

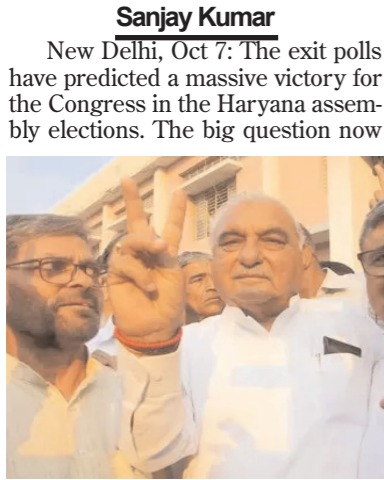
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Bhupinder Hooda on Selja as Haryana CM pick; Owaisi slams Bhagwat's Hindu unity pitch



really is - who will be the chief minister of Haryana should the Congress win the polls? The names of Kumari Selja and Randeep Surjewala are doing the rounds. However, when asked about them, Congress stalwart Bhupinder Singh Hooda recently said the name of the chief minister would be decided by the party high command. The halfway mark in the Haryana assembly is 46. Most exit polls have pre-

dicted that the Congress would win between 44 and 61 seats. Asked about the two leaders, Hooda told NDTV last week: "The high command will decide. These are hypothetical questions." Dig deeper Haryana Assembly Leader of Opposition Bhupinder Singh Hooda shows his ink-marked finger after casting his vote during Haryana Assembly elections. Haryana Assembly Leader of Opposition Bhupinder Singh Hooda shows his ink-marked finger after casting his vote during Haryana Assembly elections, in Rohtak, Saturday, All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) MP Asaduddin Owaisi on Monday slammed Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat on the latter's remark urging Hindus to unite for their security. According to a PTI report, Owaisi said at a public meeting in Telangana's Nizamabad, "The danger to Muslims, Hindus, Dalits, Adivasis, Sikhs, Christians is from Narendra Modi and Mohan Bhagwat.

J&K, Haryana election results 2024 today

with the current government to its advantage. With results on Tuesday, both parties are in a tough battle for the mandate to shape Haryana's future. The exit polls predicted a clear majority for the Congress in Haryana with some surveys predicting more than 50 seats. Two major parties, the ruling BJP and the Congress expressed confidence in thumping victory. The majority mark to form a government in Haryana is 46. The Congress' likely victory in Haryana will see the grand old party continue its resurgence that began with the Lok Sabha polls earlier in the year. The Mallikarjun Kharge-led outfit



Congress expressed confidence in thumping victory. The majority mark to form a government in Haryana is 46. The Congress' likely victory in Haryana will see the grand old party continue its resurgence that began with the Lok Sabha polls earlier in the year. The Mallikarjun Kharge-led outfit

won 99 seats, nearly doubling its tally from the 2019 general elections, when it won 52 seats. It had won 44 seats in 2019. Also, of the 10 Lok Sabha seats in Haryana, the BJP and Congress won five each, with the former's tally falling by five and the latter's rising by the same number. Among the key contestants is BJP leader and incumbent chief minister Nayab Singh Saini, who is contesting from the Ladwa assembly seat in Kurukshetra district. In 2014, Saini won from the Naraingarh assembly constituency. However, in 2019, he won from the Kurukshetra Lok Sabha seat. Veteran Congress leader and former chief minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda is contesting from his traditional Garhi Sampla-Kiloi seat in Rohtak district. The two-time chief minister and four-time MP is seen as a probable chief minister candidate for the Congress, although there has not been any official announcement yet. Wrestler-turned-politician Vinesh Phogat is contesting from the Julana seat in Jind district as a Congress candidate. Phogat hails from Charkhi Dadri district, but her in-laws are from Julana. The Olympian was among the wrestlers at the forefront of the protest against the then Wrestling Federation of India chief and former BJP MP Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh in 2023. Former BJP leader Savitri Jindal is contesting as an Independent candidate from the Hisar seat.

