and they haven't been narrow-minded thinking about the summit clash.

No additions to the squad. Every week is critical, every day is critical. We have not been narrow-minded in thinking about WTC final. We want to focus on this match," said Nayar. Harshit has had an impressive year in 2024, which started with his incredible performance for KKR in their title-winning campaign in the IPL. The Delhi pacer picked up 19 wickets in 13 matches for Kolkata and received call-ups during the Sri Lanka tour and the Bangladesh T20 series.

Harshit missed out on the chance of making his debut in the 3rd T20I against Bangladesh due to a viral infection and then joined the Indian squad for the New Zealand series as a reserve. The pacer is part of a jumbo squad that will travel to Australia for the Border-Gavaskar series.

Cricket Australia extends head coach Andrew McDonald's contract

New Delhi. Cricket Australia (CA) has announced the extension of Andrew McDonald's contract as the Head Coach of the Australian men's cricket team, a position he has held since 2022. The extension will see McDonald lead the team through an array of major international tournaments, including the next ICC World Test Championship, the defence of the 2027 ICC Men's Cricket World Cup title, the 2026 ICC Men's T20 World Cup, and the 2025 Champions Trophy. The extended contract period will be a demanding one, highlighted by an unprecedented 13 months of Test cricket in 2026-27. This includes away series against arch-rivals India and England and the historic 150th-anniversary Test at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG).

CA CEO Nick Hockley expressed confidence in McDonald's ongoing impact. "Andrew has proven to be an outstanding men's head coach who, along with delivering exceptional results, has built a strong coaching team, methodology, and an excellent environment for the team to



perform at its best. We are delighted to extend his tenure for a further two years." The extension, Hockley added, is timed perfectly to align McDonald's leadership with some of the biggest events in international cricket. "Excitingly, this extension means Andrew will take the team to the next World Test Championship campaign, World Cup defense, and the next T20 World Cup. The period also includes an unprecedented 13 months of Test cricket in 2026-27 featuring away series against India and England, and the 150th-anniversary Test at the MCG."

McDonald expressed gratitude for the opportunity to continue leading the team and praised the environment built under his tenure: "I am very fortunate to have an exceptional group of leaders, players, coaches, and staff who are fully invested in the ongoing well-being, success, and development of this group," he said. "The professionalism, commitment, and experience of my fellow coaches and the wider staff have ensured the journey has been extremely successful but just as importantly created a culture of unity, trust, and inclusivity."

McDonald acknowledged the challenges international cricket presents, but said he is proud of how his team has tackled each one with resilience and unity.

Ben Oliver, CA's Executive General Manager of National Teams, noted that McDonald's influence extends beyond the field:

"Andrew is an outstanding coach, and we are thrilled that he has extended his commitment to the Australian men's team. Andrew has created a performance environment that resonates strongly with the playing group and has produced some outstanding results."

New Zealand coach hopeful of India whitewash and WTC Final: Done it before

New Zealand coach Gary Stead is hoping his side can make it to the World Test Championship final by winning their remaining matches in the 2023-25 cycle. New Zealand to win their remaining 4 Tests to reach the final.

New Delhi. New Zealand coach Gary Stead is hoping that his side can make it to the World Test Championship final by winning their remaining matches, which would also mean they will have to whitewash India with win in the Mumbai Test. New Zealand were the

inaugural winners of the WTC title when they beat India in 2021.

During that time, the Blackcaps faced a similar situation as they had to win their remaining 4 Tests and did so. New Zealand have the one match against India and 3 Tests against England remaining in their 2023-25 cycle. Stead is hoping that his side can do a repeat of the 2021 heroics once again. Speaking to the New Zealand media, as quoted by Reuters, Stead said that his side will be looking to draw inspiration from their WTC run in 2021. "The first time we were in the situation of qualifying for the first WTC final, we had to win four tests on the bounce and we managed to," said Stead. "Hopefully that's something we can lean on and say, 'we've done it before, here's an opportunity to perhaps do something very special again.'" Also Read: How South



Africa's win in Bangladesh has hurt India's WTC final chances

Adapting to Mumbai pitch key for India series whitewash

New Zealand will have the chance to become the first team in 24 years to blank India in a

home Test series after South Africa did it in 2000. Stead believes that his side would need to quickly adapt to the pitch conditions in Mumbai to pull off the feat.

Stead emphasized the difficulty of adjusting to the red clay pitch at Wankhede Stadium, especially after their initial two wins on black soil surfaces. "A series win in itself is incredible, but what we want to do is keep trying to get better every game, and we're going to different circumstances now," Stead told New Zealand media. "The red clay is very different, so we're going to have to adapt quickly," he added. "Our next two trainings are going to be important but for the WTC itself, there's no doubt one more win would certainly help us."



