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President Murmu inaugurates Brahma Kumaris' global summit, shares concern over world peace

Sanjay Kumar Abohar, Oct 4: After inaugurating Brahma Kumaris' global summit at Shantivan in Abu Road on Friday, President Droupadi Murmu...

ality did not mean being religious or renouncing worldly work. It meant recognising one's inner strength and bringing purity in one's behavior and thoughts. She said a pure conscience resided only in a clean and healthy body, emphasising the importance of keeping one's thoughts and actions clean, too. Murmu said India had been guiding the world in the spiritual field since ancient times. She said the world was struggling with global warming and environmental problems and people needed to make efforts to preserve the planet. She informed the audience that she had planted a sapling at the Man Sarovar complex and exhorted everybody to plant a tree each year in the name of their mother or on their birthday. The President was welcomed by Brahma Kumaris' chief Dadi Ratanmohini who also shared the...



Way behind China in production pace, warns IAF Chief

Simmi Kaur Babbar New Delhi, Oct 4: In a blunt assessment vis-à-vis China, Indian Air Force (IAF) Chief Air Chief Marshal AP Singh on Friday said India needed to "catch up" on technology as on production speed of military equipment "we are way behind" the neighbour. On the much-delayed production timelines of the indigenous fighter jet programme, the Tejas, the IAF Chief, who was addressing a press conference ahead of the Air Force Day (October 8), said Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) needed to match the promise of making 24 jets every year. Air Chief Marshal Singh, who took over as IAF Chief on September 30, said, "In terms of quality of manpower, we are way ahead of them. As far as technology is concerned, we may not be so good, as of now. We were better than them, we need to catch up." On HAL and production of indigenous jets, he said, "It made a promise that production rates will be increased to 24 aircraft per year. If that promise is kept, delays can be caught up with. HAL has a third production line at Nashik, which is yet to churn out an aircraft." On the twin-

dling fleet of fighter jets, the Chief said, "Our first aim is not to let aircraft strength remain below 30 (squadrons)." Each squadron has 16-18 jets. The Cabinet Committee of Security has laid down the need for 42 squadrons to tackle a simultaneous two-front threat from China and Pakistan. The IAF presently has 32 squadrons with several scheduled to be phased out over the next few years. The IAF has placed an order with HAL for 83 Tejas Mark-1A jets. Deliveries were to start in March this year, but so far, not a single plane has been delivered. On future production of indigenously designed fighter jets, he said the force was looking at 97 more Tejas Mark-1A, and also six-seven squadrons each of Tejas Mark 2 and Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA). Asked how to produce so many planes, he said, "Private players have to come in. I don't think we can continue relying only on one agency (HAL) that may have limitations of doing things in a specified time frame." On the future of a multi-role fighter aircraft (MRFA) programme that would plan to make 114 jets with a foreign partner and India partner JV producing jets in India, the IAF Chief said, "We needed the MRFA as of yesterday". "If the Tejas Mark 2 gets into production, as planned, by 2028, and MRFA is signed, we are not too badly off. If these timelines are getting pushed, we have to look at alternatives," he said. On the current situation along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh, the IAF Chief said, "The situation is the same as it was a year ago or so." "The Chinese are creating infrastructure on their side of the LAC at a rapid pace.



Corruption at its peak in Himachal Pradesh

Hamirpur, Oct 4: Corruption is at its peak in Himachal Pradesh and the state government is dependent on the Centre's aid for running its petty affairs, said JP Nadda, while addressing BJP workers at Bilaspur today. He said the situation was so miserable that the state had imposed a toilet tax in the state, adding that the tax had lowered the dignity of the state in the country. Nadda said Congress always played the cards of caste, religion and division of society to meet its political interests. He said Congress was synonymous to 'anti-national'. Nadda claimed it was only the BJP government, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, that had brought development to the state. He said projects, including four-lane highways, tunnels and over 93,000 houses for the homeless were introduced by the BJP government and they had brought prosperity to the state. Elaborating further he said other development works in the state were also carried out under the BJP's regime, including building AIIMS-Bilaspur, three medical colleges at Hamirpur, Chamba and Nahana, a super speciality hospital and cancer hospital in Shimla and a hydro engineering college in Bilaspur etc. A bridge, the foundation stone for which was laid by former PM Indira Gandhi, was constructed by BJP leader and former CM Prem Kumar Dhumal after over 25 years, he said.

Kumari Selja confident of being in running for Haryana CM after meeting Rahul Gandhi

Navdeep Singh Sahni New Delhi, Oct 4: Senior Congress leader and Sirsa MP Kumari Selja met her party's leadership in Delhi on Thursday, the last day of campaigning for the Haryana Assembly election. Congress MP Kumari Selja on Thursday said the decision on the party's chief ministerial candidate for Haryana rests with the party's high command, hinting that her name would be among those considered. Lok Sabha LoP and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi in a conversation with party MP Kumari Selja during a public meeting for the Haryana Assembly elections. "There will be some people in the consideration zone and I think Selja will be among them," she said in an interview with ANI, adding that the leadership would take factors like seniority and party work into account when making the decision. "It is only for the high command to answer, and they will have to decide about

the CM candidate... My commitment to the party has never been in question," Selja said, expressing confidence that her contributions to the party would not be overlooked. Selja, a senior Congress leader and MP from Sirsa, had been largely absent from the party's campaign in recent days, instead focusing on her Lok Sabha constituency. She met her party's leadership in Delhi on Thursday, the last day of campaigning for the Haryana Assembly election. This followed reports suggesting she was "upset" with the handling of party affairs in Haryana. "I met Rahul Gandhi yesterday, not Sonia Gandhi... Elections are here, so discussions related to the polls, about the state - a lot of things are discussed," she said. Selja downplayed speculation surrounding her absence from the campaign, asserting that the Congress was well-positioned for the upcoming polls. "A lot of hard work went in, Rahul Gandhi himself worked hard. Priyanka Gandhi also came here, the Congress president also came here. What started with the Yatra of Rahul Gandhi made a lot of difference in the state. An atmosphere has set in, in the state," she said. The BJP is seeking a third consecutive term in power in Haryana, while Congress is hoping for a comeback after being out of power since 2014.



EAM Jaishankar to lead Indian delegation to SCO Summit in Islamabad

ST Correspondent New Delhi, Oct 4: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will lead an Indian delegation to Islamabad, Pakistan, for the SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organisation) Summit on October 15 and 16, marking the first high-level visit from India to Pakistan in several years. Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal confirmed on Friday that Jaishankar will head the Indian delegation to the SCO Heads of Government meeting. SCO is a multilateral body that includes Russia and China as members, with Pakistan hosting this year's summit. When asked if Jaishankar would meet his Pakistani counterpart, Jaiswal said he could not comment at this time. "The visit is specifically for the SCO meeting," he added. Regarding a potential meeting with Pakistani officials, Jaiswal stated that, so far, the minister's travel plans are limited to the SCO summit. "If there are any developments, we will let you know," he said.



Supreme Court junks review petitions against SC/ST subclassification verdict

Tejinder Kaur Babbar New Delhi, Oct 4: The review petitions, considered in chambers by a seven-judge bench led by CJI Dhananjaya Y Chandrachud, were dismissed as the bench found "no error apparent on the face of the record." The Supreme Court has rejected a set of review petitions challenging its August 1 decision that allowed sub-classifications within Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) for preferential reservations. The review petitions, considered in chambers by a seven-judge bench led by Chief Justice of India Dhananjaya Y Chandrachud, were dismissed as the bench found "no error apparent on the face of the record." "Having perused the review petitions, there is no error apparent on the face of the record. No case for review has been established. The review petitions are, therefore, dismissed," stated the court order. In a brief order, the bench, which included justices Bhushan R Gavai, Vikram Nath, Bela

M Trivedi, Pankaj Mithal, Manoj Misra and Satish Chandra Sharma, concluded that none of the petitions provided sufficient grounds for reconsideration. While the batch of review petitions were considered on September 24, the court order was released on Friday. The review petitioners included several persons and organisations, including All Peoples Party leader Thumati Ravi, lawyer Jaishri Patil, Samvidhan Bachao Trust, Dr BR Ambedkar Global

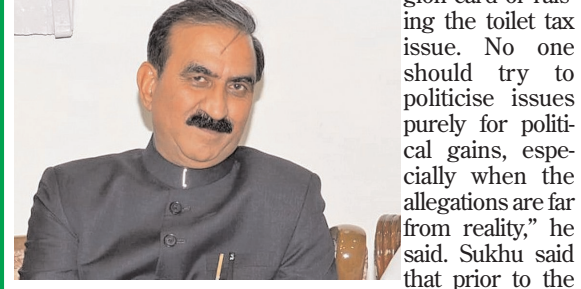
Mission, All India SC/ST Railways Employee Association and National Federation of Dalit and Adivasi Organisation. On August 1, the Constitution bench of the Supreme Court delivered a 6-1 majority ruling, empowering state governments to create sub-classifications within SCs and STs for preferential reservations, provided these decisions are based on empirical evidence and rational criteria. The majority ruling overturned the 2004 EV Chinniah case, which had held that sub-classification within SC/STs was impermissible, treating these groups as homogeneous classes. Justice Trivedi was the sole dissenter on the bench. By allowing subclassification, the top court apparently opened the door for states to identify and provide targeted benefits to the most disadvantaged subgroups within the broader SC/ST categories, provided they base their decisions on empirical evidence and rational criteria.

In a significant departure, the majority also supported the idea of excluding the "creamy layer" from SC/ST reservations, a concept previously applied only to OBCs. Authoring a separate judgment, justice BR Gavai, supported by CJI Chandrachud and others, emphasised, "The State must evolve a policy for identifying the creamy layer even within SCs and STs to achieve true equality as enshrined under the Constitution." The majority ruling acknowledged the social and economic diversity within SC/ST communities and allowed states to provide targeted benefits to the most disadvantaged subgroups, thereby promoting a more equitable distribution of affirmative action. Marking a significant shift in the landscape of reservation policies in India, the court held that the SC/ST communities are "not homogenous" but are a "socially heterogeneous class" and that there are varying degrees of backwardness within these groups that ought to be addressed by the State for the fulfilment of the constitutional goal of social equality.



No toilet tax in Himachal, clarifies CM Sukhu

Shimla, Oct 4: Interacting with the media in New Delhi on Friday, he said such claims are baseless and should not be used for political purposes. He said, "In light of the Haryana elections, the BJP is either playing the religion card or raising the toilet tax issue. No one should try to politicise issues purely for political gains, especially when the allegations are far from reality," he said. Sukhu said that prior to the Vidhan Sabha elections in 2022, the then BJP government had introduced sops worth Rs 5,000 crore, including provision of free water (in rural areas) in a bid to get votes. Despite these measures, the people of the state voted in favour of the Congress, he added. He said free water was being provided to even five-star hotels, adding that the current government had taken steps to rationalise the water subsidy and decided to impose minimal charges of Rs 100 per connection per month in rural areas.



Amethi Dalit family murder Opposition slams Yogi Adityanath govt

Naresh Malhotra Lucknow, Oct 4: Opposition leaders in Uttar Pradesh on Friday attacked the BJP-led state government over the law and order situation in the state, citing murder of four members of a Dalit family, including two children, inside their house in Amethi. Sunil Kumar, 35, a government school teacher, his 32-year-old wife Poonam, and the couple's two daughters, Drishti and Suni, were shot dead in the Ahorwa Bhawani area of Amethi on Thursday. The drawn wide-out of the Dalit family has drawn widespread denunciation of the state government. "The incident of the brutal murder of four members of a Dalit family in Amethi district of UP is extremely sad and worrying. The government should also take strict action against the culprits and the policemen there so that the criminals do not remain fearless," Bahujan Samaj Party chief Mayawati said on X in Hindi. UP Congress president Ajay Rai said the incident shows that in the poor law and order of the Yogi government, a person is not safe even inside the

house "The rule of law has been destroyed in the state. The flag of terror of goons, miscreants and criminals is flying high in UP and no step of the government is visible in the direct incident in Amethi tells that there is no rule of law in Uttar Pradesh but jungle raj... The murder of the whole family in Amethi district is the real picture of the law and order of Uttar Pradesh. "The truth is that there is no guarantee of the life of Dalits in Uttar Pradesh, no one knows whose turn will come tomorrow, and the propaganda is that the law and order is very good," the Nagina Lok Sabha MP said in a long Hindi post on X. Aazad said the incident of the mass murder by barging into their house is extremely sad and punishable, besides being a testimony to the fact that the security of Dalits is in a "pitiable state" and there is no one to listen to them. "This is because if the police-administration had acted on Poonam Bharti's complaint of molestation and death threats a month-and-a-half ago, four lives would not have been lost today," he claimed. "The insensitivity of the police-administration is also responsible for this mass murder," he said. Demanding immediate arrest of the accused, the MP warned to start a protest in Amethi over any delay. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath had on Thursday expressed grief over the incident. In a post in Hindi on X, he said,

tion of ending this terror," Rai said. "The Yogi government should answer how much worse will Uttar Pradesh be made now?" he said on social media. "I am with the victim family in this hour of sorrow. I demand the immediate arrest of the criminals guilty of four murders," added the former UP minister. Azad Samaj Party chief Chandra Shekhar Aazad said, "The



Haryana assembly election today

New Delhi, Oct 4: The ruling BJP is battling an anti-incumbency, having been in power in the state for the past 10 years. Haryana, where the BJP has been in power since October 2014, will vote in a single phase on Saturday. After voting concludes in the evening, news channels will come out with the results of exit polls conducted for them by professional pollsters to project the likely outcome and which party could win how many seats. Gurugram, India-October 04, 2024: Polling officials going to vote booth after collect electronic voting machines (EVM) and other election-related material on the eve of Haryana assembly elections at Government Girls College near ITI, in Gurugram, India, on Friday, 04 October 2024. (Photo by Parveen Kumar/Hindustan Times) Gurugram, India-October 04, 2024: Polling officials going to vote booth after collect electronic voting machines (EVM) and other election-related material on the eve of Haryana assembly elections at Government Girls College near ITI, in Gurugram, India, on Friday, 04 October 2024. (Photo by Parveen Kumar/Hindustan Times) More than 2.03 crore electors are eligible to vote in the

election, in which as many as 1031 candidates, including 101 women, are in the fray for total 90 seats of the Haryana legislative assembly. It is a poll of voters taken immediately after they exit the polling booth; therefore, the name 'exit poll.' People are asked who they voted for and projections are prepared on the basis of responses. A similar exercise is the opinion poll, conducted months or days before the election day. Here, people are asked who they intend to vote for. Opinion polls cannot be conducted after the schedule of an election is announced. This is to ensure an individual's choice of candidate is not influenced. On the election day, voting will be held from 7am to 6pm. From 7pm onwards, news channels will begin releasing their respective exit poll projections. You can watch these on TV or follow the exit poll blog of hindustantimes.com for live updates. It is possible for an exit poll to go wrong as voters may not have been truthful in revealing who they voted for. For example, for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, nearly every agency predicted well over 350 seats for the BJP-led ruling NDA. However, the NDA won 293 seats, including 240 by the BJP.



## News box

## Maharashtra subsidy for cows tops Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan

MUMBAI. Earlier this week, the poll-bound Mahayuti gov't cleared a subsidy of Rs 50 per cow daily for desi cows housed in registered gaushalas (cow shelters). The scheme will cost the severely cash-strapped state Rs 230 crore per year. Significantly, the payout is higher than the daily subsidy given to cows in cattle shelters in other BJP-ruled states like Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, where it ranges between Rs 20 and Rs 40. The cabinet cleared the subsidy even though it has two other schemes providing financial support to cattle shelters. In doing so, it overruled the state finance department, which opposed the additional subsidy and pointed out the duplication.

has learnt that the animal husbandry department had proposed to the cabinet that a subsidy of Rs 30 per day per cow be allocated to registered gaushalas in the state in order to support desi cows, whose numbers were depleting. It had also said that gaushalas covered under the other two schemes should be excluded from the subsidy.

However, after considering the proposal, the cabinet ended up clearing a subsidy of Rs 50 per cow per day, which is 66% higher than the figure proposed. This raised the annual outlay estimated from Rs 135 crore to Rs 230 crore per year. This change was made on the suggestion of animal husbandry minister Radhakrishna Vikhe Patil, sources said.

## Custodial assault case: 5 Odisha cops brought to DFS for narcoanalysis, psychoanalysis

Ahmedabad. Five members of Odisha Police were brought to the Directorate of Forensic Sciences (DFS) in Gandhinagar on Thursday for narcoanalysis and psychoanalysis, senior officials confirmed. They include a police inspector, a woman sub-inspector, two women assistant sub-inspectors and a constable. These five individuals have been implicated in a case involving the alleged sexual and physical assault of a woman, who is engaged to an Army officer, inside a police station. The accused cops are currently facing a departmental inquiry while under suspension.

"A team of Odisha Police arrived in Gandhinagar with the accused. The five accused will undergo narcoanalysis along with polygraph and Brain Electrical Oscillation Signature (BEOS) tests. The results of these tests will help the investigators assess the veracity of the claims made in the case. The tests are important as the only people present in the police station when the incident took place were the accused and the victims," sources close to the development said.

According to the earlier media reports, at 1 am on Sep 15, the woman was returning home with her fiancé when miscreants chased their car and threatened them. The duo reached Bharatpur police station in Bhubaneswar where only a woman constable was present. She allegedly refused to lodge a complaint. The couple had an altercation with another police team that reached the spot, after which both were taken into custody. In her complaint, the woman mentioned sexual assault and physical assault on her and her fiancé. The judiciary took grave note of the incident as it took place at a police station where citizens go to seek protection.

## Garba-tanko bushi fusion this Navratri!

Ahmedabad. This Navratri, the city will witness something that has not been done anywhere in India. The Nippon Odori (literally meaning dance of Japan) at Ahmedabad Management Association (AMA) will, from Oct 4 to 6, feature an amalgamation of garba and dandiya raas with Japanese dance forms such as tanko bushi and kokiriko as part of the 12th Japan Festival.

Mukesh Patel, honorary consul of Japan in Ahmedabad, on Wednesday initiated the Nippon Corner at his office in Usmanpura with Japanese decor and glimpses of Japanese culture. Patel was appointed the honorary consul in Feb this year.

Patel told that the event will attract dignitaries such as Yagi Koji, consul general of Japan in Mumbai and Kyoto Hokugo, minister (economic), at the Embassy of Japan in New Delhi, among others. "While we are celebrating the festival of Navratri, this year we decided to celebrate the dance and performance culture of two countries. Tanko bushi, like garba, is a dance with claps, whereas kokiriko, like dandiya, is performed with bamboo sticks," said Patel on the occasion of the initiation of his office in the city.

He added that it is a great honour that several of the Japanese dignitaries will perform the dance. "We believe it is a true cultural exchange and a sign of Japan-Gujarat friendship. In earlier festivals, we have celebrated food and art of both regions. This time, too, it will be an aarti to the goddess while offering prayers to Lord Buddha at AMA," said Patel.

# Create 'digital twin' to address Bengaluru's traffic woes: former Infosys CFO Mohandas Pai

BENGALURU. Calling for the creation of a "digital twin" for Bengaluru, former Infosys CFO Mohandas Pai said through this, traffic movement in every part of the city should be found out every hour, every day, every year in the last five years.