India, Maldives ink currency swap agreements

New Delhi, Oct 7: India and Maldives on Monday signed currency swap agreements worth \$400 million and Rs 3,000 crore to overcome a foreign exchange crisis in the island nation while separately, New Delhi will firm-up its strategic toe-hold on the islands by 'supporting' provisions of defence platforms, enhanced surveillance and new radar systems. India also rolled out infrastructure projects for ports, airports, housing, hospitals, roads networks, sports facilities, agriculture, fish-processing, schools, water and sewerage while the two-sides agreed to hold discussions on a Free Trade Agreement (FTA). The currency swap agreements were signed and documents exchanged after Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Maldivian President Mohd Muizzu held their first bilateral meeting on Monday. Muizzu said, "Maldives will remain a true friend, committed to our shared vision of peace." The promise of a remaining a "true friend" comes eleven months after Muizzu rode to power in



his country in November last year using 'India out' campaign. On assuming power, he had then asked Indian military personnel operating helicopters to leave. He then opted to

of Indian currency and repay in their own currency. This aid comes in the back drop of State Bank of India - in May and September - rolling over \$100 million worth of payments due from Maldives. At the strategic level, Modi said, "We will continue to support in training and capacity building of Maldives national defence forces (MNDF)". The Ministry of External Affairs put out details, saying India would support Maldives with provisioning of defence platforms and assets to augment capabilities of MNDF. Also, India will help in enhancing surveillance and monitoring capability with radar systems and equipment. India will increase capacity building and training slots for MNDF, Maldives police services (MPS) and other security organizations of the island nation. Modi virtually handed over 700 housing units made in Maldives with New Delhi's money. Modi and Muizzu lauded the use of 'RuPay debit cards' in the island nation and virtually opened the extension of a runway at Hanimaadhoo International Airport at Maldives. The Indian PM said India's infrastructure projects would focus on "greater male connectivity project, support the new commercial port at Thilafushi".

BJP accuses Tejashwi Yadav of 'looting' government bungalow

Patna, Oct 7: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has accused former Bihar deputy chief minister Tejashwi Yadav of removing furniture, light fixtures, and air conditioners from the government bungalow he vacated. RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav addressing during one day minority cell meeting of party at RJD office in Patna, Bihar. (Santosh Kumar/Hindustan Times) RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav addressing during one day minority cell meeting of party at RJD office in Patna, Bihar. (Santosh Kumar/Hindustan Times) Bihar BJP's media in-charge, Danish Iqbal, on Monday, attacked Yadav, alleging that various

items, including furniture, AC units, lights, and even the badminton court mat, were missing from the residence after he left. "The base of the bed is missing, the AC and lights have been removed, and the water outlets in the washroom have been taken out. Even the badminton court mat has been taken, and the fountain lights and sofas have been taken. It's clear that when Tejashwi Yadav vacated the house, he took everything with him. This speaks volumes about his mentality," Danish Iqbal said, ANI reported. "I'm not just accusing him, but it is completely proven. The way Tejashwi Yadav vacated his official residence, shows his upbringing. The way he vacated the house, he has displayed how to loot government's property," he added. Union minister Giriraj Singh said, "A person in a public position should not do such derogatory activities... An inquiry committee should be formed to inquire how much money was spent on Tejashwi Yadav's bungalow and a case should also be registered..." In another development, a Delhi court on Monday granted bail to RJD chief and former railway minister Lalu Prasad Yadav and his sons,

Gymnast Dipa Karmakar announces retirement

New Delhi, Oct 7: Celebrated Indian gymnast Dipa Karmakar, who missed out on a bronze medal in the 2016 Olympics by a whisker, on Monday announced her retirement from the sport after an illustrious career. The 31-year-old Dipa, who became the first female gymnast from the country to compete at the Olympics, finished fourth in the vault event to lose an Olympic medal by just 0.15 points. "After much thought and reflection, I have decided to retire from competitive gymnastics. This is not an easy decision, but it feels like the right time," she said in a statement. "Gymnastics has been at the centre of my life for as long as I can remember, and I am grateful for every moment—the highs, the lows, and everything in between."