Happy Diwali



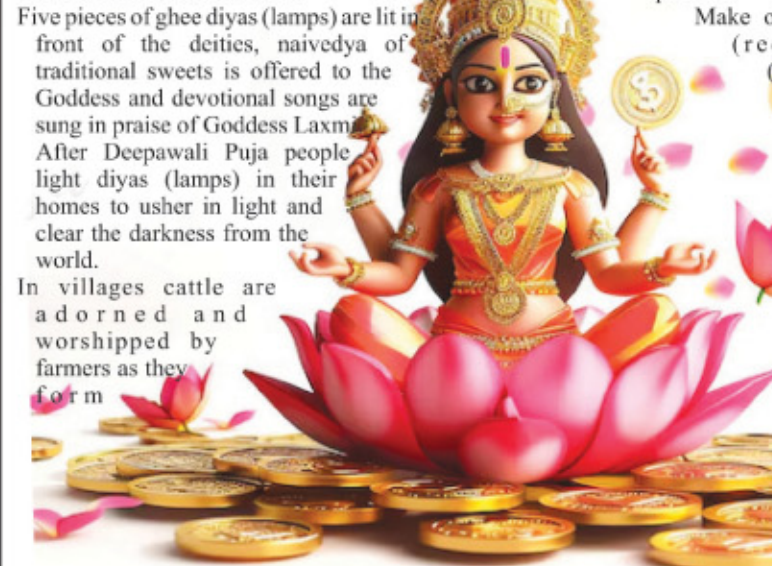
Lakshmi Puja on Diwali

The third day of Diwali festival is the most important one for Lakshmi-puja and is entirely devoted to the propitiation of Goddess Lakshmi. On this very day sun enters his second course and passes Libra which is represented by the balance or scale. Hence, this design of Libra is believed to have suggested the balancing of account books and their closing. Despite the fact that this day falls on an amavasya day it is regarded as the most auspicious. The day of Lakshmi-Puja falls on the dark night of Amavasya. The strains of joyous sounds of bells and drums float from the temples as man is invoking Goddess Lakshmi in a wondrous holy "pouring-in" of his heart. All of a sudden that impenetrable darkness is pierced by innumerable rays of light for just a moment and the next moment a blaze of light descends down to earth from heaven as golden-footed Deep-Lakshmi alights on earth in all her celestial glory amidst chantings of Vedic hymns. A sublime light of knowledge dawns upon humanity and this self enlightenment is expressed through the twinkling lamps that illuminate the palaces of the wealthy as well as the lowly

abodes of the poor. It is believed that on this day Lakshmi walks through the green fields and loiters through the bye-lanes and showers her blessings on man for plenty and prosperity. Lakshmi Pooja, or the worship of the goddess of wealth, is the main event on Diwali in North and West India. It is extremely important to keep the house spotlessly clean and pure on Diwali. Goddess Lakshmi likes cleanliness, and she will visit the cleanest house first. This is also the reason why the broom is worshipped on this day with offerings of haldi and kumkum (turmeric and vermilion). Lamps are lit in the evening to welcome the goddess. They are believed to light up Her path. Lakshmi Puja consists of a combined puja of five deities: Ganesha is worshiped at the beginning of every auspicious act as Vighnaharta; Goddess Lakshmi is worshipped in her three forms - Mahalakshmi (the goddess of wealth and money), Mahasaraswati (the goddess of books and learning), and Mahakali; Kubera (the treasurer of the gods) is also worshipped.

Diwali Puja Process

Diwali is the festival of Lakshmi, the Goddess of prosperity and wealth. It is believed that Goddess Lakshmi visit everyone during Diwali and brings peace and prosperity to all. On the night of Diwali "Lakshmi-Pujan" is performed in the evenings. A traditional Pujan is performed after sunset in all the homes. Five pieces of ghee diyas (lamps) are lit in front of the deities, naivedya of traditional sweets is offered to the Goddess and devotional songs are sung in praise of Goddess Lakshmi. After Deepawali Puja people light diyas (lamps) in their homes to usher in light and clear the darkness from the world. In villages cattle are adorned and worshipped by farmers as they form



Now put Deepak (Lamp) in front of the Deities - As the tiny diyas of clay are lighted to drive away the shadows of evil spirits. Make a Panchamitra with 5 ingredients of milk, curd, ghee (clarified butter), sugar & Honey. Place Few mithais, snacks & fruits as a prasad. Make offerings of flowers, Abir (red colour), Sindoor (vermillion) and Haldi (turmeric). Light the Agarbatti (incense sticks) and lamps filled with Ghee. Now make offerings of Fruit, Sweet dishes (mithai), Salty snacks (Mathis, Ghatia, Namakpare) and offer Dakshina (token money), which could be given to the poor. In the end offer paan (betel leaves), cloves. Now pray to the deities to seek their

the blessings. main source of their income. In south, cows are offered special veneration as they are supposed to be the incarnation of Goddess Lakshmi and therefore they are adorned and worshipped on this day.