"With this, we need to find out the patterns and know the reasons for it. Once the hotspots are identified, then teams can visit them to fix the congestion in that particular area," he said at the Move In Sync's Mobility Symposium-2024 on Thursday. At the event, industry leaders, dignitaries, policymakers, and others brainstormed on finding solutions for the traffic congestion problems. Calling upon urban expert R K Misra, Pai said like how Nandan Nikelani got the best people to work on Aadhaar, Misra can get the best techies who are interested in solving Bengaluru's congestion problem.

"We can find traffic for the last five years in the digital map and know where new congestions are coming from and simulate it for the next five years. Add Metro rail and more public buses to the simulation, find out its impact and where could the traffic be relieved and know from where the new traffic jams arise," he suggested.

The overall plan to show people on how things will be in five years and how it can be improved should be shared with the government and bodies like BMRL and BMTC for action, he said batting for the setting up of a Centre of Mobility with funding from bodies like the Outer Ring Road Association.

Mobility expert Ashish Verma said IISc's Sustainable Transportation (IST) Lab, Department of Civil Engineering and Indian Institute of Science (IISc) has developed simulation models, both micro and macro, and questioned who in the



government is listening. Urban evangelist Ravichandrar said there is no champion in the government to fix mobility.

TRAFFIC QUALITY INDEX To help citizens plan their commute in Bengaluru, the Traffic Quality

Index (TQI) was launched by 'Move In Sync' which grades the severity of traffic congestion -- from smooth flow to extreme traffic congestion. People need to give the starting point and the destination and the TQI predictive

tool will offer insights into traffic conditions between any two points, gives the best time with less traffic to plan their journey. Co-founder and CTO of Move In Sync Akash Maheshwari said, "TQI platform grades severity of traffic congestion and helps citizens plan their commute days and timings in advance instead of real-time traffic congestion status where you are left with no options."

#BLRFootpath Challenge

As part of #BLRFootpath Challenge, taken up by founder of Bangalore Walks Arun Pai and CEO of MoveInSync Deepesh Agarwal, 100 km of footpath was rated. In the rating, 28 km of Outer Ring Road and Sarjapur Road was marked 'orange and red' with 110 obstacles like garbage, cables, broken footpaths and drains. In the 25 km Koramangala and Inter Ring Road stretch they found 46 obstacles and marked it yellow.

## Procession carrying Navaratri idols reaches Sree Padmanabhaswamy Temple in Kerala capital

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM. The Navaratri procession carrying idols from Tamil Nadu reached the Sree Padmanabhaswamy Temple on Thursday.

The idols carried in the procession are those of Goddess Saraswati from the Thevarakkettu of the Padmanabhapuram Palace, Kumaraswami of the Velimala temple and Munnoottinanka of Sucheendram temple.

The Saraswati idol was carried atop an elephant, Kumaraswami on a silver horse and Munnoottinanka on a palanquin.

At Nemom, the Revenue Department accorded a reception to the procession. The idols were welcomed with special poojas at Avadi Amman Kovil at Karamana. The elaborate colourful procession started from Karamana at 6 pm. The reception at Killippalam, organised with the support of the Union Ministry of Tourism, was

attended by Puducherry Lieutenant Governor K Kailashnathan, Union Minister of State Suresh Gopi and Antony Raju MLA. The procession was given receptions at Aryasala, Chalai, East



Fort and the Kottakkakam. A large crowd was present when the procession reached near the Navaratri Mandapam at the Sree Padmanabhaswamy Temple complex. Moolam Tirunal Rama Varma, head of the erstwhile Travancore royal family, received the ceremonial sword from the

Kanyakumari Devaswom manager.

The function was attended by Suresh Gopi, royal family members Pooyam Thirunal Gouri Parvathi Bai, Aswathy Thirunal Gowri Lakshmi Bayi, Aditya Varma, Travancore Devaswom Board president P S Prasanth, Padmanabhaswamy Temple executive officer B Mahesh, administration committee member Karamana Jayan and manager B Sreekumar. The idol of goddess Saraswati and the ceremonial sword were kept at the Saraswati mandapam where it will be worshipped during the festival days. The idol of Velimala Kumaraswami was kept at the Aryasala Devi temple and Munnoottinanka at Chenthatta Bhagavathy temple. The Navaratri Trust, with the support of the Union Ministry of Culture will organise cultural events at Sree Maha Ganapathy Bhajanamadam at Valiyasala gramam on the festival days.

## 'Kerala govt prioritising initiatives for wildlife conservation': Forest minister

At the Wildlife Week inauguration at Manaveeyam Veedhi, the minister stressed the importance of forest conservation and urged people to take ownership in protecting forest areas.

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM. Forest Minister A K Saseendran on Thursday said that the state government is prioritising wildlife conservation initiatives involving public participation.

Inaugurating the Wildlife Week celebrations organised by the forest department at Manaveeyam Veedhi in the state capital, the minister emphasised the importance of conserving forests and said that people should take ownership for effective conservation of forest areas.

The fair, which began on Thursday as part



of the Wildlife Week celebrations, will offer opportunity for the public to buy authentic forest products collected by

various conservation committees.

A food fair, cultural programmes and a live monitoring system, including real-time monitoring of the forests in Parambikulam and Thekkady tiger reserves are also part of the fair. Minister for Welfare of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Backward Classes O R Kulu inaugurated the tribal fest, the minister for local self-government department inaugurated the photo exhibition and book release held as part of the event.

# Nimhans should take lead on managing stress, says ISRO chairman Dr S Somanath

Dr Somanath encouraged students to contemplate the power of their minds, drawing parallels between the vastness of space and the limitless speed of human thought.

BENGALURU. While we assume that technological advancements tend to make life easier, they often create equally stressful situations, said Dr S Somanath, Secretary of the Department of Space and Chairman of the Space Commission and Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). Speaking during the 27th convocation of Nimhans on Thursday, he stressed on the importance of focused research on managing stress and improving mental resilience and urged Nimhans to take the lead in exploring and mitigating these challenges. Dr Somanath encouraged students to contemplate the power of their minds, drawing parallels between the vastness of space and the limitless speed of human thought. "In space, the fastest thing we know is light, but human thought can travel even faster. It arises from the mind, and the speed at which it travels can be entirely modulated," he said.



The ceremony saw 572 students receiving various degrees and certificates. Excellence

awards and medals were presented to 39 meritorious students. Nimhans director Dr

Pratima Murthy presented the Institute report, highlighting significant advancements in patient care and academic research initiatives.

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## News box

## Delhi AQI rises post-monsoon; average 166 AQI recorded, several areas breach 200 mark

NEW DELHI: Pollution levels in Delhi have risen with the retreat of the monsoon season. The city's average Air Quality Index (AQI) was recorded at 166 over the past 24 hours, indicating poor air quality. Areas such as Anand Vihar, Mundka, Loni, and the Delhi Institute of Tool Engineering reported high AQI levels of 231, 273, 201, and 243 respectively, marking them as unhealthy and hazardous. The PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentration in Delhi is currently 5.5 times higher than the World Health Organization's recommended limit for a 24-hour period. Nearby regions are also experiencing increased pollution. Ghaziabad reported an AQI of 171, while Meerut and Noida both recorded an AQI of 184.

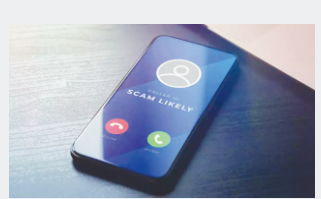
In response to the rising pollution, Shiromani Akali Dal leader Daljit Singh Cheema urged the Supreme Court to take action against Punjab and Haryana. "I appeal to the Supreme Court to take action against them...then they will start acting on it...every time they can't blame farmers, they have to provide farmers with adequate facilities," Cheema stated.

The Supreme Court has criticized the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) for inadequate efforts. "From the affidavit of compliance we find that no effort is being made by CAQM for implementation of its directions, not a single prosecution has been initiated and the last meeting was only held on August 29," the court observed. The Supreme Court has directed Punjab and Haryana to comply with CAQM's directions and submit an affidavit within a week. The case will be heard again on October 16.

## Agra teacher dies after fraudsters claim daughter involved in 'sex scandal'

Agra: A government school teacher in Agra died from a cardiac arrest after receiving a threatening call from cyber fraudsters, her family reported on Thursday.

The incident occurred on September 30 when the fraudsters demanded Rs 1 lakh, claiming her daughter was involved in a sex scandal. Deepanshu Rajput, the deceased's son, said his mother, Malti Verma, aged 58, received a WhatsApp call at noon from someone posing as a police inspector. "Mother Malti Verma (58) was a government teacher at a Junior High School in Achhnera in Agra. On September 30, she got a



WhatsApp call at 12 pm in which they said that her daughter was caught in a sex scandal and began threatening her for the future consequences of revealing her daughter's identity,"

Rajput said. Rajput explained that when he checked the phone number, he realized it was a fraud call and informed his mother. "After that, I also talked to my sister and found everything normal. I asked my mother not to worry because she was a victim of cyber fraud, but she could not control her tension and her health deteriorated after that call," he added. Upon returning home from school, Verma experienced chest pain and anxiety. Her condition worsened, and she was taken to a hospital where she was declared dead due to cardiac arrest.

Anandveer Singh, the in-charge of Jagdishpura police station, confirmed the receipt of a complaint from the family. "We have received a complaint in this case from the family. Action will be taken accordingly," Singh said.

## Man refuses to sell his plot, bludgeoned to death; 2 held

Gurgaon: A man and his son were arrested at Shyam Chowk for allegedly bludgeoning their neighbour to death in a lane near their home in Dhankot after he refused to sell a portion of his land to them, a police official said on Thursday. The accused, Anil, a 40-year-old private worker with a criminal record, and his 19-year-old son, Akash, a housekeeping worker at a private firm, admitted during interrogation that they had asked the 48-year-old victim, Shashikant, a labourer, to sell part of his land. "The accused said that their house was located behind Shashikant's residence, and they wanted to buy part of his land to widen the narrow three-foot passage connecting their house to the lane. When Shashikant refused, they called him to an open area near their homes and attacked him with sticks. After bludgeoning Shashikant in the lane, they fled the scene," said the police official. At 6 am on Wednesday, the Dhankot police post was alerted to a body lying on the road in Dhankot. "A police team, along with forensic experts, was sent to the crime scene," added the official. Based on a complaint lodged by the deceased's brother, Ramchandar, an FIR under Section 103(1) (murder) of the BNS was registered at Rajendra Park police station. "Anil called my brother outside the house on Tuesday at 11.45 pm, after which they murdered him," Ramchandar said in his complaint.

## IT firm manager (35) hangs self from tree after 'spat with wife'

Ghaziabad. A 35-year-old man was found hanging from a tree near Vasundhara Farm in Sector 8 on Thursday morning. Police identified the deceased as Sandeep Singh, who lived with his wife and seven-year-old daughter in a rented flat at Swam Ganga Apartments in Vasundhara. Sandeep was a manager at an IT company in Gurgaon. Around 9 am, the Indrapuram police station was alerted about the body. "Police, along with a forensic team and a dog squad, were dispatched to the scene. The body was sent for autopsy, with the results still pending. We suspect Sandeep had an argument with his wife, but no suicide note was found in his possession," said Swatantra Singh, ACP of Indrapuram. The man was identified after police scanned his mobile phone. "His family has been notified, and a team was sent to his apartment for further investigation," said ACP Singh.

# In biggest seat prestige fight as veteran takes on two debutants

Gurgaon. A BJP heavyweight out to make a statement after a spell in wilderness, the wife of the popular local MLA looking to step into his shoes after his death, and the oldest political party being represented by a debutant. One of the marquee battles of the state election has primed up to its current stature in unexpected ways.

Badshapur is always a prestige fight, as a constituency that straddles most of Gurgaon's urban area and the city's MNC hub. With 5.2 lakh registered voters, it is the state's largest constituency by electorate size and area. But it's also challenging because of the diversity of the electorate, from new residents of the city who bring in different aspirations to the population living here much longer, settled largely in old Gurgaon and urban villages that abut the sectors. In this mix is veteran Rao Narbir Singh (62), the candidate who knows these intricacies best. For Narbir, who was the local MLA from 2014-19 but overlooked for a ticket by BJP in the last assembly polls, this is a bit of a grudge match, too, against detractors rather than political rivals.

With all his experience, though, three-time MLA Narbir still has to contend with the

anti-incumbency BJP is facing. Which is also why his two principal rivals see wind in their sails. Kumudini Daultabad (44), widow of Rakesh Daultabad who died of a heart attack during the Lak Sabha election earlier this year, is contesting as an Independent, hoping Rakesh's goodwill will translate into votes that will kickstart a political career for her.

Vardhan Yadav (33) has found his feet quickly, establishing a connection with the younger voter as he talks jobs and accountability. What's common among the candidates is promises of infrastructure development. Badshapur contributes the most to the state exchequer as it is a bustling corporate hub. An increase in flow of business and capital has gone hand-in-hand with an influx of new residents who have added to the demographic mix of the constituency that otherwise has the Ahir, followed by Jat and Gujjar as most dominant communities. Bad roads, poor garbage disposal and choked drains — problems that people here live with round the year — have all found mention in the campaign.

Narbir conceded that the pace of development has not kept up with the rate



at which the population has grown. "Development can only be achieved when the leadership is strong," he said, adding that he could guarantee voters he would ensure more infrastructure development work is carried out in Gurgaon than during 2014-2019 when he was a minister in the first Manohar Lal Khattar regime.

"Highrise buildings and new sectors have been built here but the basic facilities that support everyday life — from roads to drainage systems — are missing," Yadav said. He highlighted waterlogging, traffic

congestion and poor condition of roads as the most pressing issues in the constituency. "Many roads are in disrepair, and the newly developed sectors lack proper infrastructure. The Bandhwari landfill has become a significant environmental hazard, and its mismanagement has caused concern among residents," he said. Kumudini has released her own manifesto for the constituency. Key points in it are resolution of disputes on 24-metre (internal) roads, managing traffic, law and order and electricity, empowerment of RWAs, better sewage and stormwater drains and steps to bring relief to homebuyers. In addition to this, she has also promised to take up the toll plaza's removal, which resonates with people living in the new sectors as they are forced to pay a toll for driving from one point in the city to another. "We have been working in the constituency for years and we know the needs of the area. We have a plan for every problem faced by the constituency's residents," she said. After 2008, when the constituency came into existence, Congress and BJP won it once each, in 2009 and 2014, respectively.

## Act against illegal dyeing units: NGT to pollution board

Gurgaon. Taking suo motu cognizance of a TOI report that dyeing units were operating illegally in the city, the National Green Tribunal (NGT) last month directed Haryana State Pollution Control Board (HSPCB) to carry out a survey and take action accordingly. The NGT bench of chairperson Prakash Shrivastava, judicial member Arun Kumar Taygi and expert member Dr A Senthil Vel on Sept 13 noted that the TOI report, titled "Dead units on paper, but still dyeing", raised "substantial issues" on compliance with environmental norms.

The bench also issued notices to Union environment ministry, Central Pollution Control Board, HSPCB and Gurgaon DC to submit their responses at least a week before the next hearing

on Oct 16. "The HSPCB is now tasked with surveying and taking action against these illicit units. The aforementioned news item indicates a violation of the provisions of the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974, and the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986," it said. TOI reported on Aug 22 that several dyeing units were officially closed, but continued to operate, specifically in Sector 103, Basai and Sector 36. Regulations dictate that only treated industrial waste can be released into the drain. But these units, which appear to be abandoned plots or warehouses, surreptitiously continue dyeing denims and hanging them out to dry. "The article underscores that dyeing units are also categorised as 'red' industries

due to their high pollution levels, and these units are not authorised to operate outside industrial areas. However, they are found in proximity to residential areas, schools, and even the under-construction Sheela Mata Medical College and Hospital. Residents have long expressed grievances about the malodorous, discoloured water in the drain, which changes hue depending on the dyes used.

This pollution has rendered the lives of locals miserable, causing health issues such as asthma and skin rashes," the order said. The bench went on to cite the article for effects of exposure to heavy metals that are present in denim dyes, and previous orders to four Haryana districts — Gurgaon, Faridabad, Sonapat and Jhajjar — for surveying and inspecting dyeing units.

## UP approves new budget, work on Chilla elevated road set to resume

Noida. UP govt has allotted Rs 892.7 crore and given its go ahead for work to resume on the long-delayed Chilla elevated road that will connect Mayur Vihar in Delhi with the Mahamaya Flyover in Noida. The budget was approved during a high-level meeting led by the infrastructure and industrial development commissioner during a meeting on Tuesday. The amount, however, is significantly lower than Rs 937.9 crore that was sought by UP State Bridge Corporation Ltd (UPSBC), the agency responsible for construction. "The work is likely to resume in a month. We are preparing a report for the state govt's expenditure finance committee. That would be done soon," Noida



after getting a "formal approval" from Noida Authority. "Once we get the approval, a letter of award will be issued to the contractor to start work," he told TOI. Conceived in 2012 to alleviate traffic congestion between Noida and Delhi, the Chilla elevated road project has faced numerous setbacks. Being on the backburner for the next six years, it

minister Yogi Adityanath in Jan 2019, initial work started with funds from Noida Authority. Its progress, however, was hindered by delays in the release of funds from PWD, the rerouting of a GAIL pipeline and complications related to additional construction work. The Covid pandemic then slammed the brakes on the project in March 2020. So far, only 13% of the project is ready, with Noida Authority having disbursed Rs 79 crore. The elevated road, 5.9km long with six lanes, is expected to become a vital connector for commuters travelling between Delhi and Noida. In June last year, the state cabinet sanctioned Rs 787 crore for the project, sharing the cost equally

## Campaign comes to close with road shows, padyatras

Gurgaon. Wrapping up their campaign for the Oct 5 polls, candidates across the four assembly seats in Gurgaon district held roadshows, padyatras, nukkad sabhas and went door-to-door to voters on Thursday.

Former minister and BJP's Badshapur candidate Rao Narbir Singh held a roadshow that covered Badshapur and Farrukhnagar. Addressing voters, Narbir Singh said the constituency witnessed development when he was elected as an MLA in 2014. The area lagged in development because of wrong candidate selection the last five years, he said. "Lotus will bloom on all four seats in Gurgaon. And the coming govt will be of BJP," Narbir Singh said.

He went on to urge voters to support BJP. "It's the era of social media. Everyone should promote BJP as much as possible through social media till voting takes place," he said. The Badshapur assembly seat was won by Independent MLA Rakesh Daultabad in 2019. His wife, Kumudini, is contesting from the seat, which was left vacant after the MLA died of an ailment earlier this year.

Up against Narbir Singh is Congress's Vardhan Yadav.