Have no objections: Farooq Abdullah on taking rival PDP's support for govt-formation

Srinagar, Oct 7: Ahead of counting of votes, National Conference president Farooq Abdullah on Monday said his party was open to the idea of taking support of Mehbooba Mufti's PDP to form government in the Union territory. He also slammed the move to give powers to the Lieutenant Governor for nominating members to the five reserved seats in the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly, and said his party would approach the Supreme Court if the BJP-led Centre went ahead with it. Abdullah, while ruling himself out of the race for chief minister's post, said statehood should be restored to Jammu and Kashmir so that the new government has powers to address the people's problems. "The statehood should be restored, full state-



hood, where the government has the power to do things. I will not be the CM. Let this one thing be clear. I have done

conditions of the people of the state, removing unemployment, removing all the distresses that have occurred in the last 10 years. First thing we should do is restore the freedom of the press. We should have the right to say what is true and what is not true. We can be rivals in elections but I have no objections and I am sure Congress will have no objections," he said. The NC president said he was not averse to taking support of the independents as well but he would not go begging for it. "I will not go begging before them. If they feel they can strengthen the state, most welcome. It should be their initiative. They should want to do good for the people," he added. The former chief minister also slammed the power given to the L-G to nominate members. "The L-G should first of all stay away from this process as a government is being formed."

Drones suspected to be from China spotted along IB in Kinnaur

Shimla, Oct 7: Drones have been spotted along the Indo-China border in Himachal Pradesh's Kinnaur district and they are likely being used for surveillance and espionage purposes, state minister Jagat Singh Negi said on Monday. Speaking to PTI, Negi said drone activity has been noticed in Shipki La and Rishi Dogri villages in Poo block of the district. "Multiple drones frequently flying near the border area have been spotted in the past week and several people have informed me about such sightings," Negi, the MLA from Kinnaur Assembly constituency, said. "Road construction to lay roads up to the Line of Actual Control (LAC) is in progress in both Shipki La and Rishidogri and the possibility of surveillance and espionage by these drones cannot be ruled out," the revenue and horticulture minister said. The minister urged the Union government to take note of the matter and issue necessary directions. The tribal districts of Kinnaur and Lahaul and Spiti share a 240-km border with China which is traversed by nine high altitude mountain passes. He asked the Union Government to take strong notice of the Chinese drones violating Indian space and take necessary action. As many as 55 villages of Kinnaur district were included in the 'Vibrant Village Programme', which aims to strengthen the infrastructure in border areas with a focus on filling the critical communication gaps, developing tourist centres and sites, providing better and accessible road connectivity, provision of renewable energy, DTH services and other facilities.

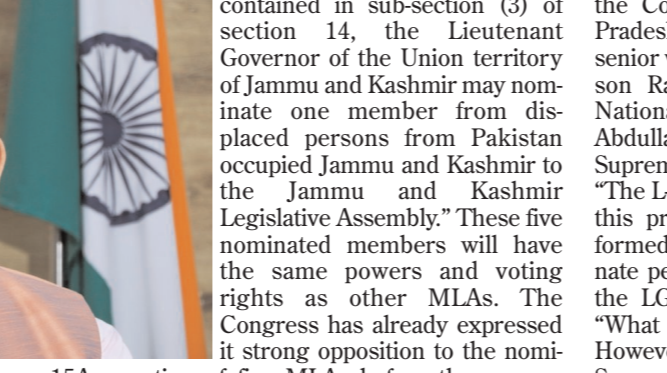
'Sanjay Roy raped, murdered Kolkata doctor when she went to sleep'

New Delhi, Oct 7: The CBI has filed a chargesheet against the prime accused, Sanjay Roy, in the rape and murder case of a trainee doctor at R G Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata, officials said on Monday. In its chargesheet filed before a special court in Kolkata, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) said Roy, who was working as a civic volunteer with the local police, allegedly committed the crime on August 9 when the victim had gone to sleep in the hospital's seminar room during a break, they said. The agency did not mention the charge of gang-rape, indicating that Roy alone committed the crime, according to the officials. Kolkata Police had arrested Roy on August 10 on the basis of CCTV footage which showed him entering the seminar room in the early hours of August 9, they said. The CBI, which took over the investigation on August 14 following a Calcutta High Court order, also took his custody and conducted a detailed interrogation, followed by a polygraph test. Roy had refused to give consent for the narco analysis, following which the CBI could not proceed with the test. The CBI has also arrested Tala police station officer in-charge Abhijit Mondal and former principal of the medical college Sandip Ghosh in the case.