Step By Step Diwali Pujan: First clean the Puja room and then Bathe each Deity (Lakshmi & Ganesh) first with water, then with panchamitra/or rose water, followed by water once more

Ganesh Pooja : Ganesh Puja is a must for deepawali Puja. (Lord Ganesh is to be worshipped in all pujas before any other God or Goddess.) (Ganesh Aarti is sung)
Laxmi Pooja : Place Lotus and other flowers at her feet as an offering. A silver coin is placed in front of the Goddess during the puja. Now perform Aarti with flowers in hand (Lakshmi Aarti is sung). After Deepawali Pujan have the Prasad and go out to burst Diwali Crackers.



Diwali in history

The history of Diwali is replete with legends and these legends are moored to the stories of Hindu religious scriptures, mostly the Puranas. Though the central theme of all legends point out to the classic truth of the victory of the good over the evils, the mode of their presentation and the characters differ. Diwali, being the festival of lights, lighting the lamp of knowledge within us means to understand and reflect upon the significant purpose of each of the five days of festivities and to bring those thoughts in to the day to day lives.

The five day of Diwali

The first day of Diwali is called Dhanvantari Triodasi or Dhanwantari Triodasi also called Dhan Theras. The second day of Diwali is called Narak Chaturdasi. It is the fourteenth lunar day (thithi) of the dark fortnight of the month of Kartik and the eve of Diwali. On this day Lord Krishna destroyed the demon Narakasur and made the world free from fear. The third day of Diwali is the actual Diwali. This is the day when worship for Mother Lakshmi is performed. On the fourth day of Diwali, Goverdhan Pooja is performed. The fifth day of the diwali is called Bhratri Dooj. It is a day dedicated to sisters.

Hindu Mythology

The Story of Rama and Sita: Lord Rama was a great warrior King who was exiled by his father Dashratha, the King of Ayodhya, along with his wife Sita and his younger brother Lakshman, on his wife's insistence. Lord Rama returned to his Kingdom Ayodhya after 14 years of exile, in which he put an end to the demon Ravana of Lanka, who was a great Pundit, highly learned but still evil dominated his mind. After this victory of Good over Evil, Rama returned to Ayodhya. In Ayodhya, the people welcomed them by lighting rows of clay lamps. So, it is an occasion in honor of Rama's victory over Ravana; of Truth's victory over Evil. The Story of King Bali and Vamana Avatar (the Dwarf): The other story concerns King Bali, who was a generous ruler. But he was also very ambitious. Some of the Gods pleaded Vishnu to check King Bali's power. Vishnu came to earth in

the form of a Vamana (dwarf) dressed as priest. The dwarf approached King Bali and said "You are the ruler of the three worlds: the Earth, the world above the skies and the underworld. Would you give me the space that I could cover with three strides?" King Bali laughed. Surely a dwarf could not cover much ground, thought the King, who agreed to dwarf's request. At this point, the dwarf changed into Vishnu and his three strides covered the Earth, the Skies and the whole Universe! King Bali was sent to the underworld. As part of Diwali celebrations, some Hindus remember King Bali.

The Defeat of Narkasur by Lord Krishna: Lord Vishnu in his 8th incarnation as Krishna destroyed the demon Narkasura, who was causing great unhappiness amongst the people of the world. Narkasura was believed to be a demon of filth,

covered in dirt. He used to kidnap beautiful young women and force them to live with him. Eventually, their cries for rescue were heard by Vishnu, who came in the form of Krishna. First, Krishna had to fight with a five-headed monster who guarded the demon's home. Narkasura hoped that his death might bring joy to others. Krishna granted his request and the women were freed. For Hindus, this story is a reminder that good can still come out of evil.

Krishna and The Mountain: In the village of Gokula, many years ago, the people prayed to the God Indra. They believed that Indra sent the rains, which made their crops, grow. But Krishna came along and persuaded the people to worship the mountain Govardhan, because the mountain and the land around it were fertile. This did not please Indra. He sent thunder and torrential rain down on the village. The people cried to Krishna to help. Krishna saved the villagers by lifting the top of the mountain with his finger. The offering of food to God on this day of Diwali is a reminder to Hindus of the importance of food and it is a time for being thankful to God for the bounty of nature.

Sikh Festival Diwali In Sikh perspective, Diwali is celebrated as the return of the sixth Guru, Guru Hargobind Ji from the captivity of the city, Gwalior. To commemorate

Happy Diwali



his undying love for Sikhism, the towns people lit the way to, Harnandhir Sahib (referred to as the Golden Temple), in his honour.

Jain Festival Diwali

Among the Jain festivals, Diwali is one of the most important one. For on this occasion we celebrate the Nirvana of Lord

Mahavira who established the dharma as we follow it. Lord Mahavira was born as Vardhamana on Chaitra Shukla 13th in the Nata clan at Khatiya-kundapura, near Vaishali. He obtained Kevala Gyana on Vishakha Shukla 10 at the Jambhraka village on the banks of Rijukula river at the age of 42.