On Thursday, Yadav said at a roadshow that he was confident people will vote for Congress as BJP is grappling to counter anti-incumbency. In the Gurgaon assembly seat, Congress's Mohit Grover held roadshows and said voters were fed up with BJP's governance over the past decade. "They have hope only in Congress. The clear reason for this is the potential formation of a Congress govt in the state, and local voters have always aligned with the ruling power... This election is one of change in Gurgaon," Grover said. BJP rebel Naveen Goyal, who decided to contest as an Independent candidate after being denied a ticket from the party, led a roadshow in Old Gurgaon on Thursday. Not too far from Goyal's contingent was BJP's candidate, wrestler-turned-politician Mukesh Sharma, who held a series of meetings and a roadshow in Old Gurgaon too. Criticising Congress for its policy of "divide and rule, Sharma said he had the support of 36

## Supreme Court orders fresh investigation, forms 5-member SIT

New Delhi, Oct 4: Tirupati laddu row: The Supreme Court, hearing the matter, said the SIT will consist of officers of the CBI, Andhra Pradesh Police and the FSSAI. Tirupati laddu case hearing: The Supreme Court on Friday ordered a fresh investigation into the Tirupati laddu row and constituted a new five-member Special Investigation Team (SIT). The SIT will consist of officers of the Central Bureau of Investigation, Andhra Pradesh Police and the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI). There will be two members from the CBI, two members from Andhra Pradesh Police and one from the FSSAI. The Supreme Court also said the SIT probe will be monitored by the CBI director. Observing that it will not allow the court to be used as a "political battleground", a bench of Justices BR Gavai and KV Viswanathan passed the order on a batch of petitions, including those seeking a court-monitored probe into the matter. "We don't want this to turn into a political drama," the bench observed. Solicitor general Tushar Mehta told the bench that if there was any element of truth in the allegations, it was unacceptable.

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, RAISUDIN S/O PHAYAJI residing at H.NO-17, WEST LAXMI MARKET, SHASTRI NAGAR, GANDHI NAGAR, SHAHDARA, DELHI-110031 have changed my name to RAISUDIN for all future purposes.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
NOTICE is hereby given to public at large that my client Mr. Sunil Kumar & Mrs. Suman Bala is purchasing the Entire First Floor with Roof Rights of Property bearing No.110, area measuring 100 Sq.Yds situated at Bharat Nagar, Delhi from Arvind Kumar and Pooja Sethi, Sh. Ajay Kumar Sethi who are owner of the property by the virtue of Sale Deed dated 04.12.2008 registered as doc no. 14304 and intend to get the financial assistance from Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Limited to provide the financial assistance. If any person(s)/Institution has/has any objection(s) or claim(s) with respect to the right, title or interest in the said property may please contact us within 07 days from the date of this notice on the address mentioned herein below, failing which my client(s) shall not be held responsible in any manner whatsoever.

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, SAMSHAD S/O MOHD. LATIF KHAN, R/O H. NO. -8377/1, GALI NO. 5, MADANPUR KHADAR EXT. SARITA VIHAR, DELHI 110076, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO SHAMSHAD ALI FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES. ALSO CHANGE MY WIFE NAME GULZARI TO GULJARA AND MY MINOR SON NAME FROM ASAD TO ASAD ALI FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES.

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, Mohd Mirajuddin Siddiqui S/o Mohd Badrudin R/o RZ-642 E, Street No-21, Tuglakabad extension Kalka j south east delhi -110019 have changed my name from Mohd Mirajuddin Siddiqui to Mirajuddin Siddiqui for all future purposes.

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, Sujata Dhalla W/o Ravinder Kumar Dhalla R/o 11/49 B Tilak Nagar, West Delhi, Delhi-110018 Have Changed My Name To Sujata For All Future Purpose

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, hitherto known as Udit, S/O: Digamber Bhushawale, R/O House No-455, Street No-4A, Darshan Vihar, Burari, PO:Burari, DIST: North Delhi, Delhi - 110084, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Udit BHUSAWALE.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
It is to inform to the public at large that Mr. Nepal Singh who is intending to purchase the Property No. B-1/2-A, measuring 30 Sq. Yards, Kharsa No.83, Gali No.3, Arjun Mohalla, Maujpur, Shahdara, Delhi-110053, from Mrs. Puspita Sharma who became owner vide Sale Deed dated 12.06.2018 executed by Mrs. Sangeeta Garg (Vide Doc. No.3424) and same to be finance & mortgage by Hinduja Housing Finance Ltd., having its Branch at I.P. Extension, New Delhi. That, Originals Regd. GPA, Agreement, WILL, dated 23.07.1999 executed by Mr. Sohan Lal & Mr. Ved Prakash in favour of Mrs. Usha and Original's Agreement & WILL dated 22.01.2000 executed by Mrs. Usha in favour of Mr. Navneet Kumar has been lost/misplaced. So, to comply the requirements of BANK/NBFC, we give this public notice that if any Person having any type of claim /right/title/interest/creating mortgage over the said property, may inform in writing, at the address mentioned below, about his objections, within 7 days from today, failing which it shall be presumed that the said property is free from all type of Encumbrances, lien etc.

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, RUKSANA W/O MOHD JAVED residing at H.NO-15, PARIVANA ROAD, NEW GOVIND PURA, KRISHNA NAGAR, DELHI 110051 have changed my name to RUKHSANA for all future purposes.

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, JALEA SINGH son of JC-491849N Rank-SUB Name-KIRAN PAL SINGH R/O VILL-KURANA, TEH-KHANDERA, DIST-ALIGARH, UTTAR PRADESH-202137 have changed my name from JALEA SINGH to JALAI SINGH for all future purposes, in my son's service record my date of birth wrongly mentioned as 01/07/1942 instead of my correct date of birth as 01/01/1936 Vide Affidavit dated 25/09/2024 before Notary Public Utr Pradesh.

**DISOWNING DEED**  
This deed of disowning made on this 18.09.2024 by us, I, Parmeshwar w/o Late. Basant R/o 6A, Pura Nagar, Near Aya Saraj Mandir, Palam Colony Raj Nagar Part-1, Palam Village, South West Delhi, Delhi-110045. Whereas, I absolute owner of above said property & I have three children's below mention - Sandeep Bhardwaj, Pradeep Bhardwaj & Sonya Bhardwaj. I evict my son Sandeep Bhardwaj (aged 35 years), with wife Jyoti Sharma from movable and Immovable Property, Because his wife keeps having domestic disputes in the house every day, I have grown old now and I can no longer bear the daily committig act against the owner of Freehold Residential Plot No. 60, (Property ID No. 1BGVV516) area measuring 100 Sq. Yards, Out of Kharsa No. No. 16/23, 25/4/1, 3, 8, Situated at Waka Mauja, Gazipur, Tehsil Badkhal, District Faridabad, Haryana. By Virtue of Sale Deed Dated 19.01.2024 as Doc No. 9232, SRO- Badkhal, in the chain Documents below mentioned documents not available i.e. Original Sale Deed Dated 21.10.2008 executed by Mr. Bimla Khattar W/o Mr. Ashok Khattar in favour of Mrs. Sukh Devi W/o Mr. Nathu Singh Rathaur as Doc No. 17115, SRO- Faridabad now our client is declaring that that any other Person does not have any right over the said property and Same property is currently financed by Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Ltd. and now same is going to be re-financed by Ujjivan Small Finance Bank Ltd. Branch: Palwal, Haryana. If any person(s) has any objection(s) or claim(s) with respect to the right, title or interest in the Said Property then contact us within 14 days from the date of Publication of this notice and or the same to the undersigned if found by anyone. Thereafter no claim shall be entertained.

**[NAVEEN KUMAR VERMA]** Advocate  
F-211, sector-3 Vaishali Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh-201010, Contact at 0956871432

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, Pardeep Kumar Sahni S/o Nand Kumar Sahni R/o D-5, Malka Gany North Delhi -110007 have changed my name from Pardeep Kumar Sahni to Pardeep Sahni for all future purposes.

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, CHANCHAL wife of Shri RAJ KUMAR, residing at B-222, Ground Floor, Street No.1, Main Market, Badarpur, VTC, Badarpur, PO: Badarpur, District: South Delhi, State: Delhi, PIN Code:110044, have changed the name of my minor daughter AKANKSHA KASHYAP aged 14 years and she shall hereafter be known as AKANKSHA. It is certified that I have complied with other legal requirements in this connection.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Information is given to general public at large that our clients Mr. Jitender S/O Mr. Suresh Chand is the owner of Freehold Residential Plot No. 60, (Property ID No. 1BGVV516) area measuring 100 Sq. Yards, Out of Kharsa No. No. 16/23, 25/4/1, 3, 8, Situated at Waka Mauja, Gazipur, Tehsil Badkhal, District Faridabad, Haryana. By Virtue of Sale Deed Dated 19.01.2024 as Doc No. 9232, SRO- Badkhal, in the chain Documents below mentioned documents not available i.e. Original Sale Deed Dated 21.10.2008 executed by Mr. Bimla Khattar W/o Mr. Ashok Khattar in favour of Mrs. Sukh Devi W/o Mr. Nathu Singh Rathaur as Doc No. 17115, SRO- Faridabad now our client is declaring that that any other Person does not have any right over the said property and Same property is currently financed by Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Ltd. and now same is going to be re-financed by Ujjivan Small Finance Bank Ltd. Branch: Palwal, Haryana. If any person(s) has any objection(s) or claim(s) with respect to the right, title or interest in the Said Property then contact us within 14 days from the date of Publication of this notice and or the same to the undersigned if found by anyone. Thereafter no claim shall be entertained.

**[NAVEEN KUMAR VERMA]** Advocate  
F-211, sector-3 Vaishali Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh-201010, Contact at 0956871432

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
It is for general information that I, MANISH KUMAR S/O KANCHHID SINGH R/O D - 55, KHAJURI KHAS, GOKUL PURI, TUKHMIR PUR, NORTH EAST DELHI - 110094, declare that name of mine has been wrongly written as MANISH in my minor Son namely DARSHIT PAL, aged 14 years in his School record. The actual name of mine is MANISH KUMAR.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
The general public is hereby informed that Mr. Dinesh Yadav, the owner of Entire Left Hand Side Portion, Property bearing Plot No. RZ-C-3/193, area admeasuring 63 Sq. Yds., total land area admeasuring 125 Sq. Yds., out of Kharsa No. 15/2, situated in the area of Village Mirzapur, colony known as Mahavir Enclave, New Delhi 110045, Mr. Hoshar Singh was the initial owner. He transferred the said property to Mr. Hira Lal through a GPA, ATS, and Will dated 23.07.1985. Thereafter, Mr. Hira Lal transferred the said property to Mr. Kana Ram through a GPA, ATS, and Will dated 06.03.1986. Mr. Kana Ram passed away, leaving behind legal heirs: (1) Mr. Tilaak Raj, (2) Mr. Hans Raj, (3) Mr. Rattan Lal, (4) Mr. Om Prakash, and (5) Mrs. Soni Devi. The legal heirs subsequently released their shares in favor of Mrs. Soni Devi through a Relinquishment Deed dated 16.07.2019. Mrs. Soni Devi then sold the property to Mr. Dinesh Yadav and Mr. Daya Ram Panwar through a Sale Deed dated 03.09.2019. Mr. Daya Ram Panwar subsequently released his 1/2 undivided share of the said property in favor of Mr. Dinesh Yadav through a Release Deed dated 25.05.2022. Please note that the chain documents, including the Death and Survival Certificate in the name of the Late Mr. Kana Ram, are not available. The property is to be financed by Hinduja Housing Finance Ltd., Branch Naglo, New Delhi. Any person(s) found in possession of aforesaid property and any objection, then kindly contact the undersigned along with original property document, within 07 days from date of this notice on below address, failing which, the claim as per aforesaid sale deed shall be treated as null and void in respect of the subject property.

**[ASHWAN KUMAR]** Advocate  
Chamber No. 122, Teshi Compound, Ghaziabad, U.P.



News box

Israeli strikes kill 37 in Lebanon, Joe Biden rules out 'all-out war' in Mideast

World At least thirty seven people were killed, and over 150 were wounded in Israeli strikes on Lebanon in the past 24 hours, in what is considered one of the most violent raids since Israel intensified its campaign against the Iran-backed terror outfit Hezbollah. Dahiye, the area that houses Hezbollah's headquarters south of Beirut, was pummelled by Israeli bombs in an attack larger than the strike that killed Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah a week ago. Some of Thursday night's strikes hit close to Beirut's international airport. The strikes in Beirut reportedly targeted Hashem Safieddine, Hezbollah's likely new chief, while he was in a discussion with other officials in an underground bunker, according to reports. His fate is currently unknown. US President Joe Biden said he did not believe there was going to be an "all-out war" in the Middle East. He added that more needs to be done to avoid a Middle East war. "How confident are you it's not going to rain? Look, I don't believe there is going to be an all-out war. I think we can avoid it," he said. An Israeli strike in Beirut on Thursday targeted top Hezbollah official Hashem Safieddine, who is widely regarded as the successor to slain Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah. Neither Israel nor Hezbollah has commented on the development, but Israel's Channel 13 reported that Israeli army sources believe the operation was successful. Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei is set to lead Friday prayers and deliver a public sermon today. This sermon, the first in almost five years, assumes significance considering the volatile situation following the killing of Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah and comes just three days before the one-year anniversary of the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza.

Series of loud explosions heard near Beirut airport: Report

Beirut. Huge explosions shook the sky in the vicinity of Beirut's main airport in the early hours of Friday (October 4), minutes after the landing of an aircraft. Data from the FlightRadar24 website showed the flight to be Middle East airlines ME429 from Dubai. Live video from Reuters showed the sky lighting up with several loud bangs heard. Minutes earlier, an aircraft inbound from Dubai could be seen making its final approach and landing. The explosions did not appear to be within the confines of the airport, but were visible from Sin El Fil, 6.8 kilometres northwest of the airport.

30 years ago, Nobel Prize crowned hopes of Mideast peace

Oslo, Norway. Of all Nobel Peace Prizes, the one awarded 30 years ago to the Israeli-Palestinian peace process is among the most controversial, featuring a laureate branded a terrorist, a jury member's resignation and a bloodbath. On October 14, 1994, a year after the signing of the Oslo Accords, the Peace Prize was awarded to Yasser Arafat, head of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation; Yitzhak Rabin, the Israeli prime minister; and his foreign minister Shimon Peres.

The Nobel committee hailed "their efforts to create peace in the Middle East", after a negotiated solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict appeared finally within reach.

"By concluding the Oslo Accords, and subsequently following them up, Arafat, Peres and Rabin have made substantial contributions to a historic process through which peace and cooperation can replace war and hate," the committee said at the time.

That hope proved fleeting. Over the following three decades, weapons continued to be fired across the Middle East, killing tens of thousands, and the region now risks descending into full-scale war as fighting rages between Israel and the Islamist movements Hamas and Hezbollah, backed by Iran. As soon as the 1994 prize was announced, protests erupted, with the choice of laureates -- especially Arafat -- harshly criticised.

An hour after the announcement, one of the five members of the Nobel committee, Kare Kristiansen, co-founder of the Norwegian parliament's Friends of Israel group, tendered his resignation. "Arafat's past is too tainted with violence, terrorism and bloodshed" to be worthy of a Nobel Prize, said the former Christian Democratic MP, who years later demanded an "apology" from the Nobel committee. As head of the PLO, Arafat, who died in 2004, personified the Palestinian resistance to Israel's occupation, ordering indiscriminate attacks even though he publicly distanced himself from terrorism. The day of the prize's announcement, Rabin was hunkered down in his office dealing with a crisis sparked by Hamas's seizure of an Israeli soldier as hostage. That evening, the Israeli army raided a house in the occupied West Bank. The officer leading the raid was killed, as were three Hamas militants. The hostage was found dead. "I would have preferred to have the two (Israeli) men alive and not to have the Nobel Peace Prize," Rabin said later.

Hurricane Helene becomes deadliest to hit US mainland since 2005 as 215 die



While the death toll has reached 215, the number of people who are missing and those who are unaccounted for remains unclear.

World Rescue crews and volunteers facing obstacles at every turn in North Carolina's remote mountains paddled canoes across swollen rivers and steered horses past mudslides in the rush to reach those stranded or missing by Hurricane Helene's rampage that killed more than 200 throughout the Southeast. Now a week since the storm first roared onto Florida's Gulf Coast, the search continued for people who have yet to be heard from in places where phone service and electricity were knocked out. Pleas for help came from people running low on medicine or in need of fuel for their generators. How many people are missing or unaccounted for isn't clear. The death toll soared to 215 people on Thursday as more victims were found, making Helene the deadliest hurricane to hit the mainland US since Katrina in 2005. Roughly half the victims were in North Carolina, while dozens more were killed in

South Carolina and Georgia. Each road presents a new challenge for rescuers. Along the Cane River in western North Carolina's Blue Ridge Mountains, rescuers from the Pensacola Volunteer Fire Department were cutting their way through trees at the top of a valley nearly a week after a wall of chocolate-milk colored water swept through for hours. Pensacola, which sits a few miles from Mount Mitchell, the highest point east of the Mississippi River, lost an untold number of people, said Mark Harrison, chief medical officer for the department. "We're starting to do recovery," he said on Thursday. "We've got the most critical people out." Harrison was helping dispatch volunteers driving all-terrain vehicles on supply runs to people still on ridgetops. Many don't want to leave their houses, while others lost their vehicles and need help getting to town. Bradley Billheimer, who



hiked down to the fire station to access the internet, said he had just talked to his mom for the first time since the storm. He feared his house would be without power for months. "I think we're going to walk out in a couple of days," he said. In another county that sits alongside the Tennessee state line, crews were just finishing clearing main routes and reaching side roads that wind through switchbacks and cross small bridges that can be tricky to navigate even in the best weather. Each road presented a new challenge. "Everything is fine, and

then they come around a bend and the road is gone, and it's one big gully or the bridge is gone," said Charlie Wallin, a commissioner in Watauga County. "We can only get so far." Most people the crews come across turn out to be fine and just in need of water, but every day there are new requests to check on someone who hasn't been heard from yet, Wallin said. When the search will end is hard to tell, he said. "You hope you're getting closer, but it's still hard to know," he said. A week into the search and rescue operations in Buncombe County, which includes the hard-hit tourist city of Asheville and where more than 72 have been killed, the county doesn't have an official tally of people who are unaccounted for or missing. The county sheriff said his office believes more than 200 people are missing.

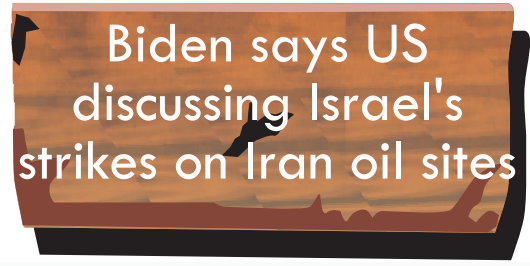
Iran's Khamenei to give 1st Friday sermon in 5 years days after attack on Israel

World Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei is set to lead Friday prayers and deliver a public sermon that could shed light on the Islamic republic's plans after a massive missile attack on enemy Israel. Khamenei's rare Friday sermon -- a first in almost five years -- comes three days before the one-year anniversary of the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza, triggered by the Iran-backed Palestinian group's October 7 attack. The supreme leader, who wields the highest authority in Iran, will lead Muslims in prayer at the Imam Khomeini Grand Mosalla mosque in central Tehran, his official website said. The prayer will follow "a commemoration ceremony" at 10:30 am (0700 GMT) for Hassan Nasrallah, the slain leader of Tehran-backed Lebanese armed movement Hezbollah. Iran's Revolutionary Guards, who answer to Khamenei, said Tuesday's barrages of some 200 missiles were in retaliation for Israel's killing of Nasrallah alongside Guards commander Abbas Nilfroushan in a late September strike on Beirut, and of



Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran in July. Khamenei last led Friday prayers in January 2020 after Iran fired missiles at a US army base in Iraq, in response to a strike that killed revered Revolutionary Guards commander Qasem Soleimani. In Tehran on Thursday, crowds waving Hezbollah and Iran flags gathered outside the former US embassy building in Tehran to denounce Israeli "crimes" in the Gaza Strip and in Lebanon, Iranian media reported. Khamenei had declared public mourning in Iran for Nasrallah and on Wednesday said that the Hezbollah chief's death was "not a small matter". Hamas,

Hezbollah and other armed groups in the Middle East are part of the Iran-aligned "axis of resistance" opposed to Israel and its ally, the United States. Analysts said Iran's missile attack -- its second-ever directly targeting Israel -- was meant to counter a string of setbacks suffered by Tehran and its regional allies. Iran has said this week's attack was carried out in "self-defence" and warned of "crushing attacks" on Israel if it retaliated. The Islamic republic has also warned the US -- Israel's top arms provider -- against intervening, threatening "a harsh response" if it did. Washington has said Iran must suffer "consequences", which may be coordinated with Israeli officials, for the ballistic missile fire. US President Joe Biden said on Thursday he was discussing possible Israeli strikes on Iranian oil sites. In April, Tehran had sent missiles and drones against Israel in retaliation for a deadly Israeli strike on Iran's consulate in Damascus. In both attacks, nearly all missiles were intercepted by Israel or its allies.