'5 members to be nominated by L-G to J&K Assembly may play crucial role in govt formation'

Jammu, Oct 7: Five persons to be nominated by the Lieutenant Governor as members of the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly may play a crucial role in the formation of the next government in the union territory, sources said on Monday. The Congress, National Conference and the PDP have opposed the nomination of the five members before government formation, and threatened to move the Supreme Court. In August 2019, Article 370 - which gave Jammu and Kashmir special status - was revoked and the state was divided into two union territories. According to section 15 of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, "Notwithstanding anything in sub-section (3) of section 14, the Lieutenant Governor of the successor Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir may nominate two members to the Legislative Assembly

to give representation to women, if in his opinion, women are not adequately represented in the Legislative Assembly". The amendment says: "After section 15 of the principal Act, the following sections shall be inserted, namely: 15A. Notwithstanding anything contained in sub-section (3) of section 14, the Lieutenant Governor of the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir may nominate



not more than two members, one of whom shall be a woman, from the community of Kashmiri Migrants, to the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly". It also says, "15B. Notwithstanding anything contained in sub-section (3) of section 14, the Lieutenant Governor of the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir may nominate one member from displaced persons from Pakistan occupied Jammu and Kashmir to the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly." These five nominated members will have the same powers and voting rights as other MLAs. The Congress has already expressed its strong opposition to the nomination of five MLAs before the government formation in Jammu and Kashmir, dubbing any such move as an assault on democracy and the fundamental principles of the Constitution. "We oppose the

nomination of five MLAs by the L-G before the government formation in Jammu and Kashmir. Any such move is an assault on democracy, the people's mandate, and the fundamental principles of the Constitution," Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee (JKPCC) senior vice president and chief spokesperson Ravinder Sharma said on Friday. National Conference president Farooq Abdullah said his party might go to the Supreme Court against any such move. "The L-G should first of all stay away from this process as a government is being formed. It is for the government to nominate people and send it (nominations) to the L.G. That is the normal procedure. "What they want to do, I do not know. However, if they do it, we will go to the Supreme Court. What is the point in making the government, if the Lord Sahib remains here? We have to fight against all this," Abdullah said in Srinagar on Monday.

## News box

## Main suspect who helped illegal Pak families held

**BENGALURU.** In a major breakthrough in the case of the illegal stay of Pakistani citizens in Bengaluru, the Jigani police arrested the main suspect on Saturday. The accused allegedly helped two Pakistani families, which were arrested recently, by providing them with fake identity documents and helping them obtain Aadhaar cards and passports.

The accused has been identified as Parvez (57), who hails from Mumbai was running a business. The police stated, the arrest was made following a tip-off and after the two families revealed Parvez's details. He was nabbed near the Krantiveera Sangolli Rayanna Railway Station in Majestic. Parvez, an Indian, is accused of assisting Pakistani citizens in obtaining fake Aadhaar cards, Indian passports, PAN cards, and driving licenses. He is reportedly the head of the Mehdi Foundation in India. The individuals arrested earlier, who were propagating the teachings of religious leader Yunus Al-Gohar, were in contact with Parvez and acted on his instructions, the police said, adding that the arrested individuals claim that there are many Pakistani citizens scattered across India in different states.

The Jigani police have taken Parvez into custody and are questioning him. Meanwhile, the two Pakistani families, who were living under Hindu names and were arrested in two separate incidents earlier this week, remain in police custody. Further investigation are on.

## Initiative launched to cure cervical cancer

**BENGALURU.** To significantly reduce the incidence of cervical cancer, the State Health Department, in partnership with the Karnataka chapter of ECHO India, Obstetricians and Gynaecologists organisation, and several NGOs, launched 'Accelerating Cervical Cancer Elimination - CCE: The Karnataka Movement'.

This initiative aims to enhance vaccination, screening, and preventive care, to position Karnataka as a model state in the fight against this disease.

Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao inaugurated the initiative on October 3. The minister reaffirmed the government's commitment to expanding access to cervical cancer prevention and treatment. "The government is implementing all possible efforts to make cervical cancer prevention and treatment accessible to every woman, ensuring early detection and timely intervention to save lives," he added.

Dr Hema Divakar, Division Director for Well Woman Healthcare, International Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics (FIGO), highlighted that while national efforts are underway, Karnataka must take the lead in driving awareness, implementing vaccination and screening strategies in alignment with the WHO's strategy.

Dr H Sudarshan, Trustee of ECHO India, urged the government to prioritise the immunisation of young girls, stating, "While we have made great strides in screening and building capacity for cervical cancer prevention, we must now focus on ensuring that young girls are vaccinated."

## Telangana: GHMC to restore RK Puram's road over bridge

Meanwhile, the rehabilitation and restoration measures for the RoB are estimated to cost around Rs 4.60 crore.



**HYDERABAD.** The Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) has decided to take up the restoration of the Road Over Bridge (RoB) of RK Puram in Secunderabad. The RoB allows citizens to commute between Sainikpuri, AS Rao Nagar and ECIL. Sources said there have been frequent complaints from motorists regarding the damage to expansion joints and excessive vibrations during heavy vehicular movement over the RoB. Meanwhile, the rehabilitation and restoration measures for the RoB are estimated to cost around Rs 4.60 crore.

GHMC officials said that a private agency carried out a study of the RoB wherein they found that the road was in a distressing condition due to severe corrosion of main rebars observed in girders, diaphragms and deck slab. It is learnt that during the monsoon season, water leakage is observed from the diaphragms and the girder portions, causing rusting of the exposed reinforcement and affecting the strength of the structure. Expansion joints are clogged and are not properly functioning, the officials said.

## AI traffic app leaves ambulance drivers in snarls, cops confused

**Bengaluru's traffic congestion poses a significant challenge for ambulance drivers, especially during emergencies.**

**BENGALURU.** While Bengaluru traffic police had planned to facilitate smooth passage for ambulances, which are often seen stuck in traffic and struggling to ferry patients, by introducing ASTraM (Actionable Intelligence for Sustainable Traffic Management), the challenges the traffic police face in implementing it have not yielded expected results.

Bengaluru's traffic congestion poses a significant challenge for ambulance drivers, especially during emergencies. To address this, traffic police had introduced the ASTraM application nine months ago, aiming to ease the movement of ambulances across the city. However, only 250

ambulance drivers have registered for the application so far.

The ASTraM app is designed to tackle congestion issues in the city. One of its features is the ability to track ambulance movements in real-time.

The app enables the control room to monitor registered ambulances from their origin to destination. It alerts the control room if an ambulance is stuck in traffic for more than 120 seconds and provides drivers with updates on the shortest routes



and traffic conditions. The app also features an SOS button for urgent interventions.

Explaining the challenges faced by the traffic police, Joint

Commissioner of Police (Traffic) MN Anucheth told TNIE that prioritising ambulances near hospitals is a difficult task. "For instance, about 25 ambulances pass every two hours at KC General hospital in Malleswaram.

In such cases, it is difficult to create easy passage for all ambulances as there is no information on the condition of patients they will be carrying. We can't prioritise and act. As there is frequent movement of ambulances around hospitals, it is difficult to facilitate

easy movement for them all the time. It has to be worked out in such a way that it doesn't affect the general traffic."

Further, he said that ambulances approaching a particular junction from various directions also pose a challenge, as making way for one vehicle may lead to traffic gridlock, affecting the movement of another.

Another senior officer said city traffic police are using multiple technologies, but unless common technology is adopted, it will be difficult to ease the movement of ambulances.

If every ambulance is linked to the same application, it would be better. He added that there are over 2,500 ambulances in the city.

## 1 Lakh devotees throng Indrakeeladri

**VIJAYAWADA.** The presiding deity, Goddess Kanaka Durga, was beautifully adorned in the form of Sri Lalitha Tripura Sundari Devi on the fourth day of the Dasara festivities at Sri Durga Malleswara Swamy Varla Devasthanam (SDMSD), atop Indrakeeladri. On Sunday, more than 1 lakh devotees visited the temple to receive blessings from the deity.