Washington The US is discussing strikes on Iran's oil facilities as retaliation for Tehran's missile attack on Israel, President Joe Biden said on Thursday, while Israel's military pressed ahead with its campaign against Iran-backed armed group Hezbollah in Lebanon. As Israel weighs its options after its arch-foe Iran launched its largest ever assault on Tuesday, Biden was asked whether he would support Israel striking Iran's oil facilities. His comments contributed to a surge in global oil prices, and rising Middle East tensions have made traders worry about potential supply disruptions.

"There is nothing going to happen today," Biden said. On Wednesday, the president said he would not support any Israeli strike on Iran's nuclear sites.

Israel's UN Ambassador Danny Danon told CNN on Thursday his country has "a lot of options" for retaliation and would show Tehran its strength "soon". A US official said Washington does not believe Israel has decided yet how to respond to Iran. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has vowed Iran will pay for Tuesday's missile attack, and Washington said it would work with its longtime ally to ensure Iran faced "severe consequences". Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian, speaking in Doha, said on Thursday that Tehran would be ready to respond. "Any type of military attack, terrorist act or crossing our red lines will be met with a decisive response by our armed forces," he said.

G7 CALLS FOR RESTRAINT

Israel's military told residents of more than 20 towns in south Lebanon to evacuate their homes immediately on Thursday as it pressed on with a cross-border incursion and struck Hezbollah targets in a suburb of Beirut. The latest warnings took the number of southern towns subject to evacuation calls to 70 and included the provincial capital Nabatieh, suggesting another Israeli military operation was imminent against the Iran-backed armed group.

North Korea's Kim threatens to destroy South Korea with nuclear strikes if provoked

SEOUL. North Korean leader Kim Jong Un threatened to use nuclear weapons and destroy South Korea permanently if provoked, state media reported Friday, after the South's leader warned that Kim's regime would collapse if he attempted to use nuclear arms. The exchange of such rhetoric between the rival Koreas is nothing new, but the latest comments come during heightened animosities over the North's recent disclosure of a nuclear facility and its continuation of missile tests. Next week, observers say North

Korea's rubber-stamp parliament is expected to constitutionally declare a hostile "two-state" system on the Korean Peninsula to formally reject reconciliation with South Korea and codify new national borders. During a visit to a special operation forces unit on Wednesday, Kim said his military "would use without hesitation all the offensive forces it possesses, including nuclear weapons," if South Korea attempts to use armed forces encroaching upon the sovereignty of North Korea, according to the North's

official Korean Central News Agency. "If such a situation comes, the permanent existence of Seoul and the Republic of Korea would be impossible," Kim said, using South Korea's official name. Kim's statement was a response to South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol's speech at his country's Armed Forces Day on Tuesday. Unveiling South Korea's most powerful Hyunmoo-5 ballistic missile and other conventional weapons that could target North Korea, Yoon said the day that North Korea tries to use nuclear weapons would.

Arab states reassure their neutrality to Iran amid conflict with Israel



Dubai. Gulf Arab states sought to reassure Iran of their neutrality in the conflict between Tehran and Israel in meetings in Doha this week on the back of concerns that a wider escalation in violence could threaten their oil facilities, two sources told Reuters. Ministers from Gulf Arab states and Iran attending a meeting of Asian nations hosted by Qatar centred their conversations around de-escalation, the sources said. The Islamic Republic launched its largest ever assault on Israel on Tuesday in what it said was retaliation for Israel's assassination of senior Hamas and Hezbollah leaders and its operations in Gaza and Lebanon. Tehran said its attack was over, barring further provocation, but Israel has promised to hit back hard. US news website Axios, citing Israeli officials, reported on Wednesday that Israel could target oil production facilities inside Iran as retaliation. Urgent de-escalation was at the top of the agenda for all



discussions taking place at the moment, one of the sources said. The Qatari foreign ministry, the Iranian foreign ministry, the UAE foreign ministry, Kuwait's foreign ministry and the Saudi government communications office did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Iran has not threatened to attack Gulf oil facilities, but it has warned that if "Israeli supporters"

intervene directly, their interests in the region would be targeted. "The Gulf states think it's unlikely that Iran will strike their oil facilities, but the Iranians are dropping hints they might from unofficial sources. It's a tool the Iranians have against the US and the global economy," Ali Shihabi, a Saudi commentator close to the Royal Court, said. Top oil exporter Saudi Arabia has had a

political rapprochement with Tehran in recent years, which has helped ease regional tensions, but relations remain difficult. Saudi Arabia has been wary of an Iranian strike on its oil facilities since a 2019 attack on its key refinery at Abqaiq briefly shut down more than 5 per cent of global oil supply. Iran denied involvement. "The GCC message to the Iranians is, 'please de-escalate'," Shihabi said, referring to the Gulf Cooperation Council that is made up of the UAE, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar and Kuwait. Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian, speaking at the event in Doha, said Iran would be ready to respond and warned against "silence" in the face of Israel's "warmongering". "Any type of military attack, terrorist act or crossing our red lines will be met with a decisive response by our armed forces," he said.

Ex-Donald Trump aide Cassidy Hutchinson now 'proud' to vote for Kamala Harris

Cassidy Hutchinson, a former aide to Trump's White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows, announced her endorsement of Trump's Democratic rival, Kamala Harris, in the November 5 presidential election.

Harris, saying her decision was based on the candidate's character and her belief about who can uphold the rule of law, reported the Washington Post. Hutchinson was one of the many individuals who was thoroughly grilled and testified extensively during the January 6, 2021 insurrection investigation by a House committee which probed the attack on the Capitol building by Trump supporters after the 2020 presidential elections. Hutchinson made her decision to support Harris during her Wednesday night appearance on MSNBC. "I've known for quite a long time, number one, that I would never in my life vote for Donald Trump ever again," Hutchinson told MSNBC host Lawrence O'Donnell. She added that she had known "for a long time" that she would be voting for the Democratic ticket when it was led by President Joe Biden, and now,



Harris. A couple of things weighed into Hutchinson's decision. Firstly, she said, it was based on having seen Trump "up close" and "believing him when he tells us who he is." To make it worse, watching Trump select Ohio Senator JD Vance as his running mate only made the decision easier for Hutchinson. Having endorsed Harris,

Hutchinson has joined a growing number of other Republicans who have announced their support for Harris -- the list includes former Wyoming congresswoman Liz Cheney and her father, former vice president Dick Cheney. "It's just a despicable betrayal of the Republican Party," Hutchinson said. Later she added: "The character of our leaders really matters, too. We need to be able to elect people that we can trust to uphold our rule of law." She added: "But Donald Trump and JD Vance cannot be trusted with the Constitution. They cannot be trusted to uphold our rule of law, and they can't be trusted to enact responsible policy." Trump and his allies have long maintained that the former president has united the party and helped get rid of those with questionable loyalties to his policies.



News box

Woman found dead, daughter hospitalised in Kochi

KOCHI. In a suspected case of suicide, the body of a 30-year-old woman was found with its throat slit at Mulavukad on Thursday, police said. The woman's three-year-old daughter, who was found alongside her mother with serious injuries, has been admitted to a hospital.

The deceased is Dhanika Prabhakar, wife of Ramakrishnan K. The family resides at Mulavukad. The couple's daughter Ishani Ramakrishnan suffered a gash on her neck for which she is undergoing treatment in hospital.

Officers said that a preliminary probe indicated that Dhanika killed herself after attempting to murder her daughter. Dhanika was reportedly taking medication for a psychological condition and the couple used to have frequent quarrels. Mulavukad panchayat president V S Akbar said, "The parents of the couple are from Tamil Nadu. Ramakrishnan works in a private bank in Kaloor. They constructed a new house in Mulavukad and have been staying there for the past six months. Before shifting to Mulavukad, they stayed in Vaduthala. The neighbours told us that there were frequent fights between the couple. Ramakrishnan and Dhanika slept in different rooms. Ishani was in Dhanika's room," he said.

It was before 9 am that Ramakrishnan found a bleeding Dhanika lying unconscious in her room. A badly injured Ishani was found to be breathing. "Soon, Ramakrishnan alerted one of his colleagues and they rushed the daughter to a private hospital in Mulavukad. All attempts, including an emergency surgery, have been made to save her life," Akbar said.

BBMP contractors hope to get 25 per cent of pending bills cleared soon

BENGALURU. Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) contractors have expressed the hope that they may soon get 25% of their pending bills cleared with the Nagamohan Das Committee probing the bribery allegations during the BJP rule, asking the state government to take a decision on the issue.

BBMP Contractors' Association president KT Manjunath stated that after weeks of follow-up, it has come to the association's knowledge that the committee has asked the government to look into the issue of releasing 25% of the pending bills.

"It is learnt that the committee has stated that it has nothing to do with the release of 25% of the pending bills kept on hold by the government. We hope better sense prevails and the government issues an order to release the pending bills as many contractors are facing a financial crisis," Manjunath said.

BS Prahlad, BBMP engineer-in-chief, said the issue did not come under his jurisdiction. The state government has to take a decision on it.

Confirming the same, BBMP Chief Commissioner Tushar Girinath said the issue is with the state government. Earlier, the contractors, who staged a hunger strike, stated that they would intensify their agitation and stop all infrastructure works in the BBMP limits. However, they withdrew their protest after Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar assured them of resolving their problems.

Three Pakistani citizens nabbed in Bengaluru's Peenya for illegal stay in India

BENGALURU. Three Pakistani nationals, including two women, were arrested by Jigani police on Thursday, just three days after the arrest of four other Pakistani nationals for staying illegally in India under fake identities. The accused have been identified as Syed Tarikh (51), alias Chavan, his wife Anila Tarikh, alias Deepali, and their daughter.

All three had adopted Hindu names to conceal their identity during their stay in India. The arrests were made after interrogation of the four Pakistanis who were earlier arrested, who revealed information about the family staying in Peenya. Following this confirmation, police raided the family's rented house, where they had been living for four years. The family had entered India eight years ago through West Bengal. They were reportedly funded by the Mehdi Foundation International Jashan-e-Younus. The family, which preached Islam, managed to obtain fake Aadhaar cards, PAN cards and driving licences. Police seized fake documents and are currently questioning the suspects, who underwent a medical examination. A source revealed that police have formed four teams to trace Pakistani nationals living illegally in Bengaluru under fake identities. Following the arrest of Rashid Ali Siddiqui and his family, police learnt that their main objective was to propagate Islam across the country through the Mehdi Foundation. On Sunday, Jigani police had arrested Siddiqui and his family who had been staying in India illegally since 2014. Siddiqui (48), his wife Ayesha (38), and her parents Hanif Mohammed (73) and Rubina (61) had been staying in Rajapura village in Jigani, using fake Hindu identities. Police took them into custody until October 9.

Stir over ordination of priests affects Archdiocesan Curia's functioning

The situation is such that the Archdiocesan Curia's work has been severely affected with the members fleeing fearing the agitators.



KOCHI. The Ernakulam-Angamaly Archdiocese continues to be in the grip of controversies and problems. Even as the issue of the Unified Holy Mass stands partially solved, another problem has been raked up by some of the laity forums. These forums have taken to social media platforms and resorted to staging agitations before the Archdiocesan Curia over the alleged collusion between bishops, priests and those opposing the Synodal Mass to ordain priests by overlooking the directive

as per which only those deacons who give a declaration that they would celebrate Unified Holy Mass can be ordained. The situation is such that the Archdiocesan Curia's work has been severely affected with the members fleeing fearing the agitators. The Apostolic Administrator of Ernakulam-Angamaly Archdiocese in a missive said, "Our Archdiocese headquarters is the ecclesiastical administrative centre that coordinates parishes, institutions and monastic

communities of Ernakulam-Angamaly Archdiocese and fulfils the pastoral needs according to law. In the wake of the recent crises, the service of the Archdiocesan Curia may not be able to continue." "With the talks deadlocked, the Advisory Committee meeting held on September 26 took a detailed look at how to address the challenges facing the Archdiocese. Members of the Advisory Committee and I spoke over the phone with Major Archbishop Mar Raphael Thattil who is on a pastoral visit to the Diocese of Great Britain. The Major Archbishop told us that he would be going to Rome to attend the Global Synod and once there, he would inform the church leaders of the current situation in the Archdiocese," said Mar Puthur. According to the Apostolic administrator, the priests serving in the Curia informed him and the Advisory Committee that if the current crisis is not resolved, it will be practically impossible to continue to carry on with their responsibilities due to the out-of-control protests. He said, "We should not find solutions to the crises in the church through unrelenting agitations. Efforts to solve problems, obedience to authority, and prayer for the special intervention of the Holy Spirit are required on the part of all of us."

Kodanad heist: two more witnesses questioned

COIMBATORE. The Special Investigation Team (SIT) of the CB-CID, probing the Kodanad murder-cum-heist case, questioned two witnesses at the Police Recruit School (PRS) premises in the city on Thursday.

The first witness Prabhakaran, is an employee at a private bank in Pondicherry. He was asked for transaction details of suspects in this case. We sought details from private bank authorities and their officer submitted it to us, a senior investigating officer said. The other witness was a priest-cum-helper namely Vignesh who had performed and assisted with pujas at former Chief Minister J Jayalitha's Poes Garden residence before the heist. He was questioned about the suspects and their visit to Poes Garden.

"The SIT Team has recorded statements from over 350 witnesses from various angles to strengthen the case. However, they have not retrieved digital records from the Call Detail Records (CDRs) and magnetic tapes. They expect that the process for this will commence soon based on a court order," the officer said. "Meanwhile, they are waiting for a response from Interpol to trace details of a seven-digit phone number through which an unidentified person contacted the prime suspects between April 27 and 28, 2017, after the heist and murder. We expect this to help us with the investigation."

government will formulate an appropriate film policy after taking into account the suggestions from the film fraternity. Internal Complaint Committee (ICC) has been made mandatory in cinema locations following the government's directive to urgently set up statutory internal complaint committees in the cinema sector. The government will take practical steps to ensure more representation and opportunities for women in the film industry and film-related institutions. In the camps and film study programmes of the State Chalachitra Academy, special attention is being paid to portraying women in films in a positive manner. This approach is followed while selecting films in the women's film production project being implemented through KSFDC. As much as Rs 3 crore is being allocated annually for the films produced by women under the project, the affidavit said.

'Can probe continue if complainants are hesitant?': Kerala HC to govt on Hema Committee report

Says the majority of victims spoke about their experiences only for the Hema Committee's study.

KOCHI. Kerala High Court on Thursday noted that certain individuals have given statements alleging sexual abuse in the film industry before the Special Investigation Team probing the revelations in the report of the Justice K Hema Committee, but a few of them are unwilling to move forward with their complaints.

The court asked the government to explain if there is sufficient evidence in the complaint, can the government, through the SIT, continue the investigation even when the complainants are no longer interested in pursuing the case?

"There are persons who have given statements before the SIT. They have expressed that they do not want to pursue the matter. We have to respect their privacy. But at the same time, the government must look into the issue. Suppose there is enough material in the complaint against the named accused, can the government through

the SIT proceed further with the investigation since the complainant is not interested in proceeding?" asked the special bench.

The court, after going through the report, pointed out that the majority of victims who the SIT has contacted informed that they spoke about their experience confidentially only for the Hema Committee's study and that they do not want to proceed with it now.

What is to be done? The government can put in place strict safety measures to ensure that such things do not happen again. But there are persons against whom there are allegations but the complainants do not want to proceed against them, said the court. In an affidavit, the state government said it had constituted a committee to prepare a draft approach paper for film policy. A film conclave is being scheduled to consolidate the suggestions of representatives from the various film fields. The

government will formulate an appropriate film policy after taking into account the suggestions from the film fraternity. Internal Complaint Committee (ICC) has been made mandatory in cinema locations following the government's directive to urgently set up statutory internal complaint committees in the cinema sector. The government will take practical steps to ensure more representation and opportunities for women in the film industry and film-related institutions. In the camps and film study programmes of the State Chalachitra Academy, special attention is being paid to portraying women in films in a positive manner. This approach is followed while selecting films in the women's film production project being implemented through KSFDC. As much as Rs 3 crore is being allocated annually for the films produced by women under the project, the affidavit said.

'LDF surrendered to one man's ego': CPI Kerala

Some members who spoke at the CPI executive came down heavily on the CPM and the chief minister, saying that it has become the CPI's responsibility to uphold left principles.

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM. The CPI state leadership has told its agitating leaders that action against ADGP M R Ajith Kumar will be taken in a short span of time. CPI state secretary Binoy Viswam on Thursday informed the state executive that the CM has given an assurance that action would be taken within one or two days.

"In the light of the assurance from the CM, we should wait for some more time," Binoy reportedly said. Some members who spoke at the CPI executive came down heavily on the CPM and the chief minister, saying that it has become the CPI's responsibility to uphold left principles.

"We are not demanding the transfer of any official out of the way. A single order could



have ended the controversy. However, the LDF is surrendering to one man's ego," they alleged. Leaders who spoke at the meeting questioned the logic behind going for an inquiry before taking action against the ADGP for meeting RSS leaders many a

time. They also pointed out that the demand for removing the ADGP was not for any failure on his part.

"The demand has been raised because he had acted against the political position of the left government. The ADGP is unfit to handle law and order and he should be removed," said the leaders.

Some of them pointed out that it should not be compared with the chief minister's meeting with RSS leaders to end political violence.

"The meeting between CPM leaders or the chief minister with RSS was to end political violence. At a time when the state is going through a volatile situation, action should be taken against the ADGP," the leaders demanded.

Enact Act, set up board to protect Sanatana Dharma: Dy CM Pawan Kalyan

Pawan Kalyan asserted that secularism should be upheld in a manner that guarantees a uniform response to threats against any religion.

TIRUPATI. Jana Sena Party chief and Deputy Chief Minister K Pawan Kalyan emphasised the need for the immediate enactment of an Act to protect Sanatana Dharma in the country, and the establishment of Sanatana Dharma Protection Board, at both the national and State levels, which should receive annual funding for its effective functioning. Addressing 'Varahi Sabha' in Tirupati on Thursday, he highlighted the key points of JSP's 'Varahi Declaration'.