According to temple officials, around 70,000 devotees flocked to the temple from 6 am to 6 pm, contributing to a revenue of Rs 70 lakh through the sale of darshan tickets, laddu prasads, special rituals, and calendars. The statistics revealed that 10,000 devotees purchased Rs 500 darshan tickets, while 12,000 opted for Rs 300 tickets, and Rs 15,000 bought Rs 100 tickets. The temple opened its doors at 6 am, following traditional rituals performed by priests in the sanctum. Devotees formed long queues outside the Lord Vinayaka temple near Canal Road from

the early hours, with a significant surge in attendance noted until 2 pm. The influx of devotees continued during the night, particularly between 8 pm and 11 pm. In her avatar as Sri Lalitha Tripura Sundari



Devi, the presiding deity was depicted sitting in the lap of Lord Shiva, flanked by Goddess Sri Lakshmi Devi and Sri Saraswati Devi, who held 'Vinjamarams' (fans) to serve her, as described in the Lalita Sahasranama Stotram. The name Lalitha Tripura Sundari translates to the "most beautiful girl in the three worlds."

She embodies peace and knowledge and is known to bestow wealth upon her devotees. The temple's head priest, Shankar Shandilya, explained, "Lalitha Tripura Sundari Devi represents the second form of 'Tripura thrayam' and is the ultimate, primordial Shakti, existing before Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva. Adorned in golden hues and holding a lotus, the Goddess is the light of manifestation, and special prayers to her in this attire can bless devotees with abundant knowledge."

On Sunday evening, Minister for Endowments Anam Ramanarayana Reddy visited the temple and participated in the Nava Harathulu ritual at Durga Ghat. He also enjoyed dance performances at Durga Kalapeetham, inspected arrangements, and engaged with devotees about the festival's proceedings. The Minister instructed officials to provide battery-operated cars to assist senior citizens and differently-abled from Om turning point to the Raja Gopuram point.

## BMC's 'zero waste campus' drive to begin on October

BMC deputy commissioner for sanitation Manoranjan Sahu said initially, 10 government schools will be turned into zero waste campus.

**BHUBANESWAR.** After initiating steps to transform 140 vulnerable garbage points by involving students, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) has decided to turn city schools into 'zero waste campuses'.

BMC deputy commissioner for sanitation Manoranjan Sahu said initially, 10 government schools will be turned into zero waste campus.

"The process to identify these schools is underway. We have also sought expression of interest (EOI) from different voluntary and non-profit organisations to take up the project in the



city," Sahu said. "Under the programme, we will educate students on the importance of waste management for a

sustainable environment. The schools will also be facilitated and encouraged to manage their own waste," he said.

According to BMC officials, the identified schools will be encouraged to reduce the utilisation of single-use plastic. The teaching staff will also be trained to conduct waste-to-craft sessions for students where they will create different products using their skills and creativity.

Recently, BMC decided to rope in around 120 schools to transform 140 vulnerable garbage points in different parts of the city through 'waste to craft' initiative.

## Telangana: HMWSSB to convert 3K defunct borewells into rain water harvesting structures

As per the available data, there are a total of 2,796 power borewells in the HMWSSB service area.

**HYDERABAD.** The Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (HMWSSB) has devised a plan to convert over 3,000 abandoned and defunct public handpumps and borewells into Rain Water Harvesting Structure (RWHS) pits during the 90-day special drive (October-December 2024). The initiative would be launched to increase the groundwater table across GHMC limits. Through RWHS pits, the rainwater flowing waste on the open roads and seeping into sewage pipelines would be diverted.

In the recent summer season, the majority of the borewells dried up between January and June as the groundwater levels were depleted. Due to this, most of the water consumers depended on the water tankers. The Water Board even made two lakh water tanker trips per day to meet the water demand. As per the available data, there are a total of 2,796 power borewells in the HMWSSB service area. Of them, 1,770 are

functioning while 942 have become defunct and inoperative, and 82 of them have dried or collapsed. Similarly, of 3,070 hand borewells, 954 are in use, 1,717 are non-functional and 339 have dried or damaged. Currently, around 20-25% of rainwater is absorbed into the ground and the rest is wasted through runoff. If every drop of rainwater is conserved for recharging the groundwater, the problem of drinking water shortage would not arise at all. The dysfunctional motors installed at these borewells would be removed and the size of the pipes, previously used to pump out groundwater, would be reduced.