Pawan Kalyan asserted that secularism should be upheld in a manner that guarantees a uniform response to threats against any religion. The JSP chief proposed the concept of 'Sanatana Dharma Certification' to guarantee the purity of materials used in offerings to the deities and prasadam at temples, ensuring strict adherence to spiritual standards. Pawan Kalyan underlined the need for evolving a strategy of non-cooperation towards individuals or organisations which spread hatred or harm Sanatana Dharma.

Law weaker towards strong & stronger towards weak: PK

"There is a need for a singular voice, transcending linguistic and political differences, to propagate Sanatana Dharma," he stressed.

Expressing respect to other religions, he highlighted the country's core principle of unity in diversity. Furthermore, the JSP chief said the temples should be reimagined and they should evolve into centres not only for spiritual practices but also for promoting art, culture, education, economic development, environmental conservation and community welfare. He called for a comprehensive planning to transform these institutions into multi-faceted hubs for societal growth. He described Lord Rama as the embodiment of Dharma, while identifying Lord Venkateswara as its representative in the current era. He expressed frustration over the disregard he faces for his beliefs and the ridicule aimed at his practices.

Indirectly addressing the comments of his Tamil Nadu counterpart Udhayanidhi Stalin for describing Sanatana Dharma as virus, Pawan Kalyan accused 'pseudo-secularists' of stifling Hindu voices in the guise of secularism, and noted the increasing criticism directed at Sanatana Dharma and Hindu deities. "Would it have been the case, if it was Islam and Christianity," he asked. Taking exception to the lack of judicial action against such a blatant attack on Sanatana Dharma, he felt the law applies differently to different people.

Stray dogs keep Karnataka's Gadag villagers indoors

Meanwhile, health officials have launched a vaccine drive as a precautionary measure. Health camps are also being held to raise awareness against rabies among the people.

GADAG. Residents of Battur, Kundrahalli, Kundrahalli Tanda and Shetty Kere villages in Lakshmeshwar taluk of Gadag district have been forced to stay indoors now for the fear of stray dogs.

Many children, cows, sheep and goats have been bitten by stray dogs in these villages. But what has become a cause for concern is the death of many dogs in these villages in the past three months. Villagers are even scared to drink milk, fearing that rabid dogs might have bitten their cows. A team of dog catchers led by a non-governmental organisation (NGO) from Bengaluru will visit the four villages on Friday and Saturday to catch the canines.

Meanwhile, health officials have launched a vaccine drive as a precautionary measure.



Health camps are also being held to raise awareness against rabies among the people. In Battur village, 20 dog bite cases have been reported in the past 40 days. A cow died after it was bitten by a stray dog a few days ago. Villagers complained to health officials after the dogs started attacking their cows and goats. Referring to the death of dogs, some villagers said the

reason could be some unknown disease, but not rabies. They said they have appealed to their GP members to find a solution at the earliest.

"We are living in fear after a 17-year-old girl died recently. The girl, who was feeding a stray dog near her house, was bitten by it.

She fell ill after a few days and was shifted to the KIMS Hospital in Hubballi, where she died. The reason for her death is not known. The health department should reveal the reason for the girl's death, otherwise people will start panicking," a few people from Battur village said. Gadag DHO SS Neelagund said people of the four villages are now being vaccinated.



## Iran trying to be more Palestinian than Hamas

THE barrage of over 180 ballistic missiles that Iran fired at Israel has heightened tensions in ever-turbulent West Asia. Initial reports do not speak of major casualties or damages in Israel. But escalation was on the cards for some time. Literally hours before the attack on Hezbollah leader Hassan Namrissarallah's bunker last week, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu cautioned the UN General Assembly: "There is no place — there is no place in Iran — that the long arm of Israel cannot reach. And that is true of entire Middle East." This is seen as a direct warning to the clergy leadership in Tehran. Indeed, shortly after the airstrike on the bunker in Beirut, but before the killing of Namrissarallah was announced, reports indicated that Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei had been moved to a 'safer location.' The April assassination of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran and of revolutionary guard commander Abbas Nilforoshan in Beirut, along with Namrissarallah, were seen as immediate provocations for the Iranian offensive. Unlike the earlier airborne attack in April, this time Iran launched only ballistic missiles against Israel, and its proxies were conspicuously absent.

Haniyeh's killing, within hours after the inauguration of President Masoud Pezeshkian — an event also attended by India's Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari — divided the Iranian leadership. While one section wanted an immediate and strong response, the other urged caution from possible reprisal and consequences for an already-sanctioned economy. The latter group won. There was no Iranian response for two months after the high-profile killing of Haniyeh.

NAmrissarallah's assassination changed that cautious Iranian response. Hezbollah has been the main force in the proxy arsenal of promoting Tehran's interests not only in Lebanon but also in Syria. Iran's investment in Hezbollah — financial and ideological support as well as a military arsenal — has enabled Tehran to emerge as a Mediterranean power, according to some Iranian gloating in conferences and academic exchanges. While the Iranian support for Hamas forms a part of its larger Islamic agenda, Hezbollah has been the most effective, efficient and cost-effective Iranian option against Israel.

Hezbollah has been more popular among Shias and more resourceful in Lebanese politics than its Amal competitor. It was able to shape confessional Lebanese politics through electoral participation. Since the Taif Accord of 1989, mediated by Saudi Arabia, there have been several efforts to 'disarm' Hezbollah. Even the UNSC Resolution of 1701 adopted in the wake of the Second Lebanon War of 2006 explicitly demanded "the disarmament of all armed groups in Lebanon, (and that) there will be no weapons or authority in Lebanon other than that of the Lebanese State." No one has been able to disarm the militant group. Emboldened by Iranian backing, Hezbollah has been pursuing a foreign policy that runs counter to the interests and welfare of the larger Lebanese population, Muslims and Christians alike. Indeed, the resistance tag that Hezbollah proudly claims is also questionable. Hezbollah emerged in the early 1980s as a response to the Israeli invasion and occupation of southern Lebanon. As it relentlessly fought the occupation and periodically attacked northern Israel, the Shia militant group made the occupation costly and domestically unpopular. This resulted in Prime Minister Ehud Barak — a key figure in Israel's Lebanon policy since the 1980s — pulling out the military from Lebanon in May 2000.

The United Nations recognised that withdrawal as Israel having completed and implemented the UNSC Resolutions on Lebanon, thereby undermining Hezbollah's 'resistance' tag. Meanwhile, at the behest of Tehran, the Lebanese movement began to focus on the Palestinian problem. During the heyday of the Oslo Accords, Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat even clashed with and derided Tehran's mullahs for supporting Hamas in undermining the peaceful resolution of its conflict with Israel.

## Keep science awards above politics

Instituted by the Centre last year, Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar facing a credibility crisis

IN a bold and rare move, 175 scientists and academicians have expressed dismay over the politicisation of national science awards — the Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar — instituted by the Central Government last year. Soon after the inaugural set of awards was presented to the winners by the President a few weeks ago, murmurs of political interference in the selection process emerged. It so happened that the names of three scientists who were chosen by the selection committee were missing from the final list of awardees. They were told about their selection informally by some committee members, only to get a shock later. It was feared that the scientists in question were denied national recognition because of their political views and the stand they took on certain important issues. The first red flag came from 26 Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar awardees in a letter to Principal Scientific Adviser (PSA) Ajay Sood, who heads the Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar Committee (RVPC). They wanted to know if the panel's recommendations were accepted in their entirety or revised by the government and requested the PSA to reveal the criteria adopted in arriving at the final decision. Once the matter became public, the government altered the selection process, triggering the protest letter from 175 scientists. "The government has updated the selection criteria on its portal and the new version uploaded in the last couple of days adds a line that the RVPC chaired by you submits its recommendations to the Minister of Science and Technology," the scientists wrote to the PSA on September 24. The change in the selection process paved the way for the political leadership to overrule or change the decision of the RVPC — which practically represents the Indian scientific community. Presidents of scientific academies as well as secretaries of scientific departments are its members.

The scientific community should have seen this coming. In the first place, it was absurd for the Ministry of Home Affairs to ride roughshod over all scientific departments and abolish dozens of awards, including the prestigious Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Prize instituted by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research in the 1950s and those given by autonomous science academies. Abolishing established and non-partisan ways of recognising good science and replacing them with a new government award which carries no cash component was a rude shock. Now, even the new awards are facing a credibility crisis. Leaving the final decision to a political

functionary means that non-academic considerations will play a role in the selection of awardees.

The episode raises important questions about academic freedom and the governance of science in India, going beyond the awards. The letter of eminent scientists has rightly called the awards episode an 'unhealthy development for Indian science'. The scientists are

a lasting legacy like the Bhatnagar Prize?

The episode also highlights sustained erosion of the PSA's role in the past few years. Though the PSA's office was formed in 1999, India has had a framework for science advice for policymaking since Independence, beginning with the national committee for the coordination of scientific work in the 1950s. Subsequently, there were scientific advisory committees to the government, the Cabinet and the Prime Minister. This framework of advice resulted in organising and reorganising scientific departments, the creation of new scientific ministries, the development of research institutes and academic bodies as well as several national policies and programmes. An independent science advice system has acted as a science-policy interface and as a clearing house of new ideas. The role of a science adviser is to advise on policy matters relating to science and technology as well as science-based policy solutions in general. In both cases, science is supposed to guide policy-making. Policymakers are not supposed to handle affairs related to science grants and awards. How far this balance can be achieved depends on the individuals who become science advisers.



concerned that this could set a precedent for ministers to use 'unrestricted vetoes' to overrule recommendations of expert committees. Academics not in the good books of the government could be sidelined from not just awards but also scientific grants, recruitment promotions, etc, the letter has said. This is against basic tenets of science practice and does not augur well for the development of scientific research.

Scientific recognitions are supposed to be based on a fair review of one's contributions in a specific area of scientific research. This is generally done through the process of peer review. The now-discontinued Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Prize was considered the gold standard as it recognised the very best of Indian science in different disciplines. The list of Bhatnagar awardees reads like a Who's Who of Indian science over the past several decades. Those awarded have gone on to head institutions, establish new ones and lead funding agencies as well as scientific departments. If the process of selection of the Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar has been compromised in its very first year, will it be able to build

In recent years, however, the office of the PSA has been reduced to a coordinating wing of scientific departments and tasked with work like any other government agency. For instance, it is not the job of a science adviser to prepare sundry dashboards or arrange publicity kiosks at airports. The PSA has also been asked to handle administrative work like screening proposals for the procurement of technology and technological products, reminiscent of the work the much-maligned Director General of Technology Development used to do at the height of the 'Licence Raj' in the 1960s and 1970s. Another responsibility thrust on the PSA was making a digital catalogue of technologies developed by public sector undertakings and an e-marketplace for such technologies to facilitate their procurement by government departments and the private sector. Such routine work can be handled by other agencies and departments. Entrusting such work to the PSA's office erodes its primary function of providing independent and autonomous advice on science to the government.

## Poll-time parole

Dera chief's release is BJP's last-ditch gambit

THE timing is a dead giveaway. Dera Sacha Sauda head and rape convict Gurmeet Ram Rahim Singh has been released on parole barely three days ahead of the Haryana Assembly polls. This is the last roll of the dice by the ruling BJP, which is desperate to counter anti-incumbency and withstand the Congress challenge. Ram Rahim continues to have a sizeable following in parts of the state — notwithstanding his conviction in rape and murder cases — and even his covert diktat to his flock can have a bearing on the saffron party's fortunes. During the parole period, the dera head will not be allowed to enter Haryana or take part in election-related activities. However, these restrictions are a mere fig leaf — Ram Rahim will have the leeway to influence voters without being present on ground zero, thanks to social media and word-of-mouth publicity. In any case, he does not have to make a public speech to get his message across to his devotees.

There are no prizes for guessing what 'compelling reasons' prompted the dera chief to seek parole weeks after he had



returned to Rohtak's Sunaria jail following a 21-day

furlough. The alacrity with which his plea has been processed and pushed — from the caretaker Chief Minister's office to the Prisons Department and then the state's Chief Electoral Officer — shows that the authorities can dispense with the cumbersome red tape whenever they want to do it.

The Congress' petition to the Election Commission of India, demanding that parole not be granted as it would amount to a violation of the Model Code of Conduct, has gone in vain. It's a moot point whether the 'Messenger of God' can make a divine intervention to decisively impact the electoral outcome. Ram Rahim might not be as powerful as he was a decade ago, but the ease with which he has secured parole and furlough in recent years indicates that he is no pushover. One thing is crystal clear: his release will force the BJP's rivals to recalibrate their strategy, and that too at the eleventh hour.

## Why Indus Waters Treaty needs to be renegotiated

In light of Pakistan's filibustering, it is appropriate to renegotiate the treaty to reflect contemporary realities.

GEN Pervez Musharraf, in his Royal College of Defence Studies (RCDS) thesis, inferred that water would be the casus belli for future wars between India and Pakistan. After the 2019 Pulwama attack, PM Narendra Modi gave a new twist to this with the statement: "Water and terror cannot be allowed to flow together." The continued intransigence of Pakistan and the resurgence of proxy warfare, despite the Balakot strikes, have brought back the focus on leveraging water as a coercive strategy. India has formally asked Pakistan to review and renegotiate the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT), which regulates water-sharing between the two co-riparian neighbours.

India has the lowest per capita freshwater availability globally and is facing looming water stress. It has 17% of the world's population, but barely 4% of its freshwater reserves. Even by optimistic projections, India has only 90 days of water reserves, compared to many other countries that have two years' worth of stored reserves. More importantly, Indians often fail to treat water as a scarce resource. In my lectures on the IWT, I've been questioned about the legitimacy of using water as a weapon. My response is: Why did we allow Ravi waters to flow to Pakistan when Punjab doesn't even allow the completion of the Sutlej-Yamuna Link canal to share water with Haryana? We are already experiencing domestic water wars over the Cauvery and Damodar rivers.

Invariably, the issue of the upper and lower riparian status and the potential blowback from China is raised. The relevant facts are: first, regarding the Brahmaputra (Tsangpo), 40-50% of the water originates from Tibet, and 70% flows to Bangladesh after accumulating in India. Therefore, the maximum impact would be on Bangladesh, especially during the lean season for flushing requirements. Second, the Indus sources only 5-8% of its water from Tibet and India's requirements

from it are minimal. Most importantly, China does not concern itself with lower riparian states, as evidenced by its actions in the Mekong Delta. We have already experienced the Chinese-triggered Pare-chu (Sutlej) deluge in 2000 and the Brahmaputra floods in 2020. China is proceeding with the Yarlung-Zangbo dam on the Tsangpo to create a 1,100-km channel to divert water to the Taklamakan Desert. The IWT, often touted as a resilient agreement between two warring nations, has survived three and a half wars, proxy terrorism and Pakistan's obduracy for over six decades.

The Treaty was signed on September 16, 1960, and, according to recently leaked documents, was a double-pincer effort by the US and the World Bank to keep India in check. India was given full control of the eastern rivers (the Ravi, Beas and Sutlej) while Pakistan received the major share of the western rivers (the Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab). In effect, Pakistan got 135 MAF (80.2%), and India received just 33 MAF (19.8%). India also had to contribute £83 million to finance dams and replacement canals in Pakistan. India was permitted to create limited storage on the western rivers for power generation, flood control and general usage amounting to 3.6 MAF. However, India has failed to fully utilise this capacity and is now trying to catch up, although such projects require decades of focused management. Of the assessed potential of 18,653 MW of power generation, projects with a capacity of only 3,264 MW (18%) have been commissioned so far. Additionally, while 1.34 million acres are permitted for irrigation, India is using only 0.792 million acres. On the eastern rivers, India has built major dams like Ranjit Sagar/Thein on the Ravi, Pratap Sagar (Pong) on the Beas and Gobind Sagar

(Bhakra-Nangal) on the Sutlej, ushering in the Green Revolution. This transformed India from a nation reliant on PL-480 grain shipments in 1960 to one of the world's leading grain exporters today.

Similarly, Pakistan constructed dams like Tarbela, Mangla and Panjnad, which feed irrigation canals in its Punjab province. However, it has failed to utilise water efficiently, and is suffering frequent floods, high salinity and gross underutilisation of resources. India recently constructed the Shahpur-Kandi balancing reservoir as an adjunct to the Ranjit Sagar

modifications. According to media reports, the filling of the reservoir resulted in 30% crop losses in Pakistan. Other projects on the Chenab — such as Pakkaldul, Lower Kalnai, Sawalkot, Rattle, and Bursar — are in the pipeline.

Even with these, India will only achieve around 62% of the potential 18,600 MW of power generation. Plans also exist for the Jhelum, including the Wullar Barrage for the Tulbul navigation project to ensure a minimum draft. The IWT has become outdated as it never accounted for climate change, water stress or livelihood needs like navigation and salinity management in dams and reservoirs. As a result, the Salal Dam is choked with silt, posing a threat to the nearby town of Reasi. Efforts to desilt the dam have been met with resistance from Pakistan.

Every Indian initiative is opposed in IWT meetings, which have become irregular following the Uri and Balakot strikes. Indian projects, even those in the permissible run-of-the-river mode, are opposed by Pakistan and dragged into arbitration, causing delays and increased costs.

Pakistan has also resorted to using multiple redress mechanisms, such as neutral experts and the Court of Arbitration (COA), concurrently on the same issues. Since September 2023, India has boycotted the COA and responded only to neutral experts.

In light of Pakistan's filibustering, it is appropriate to renegotiate the Treaty to reflect contemporary realities. Beyond the issue of terrorism, India needs water for its growing needs. And, it would be wise for Pakistan to recognise the emerging challenges and Indian leverage.



Dam, which is essential to control the flow of the Ravi. In its absence, large amounts of water have flowed to Pakistan. The two-decade delay in the project was caused by inter-state bickering over power-sharing costs until the Central government took over the project. A major push came with the commissioning of the Baglihar Dam on the Chenab in 2016, following a protracted arbitration process and a largely favourable verdict with river



# How Robots are bringing about a new lifestyle!

With robotics bridging the gap between technology and the way we live, it's all about a human-humanoid interaction now.

## Exploring new frontiers

The Antarctic has long been a worry for scientists as to how they would learn more about the sea there, but in recent news, a robot has allowed scientists to map the sea ice in 3D. Jaguar, a 300-pound yellow robotic vehicle helped them gain valuable information on the thickening of the ice. Industrial robots are also building cars and other transport. And when it comes to finding out more about the tricky, hostile environment of space, it's the robots that have to be credited with the exploring. Robotic missions have been sent to the Moon, Mars, Venus, Titan and Jupiter. This May, in a giant leap in engineering, robot Dextre (by the Canadian Space Agency) repaired the International Space Station's Canadian robotic arm in space.

## Hospitality

Say hello to the army of robo-chefs!

Fancy a machine serving you a virgin mojito? Did you know, as per reports this November, a 'smart' Caribbean cruise liner had robots mixing drinks in what is called the world's first 'smart ship'. As patrons place orders on tablets and a wall displays their wait time, the jerky, drink-mixing bots used mechanical arms to pull down bottles, adding mixes, shaking and stirring. In Harbin, China, robots have been serving tables at an eatery. They dish up dumplings, noodles and wait on diners. As per a report, when someone walks in, they say, 'Earth person hello. Welcome to the Robot Restaurant.' Once the orders are placed, the robots get into the kitchen and cook the meals. Two Chinese students at a university also came up with a 'wok robot' that can dish up 600 dishes! A Japanese firm has come up with an engineering masterpiece — a six speed sushi-making robot — capable of churning 2,500 pieces of sushi per hour!

And it's not just terra firma, you can

expect to be served by a flying robot — the first commercial attempt of its kind — by the end of 2015! The demo was presented this November to Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong and these futuristic automated waiters are set to be launched at an outlet in Singapore then.

## Helping at home

This is how tech-savvy equipment is going to change basic domestic chores and make life easier for you! The Cocorobo, a Japanese premium vacuum robot, that's part of the smart home system, cleans your floors, tells you the weather and more. The Scooba can vacuum and wash floors at the same time. There are also window cleaners

and lawn mowers as well as robot pool cleaners. And if you're tired with all that cooking on a weeknight, Armar can come to the rescue! Called a 'kitchen companion', he fetches stuff from the fridge and does the dishes too!

## Correct your golf swing

Always regretted that bad swing that has been spoiling your golf game? Now, a 10-foot-tall robot in South Seattle called RoboGolfPro, wants to help you. It can be programmed in a various ways to allow golfers to realise the correct move and thus improve their game.



# Handcrafted yet mindblowing

The items on display at the West Bengal State Handicraft Expo are the perfect pointers to what a little creativity can do to everyday stuff.

The colours on the 'pat' just don't mingle to form a 'chitra'; they are statements woven into a story. The terracotta skull ashtray reminds one of the fate of many a smoker. The miniature busts and figurines carved out of coconut shells and ornamental items made from fish scales are instances of perfect waste management, while the seemingly delicious Bengali dishes are rock solid. Watch your teeth!



All these and more such out-of-the-box items are on display at the 22nd West Bengal State Handicraft Expo 2014-2015, which was inaugurated on November 21 at the Milan Mela ground. Apart from being an attempt by the state government to promote artisans and their crafts, it is a platform to highlight individual talents. TOI takes you through the stalls of the few districts whose artisans have been able to pull crowd.

## Darjeeling

Tanned tribal soldiers armed with spears stand as mute gatekeepers at the expo entrance. Made out of wood from the Gamhar — a tree found at high altitudes, these figurines, according to Naxalbari artisan Pradeep Singh, 35, takes at least two days to carve. Singh, who has been at it for 20 years now, said kwash ink is used for highlighting and texturing the figurines. Animal masks and miniatures, all made from the same material, are also on display at the stall.

## Hooghly

Ashok Jha has created his miniature fairground, comprising a merry-go-round, human figures and other fun rides, completely out of springs and bolts. The set, priced at ₹40,000, has a hi-tech look with a touch of ethnicity. The 37-year-old artisan from Bandel also has religious wall decorations, made with acrylic paint, wood and putty, on display — all priced between

₹4,000 and ₹16,000.

On the other hand, the imitation food dishes by Shibnath Barai, 49, are just mind-blowing! Barai — the creator of the Science City dinosaur exhibits — has used fibreglass to mould pieces of fish and chicken drumsticks and pigment colours to provide the texture. The dishes will leave you dearer by ₹300 and ₹700. Would you be interested to buy rotten fruits and eggs for ₹100 per pair? Well, he has these on offer too!

Shubhankar Bakshi, 44, on the other hand, makes fabulous miniatures, especially of monkeys, out of coconut shells. "I just use a plain knife to give shape to the coconut fibres. I don't tamper with the natural construct," he said. His other creations include coconut fibre crabs and other marine creatures and mini dolls made of mahogany fruits.

His health warning to smokers is a sickening green terracotta skull ashtray! According to Baruiapur artisan Govind Chandra Pal, the ashtray happened by accident. "A friend of mine once commented that everything relating to smoking should come with a warning. I liked the concept and the ashtray was the result." But the warning comes with a price tag — ₹70.

## Paschim Midnapore

You'd probably want a piece of art that tells a story. Saleha Chitrakar, 26, is the person whose exceptionally meticulous 'patchitra' evokes the same idea. The colours have been churned out of natural substances like turmeric, sheel leaves, aparajita flowers and burnt rice. Apart from the paintings on canvas that range from ₹700-1,500, she also has handmade fans and khuntis, priced at ₹50 each.

## Dakshin Dinajpur

Have a penchant for indigenous Incan masks? Forget about travelling to Machu Picchu, because artisan Bubai Baisya has just the right stuff, and that too between ₹400 and ₹1,200 apiece. The 26-year-old artisan carves bamboo with a batali and uses blue lamps to smoke the masks and give these an antique look. Also on display are engraved owls on flower vases, again made of bamboo stems.

## South 24 Parganas

If you lay eyes on Suman Saha's earrings and trinkets, you'll think twice before throwing away fish scales and endoskeletons. Why? Well, the artisan creates her ornaments with just these, using glass paint, acrylic colours and glitters. The price tag: ₹30 to ₹100.

## How to remove common stains at home

How often have you poured something on your dress and toiled to get the stain out? Even when you run it through water or hand wash it, the stain stays put because every stain is different and must be treated differently. Here are some effective ways to get common stains out.

Stains from drinks like coffee, tea, alcohol, fruit juices and

### soft drinks:

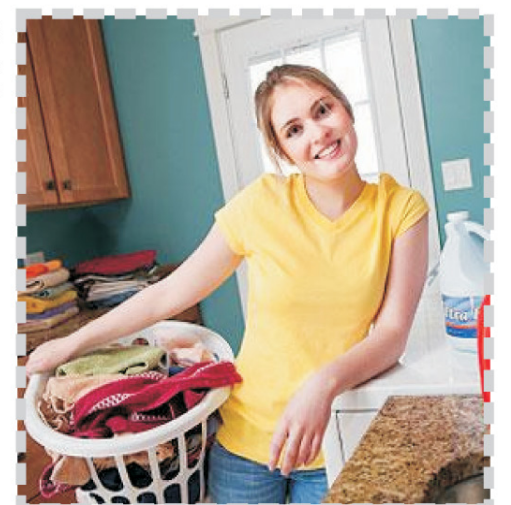
Soak the stain in cool water for 10 minutes and using either a bar of soap, liquid detergent or a paste made with washing powder and water, dab on the stain and rub.

Before the paste dries, wash the dress with detergent in hot water.

**Chocolates:** Try to scrape off as much of it as you can with a blunt-edged knife. Soak in warm soapy water and if a brown stain is still visible, soak in a mix of water with sanitizer and rinse with warm water.

**Cosmetics:** Before you put the dress for wash, dab on the stain with either a prewash stain remover or a paste of washing powder with water.

**Oil:** Using a tissue, remove



the excess oil. Wet the stain and apply liquid detergent directly on the stain and leave it for 15-20 minutes. Wash with hot water. Alternatively, try putting a paper on both sides of the stain and ironing over the paper.

### Things to remember

- Always take the stain out before you wash your dress.
- Always blot the stain, don't rub.
- The longer you leave the stain, the more difficult it is to remove.
- Nail polish stains are close to impossible to remove, so the best thing would be careful about not spilling it on your dress.



# 1984 anti-Sikh riots case: Victim's wife deposes against Jagdish Tytler

**In her statement, the victim's wife said an eyewitness told her that Tytler had come to the place of the incident in a vehicle and incited a mob.**

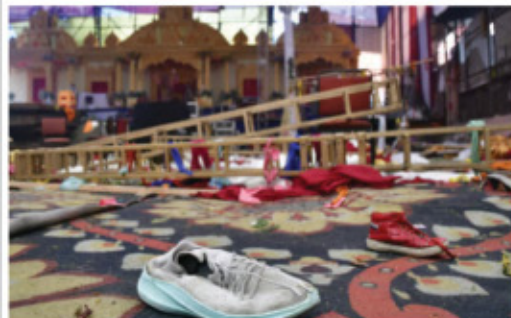
**NEW DELHI.** The wife of a victim to the 1984 anti-Sikh riots case in north Delhi's Pul Bangash Gurdwara on Thursday deposed before a Delhi court against Congress leader Jagdish Tytler. Special Judge Rakesh Syal recorded the statement of Lakhwinder Kaur, the wife of Badal Singh who was one of the three killed by an irate mob that torched the Gurdwara during the riots. In her statement, Kaur said an eyewitness told her that Tytler had come to the place of the incident in a vehicle and incited a mob. Kaur told the court that she met Surender Singh Granthi, who worked as a Granthi in the Gurdwara in 2008, who described the incident to her.



"Surender Singh told me he saw the incident from the roof of the Gurdwara. He told me that he saw my husband Badal Singh exiting from the Gurdwara and saw him being attacked by a mob who took out the kirpan of my husband and stabbed him to

death using the same. He told me that Tytler had come to the place of the incident in a vehicle and that he had gathered everyone," she told the court. She added that Surender Singh told her that the mob engaged in violence upon the incitement of Tytler and her husband's body was put in a cart after he was killed and burnt by placing burning tyres on top of him. She, thereafter, approached the court for investigation, Kaur said. Tytler's counsel opposed the deposition stating that the account of Granthi was hearsay and not admissible as evidence.

## One dies of electrocution, seven hurt in stampede at Kalkaji temple



**NEW DELHI.** Ten months after a makeshift platform collapsed during an event at Kalkaji temple in southeast Delhi killing a woman and injuring 17 others, another tragedy struck the mandir on Thursday. A 17-year-old boy was electrocuted and at least seven people were injured in a stampede that followed during Navratri celebrations. The deceased boy, identified as Mayank, was a Class 9 student and a resident of Ghaziabad. He was in the temple with his family. DCP (Southeast) Rajesh Deo said initial probe revealed that an electric wire used for halogen light installation during Navratri was broken. It came in contact with the iron railing. "Seven people were injured. Four are admitted to AIIMS and three in Safdarajang Hospital," he said. No lesson learnt? On January 28, a raised platform had collapsed during an event at Kalkaji temple, killing a 45-yr-old woman and injuring 17 others.

## Delhi police bust syndicate involved in guaranteed returns investment fraud

**Police said complaints by 29 victims against 'HIBOX' app were received at IFSO in which it was alleged that they had been lured to invest in the app with the promise of guaranteed returns.**

**NEW DELHI.** The Intelligence Fusion and Strategic Operations unit of the Delhi Police has busted a syndicate that was allegedly involved in duping people on the pretext of providing guaranteed returns in the name of investment in Application Hibox and seized Rs 18 crore from different bank accounts. Cops, who believe the scam is probably of more than Rs 500 crore, have issued notices to social media influencers, including Elvish Yadav, who promoted HIBOX app and lured investors to invest via the said application. Sharing details, DCP (IFSO) Hemant Tiwari said the complaint of 29 victims against "HIBOX" app was received at IFSO on August 16 in which it was alleged that they had been lured to invest in HIBOX with the promise of guaranteed returns of 1% to 5% daily, amounting to 30% to 90% monthly. Many social media influencers and YouTubers viz. Saurav Joshi, Abhishek Malhan alias Fakra Insaan, Purav Jha, Elvish Yadav, Bharti Singh and Harsh Limbachiya, among others, promoted the application.

## Police order tweaked for climate activist Sonam Wangchuk's release, HC told

**NEW DELHI.** The Delhi High Court on Thursday was informed by Solicitor General Tushar Mehta that climate activist Sonam Wangchuk has been released from detention following the modification of a prohibitory order issued by the Delhi Police. The original order, dated September 30, had restricted gathering of five or more people in public places until October 5. However, it was revised on October 2, allowing Wangchuk's release.

A bench headed by Chief Justice Manmohan, alongside Justice Tushar Rao Gedela, heard the case after petitions were filed by Mustafa Haji and Azad. These petitions challenged the prohibitory order and sought release of Wangchuk and others. Advocate Prashant Bhusan, representing one of the petitioners, alleged Wangchuk and several others had been taken to Ambedkar Bhawan, where they were being restrained from going to Jantar Mantar to hold a climate awareness event. The court directed both Delhi Police and petitioners to submit affidavits addressing these claims. The court was hearing public interest litigations (PILs) that sought release of over 140 people from Ladakh who had reportedly been detained while attempting to enter Delhi.

Their objective was to peacefully advocate for granting Ladakh special protections under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution. Wangchuk, along with about 150 others, was detained at the Haryana-Delhi border late Monday.

## BJP takes out protest march against AAP government over bad roads

**Potholes on Delhi's roads are not just a result of one monsoon but represent a decade of corruption in road maintenance and construction, said Delhi BJP chief Sachdeva.**

**NEW DELHI.** The Delhi BJP on Thursday launched a city-wide campaign to highlight what it describes as the deteriorating condition of roads caused by the alleged corruption and incompetence of Delhi government. Party leaders, including state BJP President Virendra Sachdeva and several MPs, held protests at various locations, displaying cut-outs on damaged roads with messages like "Congratulations Delhi! These are the potholes of the most corrupt government."



The campaign kicked off at Khari Baoli, Church Mission Road, and Old Delhi Railway Station Road, where Sachdeva, accompanied by MP Praveen Khandelwal, Delhi BJP Media Head Praveen Shankar Kapoor, and other senior leaders, pointed to the poor state of infrastructure as evidence of the Kejriwal government's failure. "The potholes on Delhi's roads are not just a result of one monsoon but represent a decade of corruption in road maintenance and construction," said Sachdeva, accusing the government of taking commissions as high as 35% for road projects. MP Manoj Tiwari led protests in Nehru Vihar, Burari, and Wazirabad Road, while Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly, Vijender Gupta, demonstrated in Nangloi.

# Medicos express concern over Unani doctor's murder

**In the wake of the RG Kar case, medical associations expressed deep anguish and frustration over the incident and questioned the law and order situation in the city.**

**NEW DELHI.** Wednesday's midnight murder of a doctor at a nursing home has sent shockwaves throughout the medical community, amid a surge in recent crimes in the city and deadly attacks on healthcare professionals nationwide. Happening in the wake of RG Kar case, medical associations expressed deep anguish and frustration over the incident and questioned the law and order situation in the city.

Terming it as a 'blatant disregard for law and order,' the Federation of Resident Doctors' Association (FORDA) questioned why doctors have been becoming easy targets in the hospital.

"An incident like this happening at the workplace of a doctor in the capital



city of India? Isn't this a blatant disregard for law and order in the city? Why are doctors becoming easy targets in the hospitals? Our demand for central law is shunned on the rationale that other professionals like lawyers and accountants would also demand the same. Are other professionals being assaulted with the same frequency?" asked Dr Aviral

Mathur, president, FORDA. Dr Dhruv Chauhan, a national council member of the Indian Medical Association's (IMA) Junior Doctors Network, said the doctors' situation has become worrisome. "Doctors are now sitting on deathbeds. Anyone who comes to us for help could potentially be a threat, as seen in this doctor's case. This is no longer just a doctor-versus-assailants issue; it reflects a complete breakdown of law and order in our country," he said. The Federation of All India Medical Association (FAIMA) said despite the public outcry after the RG Kar incident, the attacks on healthcare professionals continue to surge.

# Delhi minister Saurabh Bharadwaj detained amid bus marshals' protest: AAP

**AAP MLAs, ministers and hundreds of bus marshals had gathered near Chandgi Ram Akhara, near the office of Lieutenant-Governor VK Saxena.**

**NEW DELHI.** The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Thursday said the Delhi Police has detained Cabinet Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj along with several party MLAs when they were protesting to reinstate the bus marshals who had earlier been terminated.

AAP MLAs, ministers and hundreds of bus marshals had gathered near Chandgi Ram Akhara, near the office of Lieutenant-Governor VK Saxena. During the assembly session,



both the AAP and BJP MLAs had unanimously passed a resolution, promising to resolve the employment concerns of the bus marshals. As part of the resolution, all MLAs and

ministers were scheduled to meet with the L-G on October 3 to ensure that any paperwork required for the reinstatement would be swiftly processed. However, the BJP MLAs failed to uphold their commitment, and the L-G has not yet convened the promised meeting.

Speaking at the protest site, Bharadwaj said, "Thousands of bus marshals, who have been struggling for more than a year without any income, are gathered here today with a simple

demand — justice. These individuals have families to support, rent to pay, and children to educate. Despite the legislative assembly's resolution, their plight continues, and the L-G has shown no willingness to address the issue."

AAP said that despite their peaceful approach, the police have cut off essential services such as lighting and water, in an apparent attempt to intimidate the protesters.

The AAP also alleged the BJP of taking U-turns on its promises, urging the L-G to prioritise a meeting to resolve the issue of bus marshals.

# Gopal Rai inaugurates bio-decomposer initiative

**Rai said the Delhi government will spray the bio-decomposer on over 5,000 acres of farmland to help mitigate winter pollution.**

**NEW DELHI.** In an effort to address the issue of stubble burning and lower the pollution levels in the national capital during winter, Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai on Thursday inaugurated the use of a bio-decomposer mixture in Palla village in Narela. Rai said the Delhi government will spray the bio-decomposer on over 5,000 acres of farmland to help mitigate winter pollution. To ensure effective implementation, 11 teams have been formed to carry out the spraying process across the designated areas, he added. The bio-decomposer helps break down stubble, preventing farmers from resorting to burning crop residue, a significant



contributor to seasonal pollution. In a post on X, AAP shared the initiative's progress, stating, "Another effective step... Today minister Gopal Rai inaugurated the spraying of bio-decomposer mixture for decomposing stubble." As per the statement, the government has simplified the process for

farmers to avail free bio-decomposer spraying by requiring only a form submission, with 841 farmers already participating. Rai emphasised that stubble burning is a major contributor to winter pollution and noted that bio-decomposer spraying, which was successful last year, has been reinitiated. The initiative, part of the government's 21-point winter action plan, also

improves soil fertility. Rai highlighted that Delhi has seen a 34.6% reduction in pollution since 2016, with fewer polluted days. The bio-decomposer powder, sourced from the Pusa Institute, will be sprayed under government's supervision.





**Bedroom decor should have a romantic essence to it, don't you think?**



# Give your Bedroom

a romantic touch

Considering that we spend a major part of our lives in our bedrooms, we should make it one of the most comfortable zones in our homes. It should be a room that spells romance and makes you feel good as soon as you step inside — a space that stimulates your senses. So, what do you need to make your boudoir a cosy love nest? Read on to find out some tips...

**Make it look great:**

The way your bedroom is lit, can make or break the look you want to create. Interior designer Ketki Passi says, "The right kind of lighting can help create a romantic ambience."

Candles can work wonders — they are what romance is all about. The mysterious light and shadow effect of a candle can give a very special aura to your bedroom. Bright, harsh bulbs are a big no-no. For the ideal romantic look dim, soft lights are key. Use heavy curtains to escape the glare of harsh street-lights. Of course, table and floor lamps are

indispensable.

**Make it comfortable:**

A bed that looks comfortable is a basic essential here. Four-poster beds look romantic. Use light fabric drapes in pastel shades around the bed to get a soft look. When it comes to bedspreads and covers, avoid rough and uncomfortable fabrics

— soft, smooth and comfortable ones like satin, silk and very good quality airy cotton are essential. Using sexy colours makes your room look, well, sexy. Choose bright bold colours like red, orange or rust. Place plush pillows on the bed of different sizes to make it look comfortable and inviting. Two large pillows, four medium

rectangular pillows and around four to five smaller square cushions. A fluffy and soft comforter can add to the romantic look.

**Prioritise privacy:**

Curtains spell romance — pretty, flimsy, sheer curtains that sway with the breeze, light ones in lovely pastel shades that leave you feeling calm and relaxed. Of course, you should also have those heavy drapes to guard your privacy.

**Indulge the senses:**

Romance is about titillating the senses and the sense of smell is important. Spraying room freshener is passe. Opt for fragrances of incense sticks, scented sachet, aromatic candles in lavender, vanilla, and camomile etc. Go and have fun doing up your bedroom!



## 5 cool makeover tips for your Room

Interior designer Rakshita Singh gives some simple design tips that can add some drama in your bedroom decor.

When decorating your bedroom, you need to make sure that your aesthetics are in place and more importantly, you need to ascertain whether you want the 'me only' look for your bedroom or the 'we' look. Here are some simple design tips that can add drama to your bedroom decor...

**Keep the magic alive:**

Dedicate one wall of your room to your partner with a large number of tiny framed photographs in a heart shape. This will remind you of each other and the best times you have spent together. It will also help to keep the magic alive.

**All about the 'we' not 'me':**

It's not about his or her, BUT it's about 'WE'. Opt for more neutral tones of colour like beige, purple and whites when renovating a room for a newly married couple.

**Add some romantic drama:**

Add some extra canopy of cloth in your bedroom to add some drama and closure. Choose and name your bed sides before you get hitched by putting the name above your bed heads.

**Make a cozy nook:**

Adding a love seat in a bright and attractive colour to your bedroom decor can jazz it up.

**Light it right:**

Add some drama by adding tea lights and lamps in the corner of your rooms. It does make it romantic.

**Plan ahead:**

Even if you are a great believer in spontaneity, give that a miss. Give attention to planning to avoid any last minute trouble. A day of prep here and there will make the lead-up to your party much more manageable. Apart from your food and drinks, do pay attention to your playlist, flower arrangement, lighting and the like.

**Choose a theme:**

Let us admit that everybody loves a theme. It might not be a



## 4 ways to organise a cool party

**When you are entertaining, do it with a sense of ease and elegance. Here are four simple ways to throw a party which will make the guests feel at home**

very very strict theme but people enjoy the party when a theme is there. A theme actually adds more fun and life to a party. Don't go overboard but give a little crazy thinking while choosing a party theme.

**It's all in the details:**

Yes, life's in the details. It's the little things that make people smile, and remember even long after your party is over. Keep in mind the likes and dislikes of your guests. If you have kids accompanying the adults in the party, remember to keep their food and drinks preference in mind.

**Be a relaxed host:**

When you are throwing a party at home, don't behave like a caterer. Don't run around like a worried soul. Remember, it's just a party. The whole point of a party is to spend time with your guests in the spirit of celebration. So, just relax and soak in the mood of fun and revelry.



## How to take care of your Woollen clothes

- \* Use lukewarm water and baby shampoo or a light detergent for washing woollen clothes.
- \* Regularly brush up your coats and jackets to avoid any bacteria breeding on them.
- \* Dry them in the shade; else they will lose their colour and sheen.
- \* Fold and then store the heavy sweaters instead of hanging them.
- \* Try wearing the woollen clothes after a gap of two or three days as it takes times for them to regain their original shape.



**Woollens are hard to maintain but they can last you a long time if you take good care of them. Few tips to maintain your woollens:**



## Sensex surges 800 points as IT, bank stocks power market rebound

**New Delhi.** Benchmark stock market indices bounced back sharply after a shaky start, driven by strong gains in information technology and banking stocks. The S&P BSE Sensex climbed 801.11 points to reach 83,298.21 at 12:31 pm, while the NSE Nifty50 surged 195.15 points, trading at 25,445.25. Despite early losses spurred by heightened volatility from Middle East tensions, the broader market indices showed resilience, with most sectors rebounding. High-weightage Nifty IT led the sectoral indices, rising 1.8%, fuelled by strong performances in Infosys and Tech Mahindra. Nifty Bank, Nifty Pharma, and Nifty Financial Services also contributed to the rally, highlighting strength across key sectors.

The top five gainers on the Nifty50 were Infosys, Tech Mahindra, Tata Motors, Axis Bank, and Sun Pharma, all posting solid gains in mid-day trade. Meanwhile, the top losers were Cipla, Hero MotoCorp, BPCL, Shriram Finance, and Apollo Hospitals. Earlier in the day, both the Sensex and Nifty50 faced significant losses amid market jitters driven by the ongoing Middle East conflict. However, the indices reversed course as volatility eased, and investors sought opportunities in IT and banking heavyweights. Meanwhile, international oil prices continue to rise, driven by escalating geopolitical tensions. This has kept market participants on edge, although the current rebound suggests that investors are cautiously optimistic about the domestic market's recovery. With the volatility index dropping, investors will likely keep a close watch on global developments, especially as the tensions in the Middle East remain a key factor in determining market movements in the near term.

## Diffusion Engineers shares list at 12% premium: Hold or book profit

**New Delhi** Shares of Diffusion Engineers Limited made a decent debut on Dalal Street amid a market slump due to the growing Middle East conflicts on Friday, opening at a 12% premium over their initial public offering (IPO) price. While the listing was positive, it fell short of expectations. Before the market debut, Diffusion Engineers shares were trading at a premium of 35.52% in the grey market, leading investors to anticipate a stronger opening. The shares listed at Rs 188 on the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE), marking an 11.90% rise over the issue price of Rs 168. On the National Stock Exchange (NSE), the shares opened at Rs 193, a 15.17% premium.

Should you hold or sell?

The key question for investors now is whether to hold onto their shares or book profits. According to Shivani Nyati, Head of Wealth at Swastika Investmart Ltd, the company's stock market debut, while not as high as some expected, is still a positive sign, with the shares listing at Rs 193 on the NSE. Nyati believes Diffusion Engineers is positioned for future growth, citing the company's focus on forward integration and diversification. "The organisation has shown steady financial growth and expanding profits, which bodes well for long-term investors. The P/E valuation of the IPO is reasonable," she said. For those who participated in the IPO, Nyati suggests holding onto their shares but keeping a close watch on both the company's performance and overall market conditions. She advises maintaining a stop-loss at the issue price of Rs 168 to protect against any downside.

Strong IPO response

The Diffusion Engineers IPO saw significant interest from investors, with an overall subscription of 114.50 times. The retail category was subscribed 85.61 times, the Qualified Institutional Buyers (QIB) segment saw demand at 95.74 times, and the Non-Institutional Investors (NII) category was oversubscribed by 207.60 times. This strong response reflected investor confidence in the Maharashtra-based company, which aimed to raise Rs 158 crore through its public issue.

## Gold, silver price : Precious metals record hike on MCX

**New Delhi.** Both gold and silver prices recorded a hike on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX) on Friday, October 4, 2024. Gold futures, maturing on December 5, 2024, stood at Rs 76,468 per 10 grams on the MCX, after recording a jump of Rs 224 or 0.29 per cent. The previous close was recorded at Rs 76,244. Meanwhile, silver futures, maturing on December 5, 2024, witnessed a marginal hike of Rs 459 or 0.49 per cent and were retailing at Rs 93,437 per kg on the MCX



against the previous close of Rs 92,978. GOLD, SILVER PRICES IN MAJOR CITIES

The gold and silver prices in India depend on several factors, including the value of the rupee against the dollar. Global demand also plays a key role in determining the trends observed in the rate of precious metals.

GOLD, SILVER PRICES IN INTERNATIONAL MARKET

Gold prices climbed on Friday, supported by safe-haven demand arising from the Middle East conflict, while spotlight shifted towards U.S. payrolls report to gauge the trajectory of the Federal Reserve's policy path, news agency Reuters reported. According to the latest metal report, spot gold gained 0.3 per cent at \$2,662.50 per ounce by 0325 GMT, while, U.S. gold futures rose 0.1 per cent to \$2,682.10.

# India's per capita income to surge by \$2,000 in 5 years, says Nirmala Sitharaman

**Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman highlighted that India is well on track to double its per capita income within a few years, largely driven by economic and structural reforms implemented over the past decade.**

**New Delhi.** Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said India is set to see a rise in its per capita income, with the figure expected to increase by \$2,000 in the next five years. She made this statement while speaking at the 3rd Edition of the Kautilya Economic Conclave on Friday. The finance minister highlighted that India is well on track to double its per capita income within a few years, largely driven

by economic and structural reforms implemented over the past decade. She said that the country has made significant economic progress, bouncing back from the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. "While it took us 75 years to reach a per capita income of \$2,730, as per IMF projections, it will take only five years to add another \$2,000," Sitharaman said. She described the upcoming decades as 'period-defining', predicting that they will see a rapid improvement in the living standards of Indians. "The upcoming decades will see the steepest rise in living standards for the common man, truly making it a period-defining era for an Indian to live in," she said. She further said that these improvements are being seen alongside declining inequality, citing data showing a decrease in the Gini coefficient. The Gini coefficient, which measures inequality in income and consumption,



has fallen for both rural and urban areas. For rural India, it declined from 0.283 to 0.266, and for urban areas, it fell from 0.363 to 0.314. The largest stakeholders and beneficiaries of the growth process towards Viksit Bharat will be the four major castes, namely 'Garib', 'Mahilayen', 'Yuva' and 'Annadata'. Accordingly, the budgets in Amrit Kaal will be devised with these stakeholders in mind," she

said. She pointed out that India has leapt from being the 10th largest economy to the 5th largest in just five years. The country's steady economic performance, including controlled inflation, is part of the broader growth narrative, the finance minister added. However, she also acknowledged that global challenges could disrupt this momentum. Sitharaman pointed to ongoing international conflicts that pose threats to global peace and economic stability. Despite this, she expressed confidence in India's potential for continued

growth.

One of the key factors in India's future growth, Sitharaman said, will be the organic rise in consumption, driven by the country's large and young population. "As of now, 43% of Indians are younger than 24 years old, and they have yet to explore their consumption behaviour fully," she said.

## ITC allowed on construction costs for rental realty

**NEW DELHI.** In a landmark ruling, the Supreme Court on Thursday provided major relief to property owners by affirming that input tax credit (ITC) on construction costs for rental buildings can be claimed, likening such properties to "plants" in a factory that generate economic output.

This decision not only clarifies the interpretation of the goods and services tax (GST) Act but also promises to benefit thousands of taxpayers nationwide who have faced litigation from GST departments, ensuring that those who invest in rental properties can reclaim ITC on related expenses without restriction. Safari Retreats, engaged in constructing shopping malls for leasing purposes, initiated a writ petition in the Odisha High Court, seeking eligibility for ITC on goods and services utilised in construction of immovable property, excluding plant and machinery. The HC interpreted Section 17(5)(d) to allow for the availability of ITC. In response, the central revenue department filed a special leave petition (SLP), arguing that GST rules don't permit claiming

ITC on immovable property. Subsequently, several petitioners approached the apex court to contest the constitutional validity of these provisions, as the HC had not addressed this issue. In 2023, the apex



court concluded the matter but reserved its orders, with Justice Abhay S Oka and Justice Sanjay Karol delivering the decision on Thursday. As per experts, further clarification is needed whether similar relief measures can be extended to additional sectors, such as ports, airports and data centres. As per Abhishek A Rastogi, founder of Rastogi Chambers and representative for several petitioners in the apex court case, the ruling will determine ITC

eligibility via essentiality and functionality tests, ensuring credits are denied only when inputs aren't vital for business operations. This decision will clarify ITC claims, especially in construction, and serve as guidance for future cases and interpretations of the law.

"ITC on goods or services used for repairs, construction, works contract, etc to such buildings, which have not been capitalised in the books, is as it is available and not blocked under Section 17(5) of The CGST Act 2017. This judgement is going to benefit thousands of taxpayers whose cases have been litigated by the GST Departments across the country," said Vivek Jalan - Partner Tax Connect Advisory Services LLP. Decision to benefit thousands of taxpayers. This decision not only clarifies interpretation of the GST Act but also promises to benefit thousands of taxpayers nationwide who have faced litigation from GST departments, ensuring that those who invest in rental properties can reclaim ITC on related expenses without restriction

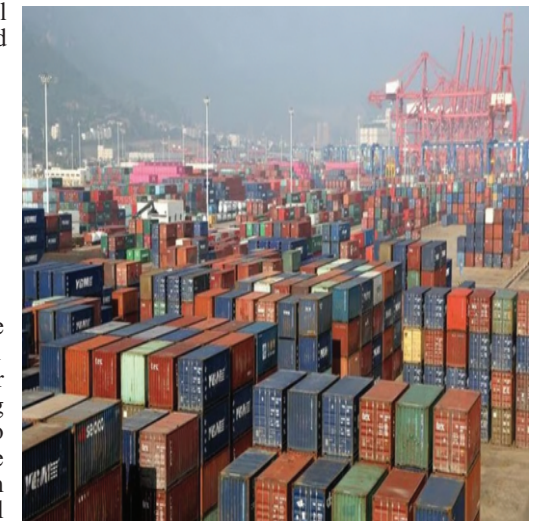
## Q2FY25 IT results preview: Revenue growth to be positive

**BENGALURU.** IT services companies might report better earnings in the second quarter of this fiscal year as analysts believe that there have been improvements in decision cycles and that Generative AI deals will be in focus. Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) will announce its results on October 10, followed by HCLTech on October 14. Bengaluru-based IT services companies Wipro and Infosys will post their results on October 17, says an industry preview. The IT sector growth is in the middle of its recovery, having bottomed out two quarters ago, and is expected to achieve a high single-digit over the next three quarters, said HDFC Securities in its Q2FY25E results preview. AI is proving to be a net positive for the

sector, and with GCC (Global Capability Centre) growth differential peaking, concerns around terminal growth are easing, supporting sustained demand. Despite the absence of mega deals recently, some improvements in decision cycles and discretionary spending can support growth even as the fabric of cost optimisation remains, it added.

LTIMindtree and Infosys are expected to lead growth within tier-1 in Q2, followed by TCS, Tech Mahindra, HCLTech and Wipro. TCS' revenue growth is expected to moderate in Q2, impacted by muted performance ex-India with incremental weakness in Retail & CPG and growth moderation in UK geography (despite recent wins such as Primark, Rolls Royce and

Mansfield Building), it said in the note. It added that Wipro may guide -1 to +1% QoQ for the third quarter despite improvement in US banking and Capco. HCLTech is likely to maintain its 3-5% guidance despite State Street's dent in Q2 and high growth expectations in Q3. As far as deal wins are concerned, they are likely to be soft for Tech Mahindra, but there will be an uptick in its margin. The margin guidance of Infosys (20-22%) and HCLTech (18-19%) is likely to be unchanged, said HDFC Securities. PL Capital said Accenture's commentary on outsourcing growth for FY25 indicates a positive bias over the consulting business. "The read across Indian IT peers remains positive, as the growth trend and



export to the tune of \$100 billion will get affected during this year if the situation continues," says Ahmed. An exporter on condition of anonymity, said that trade with Iran had taken a dip following the sanctions against Iran by the US. Tea, turmeric, agricultural products among others are exported to Iran via Dubai. Joint Director General of Federation of Indian Exports Organisation K Unnikrishnan said the conflict would result in insurance premiums going up for shipping cargoes to Gulf countries.

## Apple deepens India foothold with new stores, local production of all iPhones

**Apple is planning to expand its retail presence in India with more flagship Apple stores in key cities as it aims to create more direct customer interactions and experiences.**

**New Delhi** Apple has announced that it will now produce the iPhone 16 Pro and iPhone 16 Pro Max models in India. This move means that for the first time, the entire lineup of iPhones will be made in India. The tech giant, which has been gradually increasing its manufacturing presence in the country, has now achieved a major milestone by including its latest models in local production. Apple is now manufacturing the entire iPhone 16 lineup, including iPhone 16 Pro and iPhone 16 Pro Max, in India," the company said in a

statement. This decision highlights the growing importance of India in Apple's global operations, both for local sales and as an export hub.

**Apple expands retail presence**

In addition to its manufacturing push, Apple is also planning to expand its retail presence in India with more flagship Apple Stores. These new stores are set to open in key cities such as Bengaluru, Pune, Delhi, and Mumbai. The company aims to create more direct customer interactions and experiences through these stores. "Our stores are incredible places to experience the magic of Apple, and it's been wonderful to deepen our connection with our customers in India," said Diederik O'Brien, Apple's senior vice president of retail, in a statement.

We're thrilled to build our teams as we plan to open more stores in India, because we're inspired by the creativity and passion of our customers across this country," she added.

The company opened its first two flagship



stores in India earlier this year, and the success of these stores has possibly prompted plans for further expansion.

**Pro models now 'Made in India'**

While Apple has been making iPhones in India since 2017, it is significant that the more complex iPhone 16 Pro and Pro Max models will now be manufactured

locally. This marks a shift in Apple's reliance on India, not only for basic models but also for its high-end products.

Apple also confirmed that the Pro models made in India will be available to customers in the domestic market and will also be exported to select countries. "Manufactured in India iPhone 16 Pro and Pro Max will soon be available for our local customers and for export to select countries across the world," the company said. Apple's growing footprint in India extends beyond just manufacturing and retail. The company now employs over 3,000 people in the country, having ramped up production since it began making iPhones in India seven years ago. "Apple's work with Indian suppliers of all sizes supports hundreds of thousands of jobs across the country," the company added.



NEWS BOX

India pacers, ft Arshdeep Singh, Hardik Pandya gear up for Bangladesh T20s

New Delhi India's pacers, including Arshdeep Singh, Hardik Pandya, and Harshit Rana, were spotted undergoing intense net practice ahead of the T20I series against Bangladesh, which begins on October 6. After dominating the Test series with a 2-0 win, India aims to replicate their success in the T20 format. In a video shared by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), the fast bowlers were seen sweating it out in Gwalior, the venue for the first of three T20Is. Suryakumar Yadav will lead the young squad, featuring promising talents like Harshit Rana and IPL 2024 breakout star Mayank Yadav, who could make his India debut during the series. Suryakumar's side, packed with youthful energy, most recently triumphed in a 3-0 series against Sri Lanka, where India's bowling attack played a



crucial role in their success. The team's dynamic lineup includes both experienced players like Hardik Pandya and young players like Riyan Parag, Mayank Yadav and returnee Varun Chakravarthy eager to prove their worth. Under the coaching of Gautam Gambhir, India has increasingly relied on part-time bowlers, showcasing depth and variety in their bowling attack. This strategic approach, which paid off against Sri Lanka, will be crucial in the upcoming Bangladesh series. Full India squad for Bangladesh T20Is: Suryakumar Yadav (C), Abhishek Sharma, Sanju Samson (wk), Rinku Singh, Hardik Pandya, Riyan Parag, Nitish Kumar Reddy, Shivam Dube, Washington Sundar, Ravi Bishnoi, Varun Chakravarthy, Jitesh Sharma (wk), Arshdeep Singh, Harshit Rana, Mayank Yadav. The series presents an exciting opportunity for these pacers to shine on the international stage, with expectations high, especially for players like Arshdeep and Hardik, who have been integral parts of India's T20 setup. The addition of fresh faces like Mayank Yadav adds another layer of excitement as fans await his potential debut. With momentum from their Test series win and the hunger for T20 success, India's pacers will be crucial to securing another series victory against Bangladesh.

Manchester United's Erik ten Hag asks for 'trust in process' after Porto scare

Porto. Manchester United manager Erik ten Hag once again called for patience and trust from fans, despite the club's recent struggles, including a 3-3 draw against Porto in the Europa League on October 4. United squandered a two-goal lead, with early strikes from Rasmus Hjulund in the 7th minute and Marcus Rashford in the 20th, but defensive lapses allowed Porto to equalize and eventually take the lead. A stoppage-time header from Harry Maguire salvaged a point for United. After the match, Ten Hag urged fans not to judge the team based on their current difficulties but to evaluate their progress at the end of the season. He emphasized that his process is still ongoing, and it is crucial to give it time to show results. Despite a busy summer transfer window, United have managed just three wins from their nine matches across all competitions



this season. "We will get there. Don't judge us in this moment. Judge us at the end of the season. We are in the process and we will improve. We are now two seasons where we achieve finals. We have to develop and progress this team," Ten Hag said. "We started the game very good, we dominated, scored two good goals, but then we lost control. So the start was good, the middle part was not good, and then we finished very good," Ten Hag added. United's draw against Porto marks a four-match winless streak, adding pressure on Ten Hag and the club. The Dutchman's future at the club is becoming more uncertain as poor results continue to mount. However, Ten Hag remains confident in the support of the board and is determined to turn things around. The manager insists that the team's long-term progress is more important than their current setbacks. He believes that once the new signings and tactical changes fully settle in, United will find consistency. United's next challenge comes against Unai Emery's Aston Villa in the Premier League on October 6, a must-win fixture as they look to break their current slump and restore faith in Ten Hag's process.

My father Mahavir Phogat worked hard for Vinesh, she never thanked him: Babita

**Babita Phogat revealed how her father, Mahavir, helped Vinesh overcome personal loss and become one of India's most decorated wrestlers. Babita said it has been disappointing to see Vinesh not acknowledging coach Mahavir's contributions.**

New Delhi Babita Phogat, cousin of former Indian wrestler Vinesh Phogat, expressed her disappointment over Vinesh's perceived lack of gratitude, particularly regarding her coach and uncle, Mahavir Phogat. Following the controversy surrounding the Paris Olympics, Babita claimed that Vinesh failed to acknowledge Mahavir's significant contributions to her career. Vinesh was disqualified from the Paris Olympics just before the gold medal match due to being 100 grams overweight, a situation that overshadowed her earlier achievements.

Vinesh's stellar run at the Paris Olympics ended on a sour note after the disqualification, which prompted her retirement from wrestling and a subsequent shift into politics, joining the Indian National Congress. The disqualification, despite her successful Olympic journey, marked a dramatic turn in her career.

Speaking on Sushant Sinha's podcast, Babita, a Commonwealth Games gold medalist from 2014, revealed her frustration regarding Vinesh's lack of appreciation for Mahavir Phogat. After the passing of Vinesh's father, Mahavir took on the role of her coach, playing a crucial part in her development as a wrestler.

You must have seen when Manu Bhaker returned home with her Olympic medal, her coach was by her side. Similarly, Aman Schrawat came back with his medal and had his coach with him. But when Vinesh returned, Dipender Hooda was there with her. It's better for people to just give him (Dipender) the Dronacharya award. I believe that if my father had been standing beside her at the airport, there wouldn't have been so much politics surrounding this situation," Babita said.



'MAHAVIR CRIED WHEN VINESH WAS DISQUALIFIED'

Babita said she saw her father Mahavir crying when Vinesh was disqualified from the Olympic final earlier in the year.

"I have seen my father cry just three times in my life. First, when my sisters and I got married. Second, when my uncle died and third, when Vinesh got disqualified from the Olympics," she said.

"These things need to be understood. I have seen how my father never allowed Vinesh to feel the absence of her father. When my uncle passed away, Vinesh, along with her

brother and sister, left wrestling. My father went to their home, confronted their mother, and brought them back to the sport. Even when they didn't reach the training ground at 4 a.m., he would go to their house and bring them. When someone puts in so much hard work into training and never receives a thank you, it is understandably emotional for any coach," Babita added. Vinesh was also one of the key figures in the protest against former Wrestling Federation of India President, Brij Bhushan Singh, accused of

sexual misconduct. Her involvement in the protests and her increasing role in Indian politics have kept her in the national spotlight.

Babita, who is a Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader, highlighted how Vinesh's entry into politics has changed her, suggesting a growing distance between the sisters since Vinesh's political debut. The clash between the two sisters adds another layer to the already complex narrative surrounding the Phogat family, a household synonymous with Indian wrestling success.

Manchester United's mishaps continue after surviving Porto scare in Europa League

**Manchester United blew a two-goal lead, ultimately settling for a 3-3 draw against Porto in the Europa League. Late heroics from Harry Maguire saved them from defeat, but criticism of their performance continues to mount.**



Porto. Manchester United's rough run of form continued after they squandered a two-goal lead to settle for a 3-3 draw against Porto in their Europa League clash on October 4. United started strong, with early goals from Rasmus Hjulund in the 7th minute and Marcus Rashford in the 20th, giving the side a commanding advantage. However, they struggled to maintain their composure and allowed Porto to claw back into the match.

quickly capitalized on United's defensive lapses, with veteran defender Pepe scoring in the 27th minute. Samu Omorodion followed with two goals—one in the 34th minute and another just after halftime in the 50th minute—to push Porto ahead. Despite their struggles, United managed to salvage a point thanks to a stoppage-time header from Harry Maguire. His late equalizer spared them the embarrassment of back-to-back defeats, but it was not enough to hide the mounting concerns over the team's performances.

This latest result makes it two draws in two Europa League matches for Ten Hag's United, who are now under increasing scrutiny to turn their season around. The pressure is only set to grow as the side seeks to find consistency and fight their way out of a tough start to the campaign.

Women's T20 World Cup 2024: India begin title hunt against struggling New Zealand

**Women's T20 World Cup 2024: Harmanpreet Kaur's India will have the upper hand when they face Sophie Devine's New Zealand in Dubai on Friday. India won both their matches in the warm-ups and will be high on confidence before the group games.**

New Zealand Harmanpreet Kaur's India are set to start their campaign in the Women's T20 World Cup 2024 when they lock horns with Sophie Devine's New Zealand on Friday, October 4 at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium. India are being deemed as one of the favourites to win the World Cup given their strength and the conditions in the

United Arab Emirates (UAE). The Women in Blue played the final in 2020 and the semis in 2018 and 2023, but are yet to get their hands on the coveted trophy. Back in June, the men's team won the T20 World Cup after beating South Africa in the final in Barbados. In July, after their return home, Rohit Sharma's men got a rousing reception where they took part in a victory parade. Jemimah Rodrigues, who is a part of the women's squad, has dreamed of lifting the title. "100 percent. It's nice to keep dreaming about that, and we do dream about sitting on that bus at Marine Lines. I have played a lot of cricket there and getting crowds there. But more than anything, we want to lift the World Cup for India," Jemimah told India Today earlier. India won both their warm-up matches against West Indies and South Africa, which should keep them in good stead. Harmanpreet's only T20I hundred

came against the White Ferns and she will be looking to up the ante this time around as well. Yastika Bhatia and Shreyanka Pati's selection was subject to fitness, but both of them played in the warm-ups and looked in good shape. Jemimah scored a fifty against the Hayley Matthews-led West Indies, and she is expected to be a key in India's top order along with Smriti Mandhana and Shafali Verma. Richa Ghosh adds firepower lower down the order. Deepti Sharma remains India's star all-rounder, having scored 1020 runs and picking up 131 wickets. Renuka Singh Thakur and Pooja Vastrakar are most likely to share the new ball.

**New Zealand undercooked?** Focus will be on both Harmanpreet and Devine, who will both be playing in their ninth edition of the mega event. For Devine, the T20 World Cup will be her last as the skipper of the White Ferns.

Afghanistan all-rounder Rashid Khan's grand wedding in Kabul

New Delhi. Afghanistan all-rounder Rashid Khan celebrated a grand wedding ceremony in Kabul on October 3, 2024. The star spinner tied the knot in Afghanistan's capital, with videos from the celebration quickly going viral on social media. The event was attended by many of his national teammates, further highlighting the significance of the occasion for the Afghanistan cricket fraternity.

Rashid Khan is widely regarded as one of the top spinners and all-rounders in the T20I format. His recent performances have only solidified his standing as one of the premier cricketers in the world. In September, he played a pivotal role in Afghanistan's historic ODI series win against South Africa, further showcasing his remarkable skills. With 152 wickets in 93 T20I matches and



190 wickets in 105 ODIs, Rashid's career is an impressive story of success. Beyond his individual performances, Rashid has also taken on leadership responsibilities. He recently led Afghanistan in the 2024 T20 World Cup, guiding the team to one of their most successful campaigns on the global stage. His efforts, both as a leader and a player, have elevated Afghanistan's stature in international cricket. Rashid Khan's wedding celebration further showcased his grand stature within Afghanistan, not only as a cricketer but also as a national icon. The immense attention his wedding received highlights his popularity and the significant impact he has had on the sport and his country. With his career still on the rise, Rashid Kh2222an continues to be one of the most prominent names in the cricketing world, and his future looks just as bright as his current achievements.

Smriti Mandhana emotional as families wish India players in video messages

New Delhi. As they prepare for the much-anticipated T20 World Cup, players and the support staff members of the India women's cricket team sat back and watched their families sending them heartfelt wishes from home. In heart-warming video messages, the families of each and every player in the team wished the players the best and urged them to bring the World Cup home. Smriti Mandhana and Harmanpreet Kaur were enjoying the video messages and the India opener was seen getting emotional as she watched her parents and brother wish the team success. Smriti's brother even teased her, giving her a cheeky try to handle pressure situations in the T20 World Cup.

Coach Amol Majumdar's wife and daughter made it special, recalling the hard work of the support staff in the lead-up to the T20 World Cup. "I know for this World Cup, all of you have worked hard. I hope, there comes a time when all your hard work pays off. We are sending you lots of love, lots of



prayers and lots of good wishes," the head coach's wife said. **WATCH: FAMILIES WISH TEAM**

**INDIA STARS** S Sajana and Asha Sobhana were thrilled to see their parents sending them wishes in

Malayalam while Dayalan Hemalatha was emotional when her mother, speaking in Tamil, wished her the best. Captain Harmanpreet Kaur's mother said she is confident that her daughter will lead the team to the best of her ability and India will return home with the coveted trophy.

India will open their campaign against New Zealand in Dubai on Friday, October 4. India have been handed a tough draw, grouped alongside New Zealand, Australia, Pakistan and Sri Lanka in Group A. India reached the final of the T20 World Cup in 2020 and the semi-final last year. On both occasions, they lost to Australia. Harmanpreet and her side will be keen on ending the drought and a good show against Australia in the group stage will help their confidence.

Captain Harmanpreet and seniors like Smriti and Jemimah Rodrigues will look to lead from the front as India begin as one of the favourites to win the title in the UAE.





# Ketika Sharma

## Looks Hotter Than Ever In Yellow Strappy Mini Dress

Telugu actress Ketika Sharma always manages to stay in the limelight for her outstanding acting prowess as well as fashion choices. The actress never misses a chance to impress her fans with her impeccable fashion statements, and her Instagram handle is the proof. Recently, the diva dropped a few photos from her latest outing that impressed her fans. In the recent picture, Ketika is seen posing on a wooden balcony against the backdrop of a beautiful green scenic view. She is seen slaying in a sleeveless pale yellow floral-printed minidress with knotted detailing in the front. She chose no makeup, left her hair in soft curls, and rounded off her look with a pair of white sneakers. Sharing the photos, Ketika wrote, "Good morning indeed" in the caption.

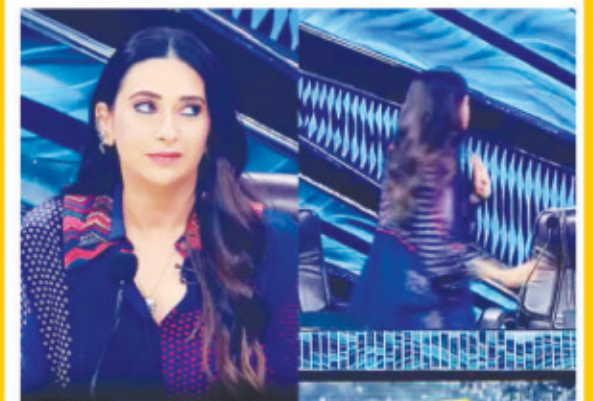
Seeing the post, fans showered red hearts and fire emoticons in the comment box.

Ketika, who is quite active on social media, shared a couple of photographs from her latest photoshoot session a few days ago. In the picture, the actress is seen slaying in a brown backless halterneck dress. The actress opted for a nude makeup look and kept her curly hair open as she posed for the camera. The pictures went viral in no time. Seeing the post, one of her fans commented, "Beautiful angel," and another one wrote, "Fantastic." "Looking damn hot," wrote a third user.

Ketika made her acting debut in the year 2021 with the Telugu film Romantic. The film was directed by Anil Paduri. Later, in the same year, she also appeared in the sports drama film Lakshya, directed by Dheerendra Santhosh Jagarlapudi and produced jointly by Sri Venkateswara Cinemas and Northstar Entertainment. The film starred Naga Shaurya, Jagapathi Babu, and Sachin Khedekar in pivotal roles. She was last seen in the 2023 Telugu-language fantasy comedy Bro. The film was co-written and directed by Samuthirakani, from a screenplay by Trivikram Srinivas. Produced by People Media Factory and Zee Studios, it stars Sai Dharam Tej and Pawan Kalyan in the lead roles. The music is composed by Thaman S. It is a remake of the director's own 2021 Tamil-language film Vinodhaya Sitham.



## Karisma Kapoor Looks UPSET After Boys Perform on Kareena Kapoor's Song: 'Mujhe Acha Nahi...'



Karisma Kapoor walked out of the sets of India's Best Dancer after watching two boys perform on Kareena Kapoor's new song. In a promo from India's Best Dancer, Karisma was seen judging Nextion and his dance partner who were dancing on Roshni Se, from the film Asoka. The music video featured Kareena and Shah Rukh Khan. The boys were seen dancing on an elevated stage, with waterworks. While the judges were impressed with the performance, it seems like something that Nextion said left Karisma upset. While Sajid Khan, Geeta Kapur and Terence Lewis tried to calm her down, Karisma decided to walk away. Sharing the video on Instagram, Sony Entertainment Television wrote, "Aisa kya bol diya Nextion ne ki Lolo ho gayi upset?"

While fans will have to wait until this weekend to see what really happened, a social media users believe it was a prank. "Prank for nextion birthday," a comment read. "Prank ho sakta hai," added another. "Hope so asa nhi hga jesa dikhaya gya h," another added. Into its fourth season, India's Next Dancer premiered on July 13 and airs every Saturday and Sunday at 8 PM. Additionally, it is also available on Sony LIV for streaming. Every week, a Bollywood star is invited as guests. Recently, Sonakshi Sinha appeared on the show with her husband, Zaheer Iqbal.

The newly married couple Sonakshi Sinha and Zaheer Iqbal danced on the romantic song titled Janam Janam from the film Dilwale, starring Shah Rukh Khan and Kajol. Their chemistry and love for each other wowed judges, as visible in the clip. During the episode, Sonakshi also got emotional while watching a performed themed around the mother and daughter's emotion during a vidai scene. "Bohat hi khoobsurat performance tha (It was a beautiful performance)," she said.

## Salman Khan Called Anil Kapoor 'Sir' After Romancing Sonam Kapoor In Prem Ratan Dhan Payo: 'How Can I...'



Did you know that when it comes to Prem Ratan Dhan Payo, Salman Khan had some serious reservations about casting Sonam Kapoor? This 2012 film was their fourth collaboration with director Sooraj Barjatya, following their hits like Maine Pyar Kiya and Hum Aapke Hain Koun. Sooraj spoke about it in an interview with Zet, revealing how the casting process unfolded. He shared that he discussed various actresses with Salman before settling on Sonam after watching her in Raanjhana. He felt she was a perfect fit for the role of a modern princess navigating life in Delhi. Salman had his doubts at first, but in the end, the film became a huge commercial success. "I wrote the script and discussed potential heroines with Salman. We had several names on the table, but I wanted to



present a fresh pair. After watching Raanjhana, I felt Sonam was perfect for the role. It hadn't occurred to me before, but she fit the character—a princess who was independent and living in Delhi while navigating her relationships," he said. After Sooraj chose Sonam, he showed her photos to Salman and he said he wants to think it over. "He looked at them and said, 'Sooraj, let me think about it.' A month went by, and he was still considering," Sooraj recalled. Salman also said, "Isn't she too tall? And she's a lot younger than me. I've seen her grow up; how can I romance her. Salman Khan took almost five months to agree to cast Sonam Kapoor. Finally, he texted Sooraj Barjatya, saying, "From today onward, I'll call Anil Kapoor, Anil sir, take her in the film." Sonam, in an interview with 9XE, had later said, "I loved it! I know him well and have watched all his films," she said, to which Salman jokingly responded, "I know her father really well." Prem Ratan Dhan Payo is a romantic drama film that released in 2015. The story follows Yuvraj Vijay Singh, a crown prince who is nearly killed in a plot against him. To protect the royal family, a lookalike named Prem is brought in to pretend to be him.

# Ananya Panday

## Wows In Glamorous BTS Looks From CTRL, Adds Look Of 'Fave Character'

After surprising her fans with pictures of herself dressed as the legendary actor Amol Palekar, Ananya Panday shared another set of behind-the-scenes photos from her upcoming thriller CTRL. This time, the actress was in full-glam, dressed in beautiful outfits. However, she did not forget to include a surprise for her fans at the end of her post. Ananya recently shared a new set of pictures in which she is dressed as her character Nella Awasthi from the Vikramaditya Motwane-directed film CTRL. The post begins with a picture of the actress just out of the shower, followed by several stunning photos of Ananya wearing a black full-sleeved top paired with a brocade skirt and accessorised with heavy jewellery. In another photo, Ananya is seen flaunting a beautiful braided hairstyle. The next picture features the actress taking a selfie in a white dress, showing off her purple hair highlights.

Meanwhile, Ananya also included several photos of herself in different outfits and looks. She appeared stunning in a beige-hued outfit with bold red lips and adorable and sexy in a bluish checkered dress with short wavy hair. Moreover, there were two pictures of her in a white shirt paired with a striking blue hairband and a selfie where she was dressed as Amol Palekar. Ananya shared the post with the caption, "I know my last post was a bit scary but Nella can also look like this. Can't wait for all of you to meet her tomorrow !!! #CTRL @netflix\_in but swipe to the end for ur fave character anyway."

As soon as she uploaded the post, her fans flooded the comment section. One wrote, "That purple streak and side-eye picture is still my favourite." Another said,

"Ananya is ethereally gorgeous." A third one mentioned, "Loved all the looks, but the purple streak and the last one are the best." A day back, Ananya shared a post featuring some behind-the-scenes pictures of CTRL. In a note accompanying her IG post, she mentioned, "Why you may ask? Watch CTRL on Friday to find out." She was dressed like Amol Palekar in a boy-cut wig, moustache, square-rimmed glasses, striped T-shirt and distressed jeans. In other glimpses, the actress was seen taking lessons from comedian Sumukhi Suresh, trying her hands at Sumo wrestling, and the process of turning into the look of the legendary actor.