HMWSSB Managing Director K Ashok Reddy said the Water Board will adopt the mandatory provision of RWHS in houses that have tap connections.

The Water Board is also setting up additional RWHS pits to divert the rainwater, flowing on the roads and drains, into the pits. It would recharge the dried-up borewells.



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News box

**Pro-Gaza protests held worldwide as Israel marks one-year of Hamas attacks**

Paris. Thousands of pro-Palestinian demonstrators protested in cities around the world on Sunday on the eve of the first anniversary of the deadly October 7 Hamas attack on Israel that triggered the war in Gaza. Demonstrations were held in major cities from Jakarta to Istanbul to Rabat, and followed protests on Saturday in major European capitals as well as Washington and New York. We are here to support the Palestinian resistance," said protester Ahmet Unal in Istanbul, where thousands assembled. In Paris, the Jewish community gathered on Sunday to mark one year since the attack by Palestinian militant group Hamas, when militants attacked southern Israeli communities, killing 1,200 people and taking about 250 hostages, according to Israeli figures. Israel's subsequent military campaign against Hamas in Gaza has killed nearly 42,000 Palestinians, according to Gaza's health ministry, and laid waste to the enclave. Israel launched air attacks on Beirut's southern suburbs overnight and early on Sunday, the most intense bombardment of the Lebanese capital since Israel sharply escalated its campaign against Iranian-backed group Hezbollah last month. In Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia, the world's most populous Muslim-majority country, at least 1,000 pro-Palestinian protesters gathered on Sunday morning near the US embassy demanding that Washington stop supplying weapons to Israel. In Sydney, thousands of pro-Palestinian protesters gathered ahead of the October 7 anniversary, chanting and waving Lebanese and Palestinian flags amid a heavy police presence. One person was arrested for waving an Israeli flag with a swastika in the middle of it instead of the Star of David. In Rabat, thousands of Moroccans marched, calling for a halt to the violence in Gaza and Lebanon, in one of the largest protests in the country since the beginning of the war in Gaza.

**10 injured in northern Israel as Hezbollah rockets hit Haifa**

Jerusalem. Hezbollah rockets hit Haifa, Israel's third-largest city, Israeli police said early on Monday, and Israeli media reported 10 people were injured in the country's north. Hezbollah said it targeted a military base south of Haifa with a salvo of "Fadi 1" missiles. Media reports said two rockets hit Haifa. Police said that some buildings and properties were damaged, and that there were several reports of minor injuries and people were taken to a nearby hospital. Israel's military said fighter jets hit targets belonging to Hezbollah's Intelligence Headquarters in Beirut, including intelligence-gathering means, command centres, and additional infrastructure sites. Over the past few hours, the airstrikes struck Hezbollah weapons storage facilities in the area of Beirut, the military said, noting that secondary explosions were identified following the strikes, indicating the presence of weaponry. Airstrikes also struck Hezbollah targets in southern Lebanon and the Beqaa area, including weapons storage facilities, infrastructure sites, a command centre, and a launcher, the military said. It blamed Hezbollah for deliberately embedding its command centres and weaponry beneath residential buildings in the heart of the city of Beirut and endangering the civilian population.

**Massive blast outside Karachi Airport in Pakistan kills two, injures eight**

KARACHI, Pakistan. A massive blast outside Karachi Airport in Pakistan on Sunday killed two people and injured at least eight, officials said. Police and the provincial government said a tanker exploded outside the airport, which is Pakistan's biggest. But the provincial home minister, Zia Ul Hassan, told local TV station Geo that it was an attack targeting foreigners. A Home Ministry official told The Associated Press that it was an attack on Chinese nationals, one of whom was injured. He spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to the media. Thousands of Chinese workers are in Pakistan, most of them involved in Beijing's multibillion-dollar Belt and Road Initiative that connects south and central Asia with the Chinese capital. Videos showed flames engulfing cars and a thick column of smoke rising from the scene. There was a heavy military deployment at the site, which was cordoned off. Deputy Inspector General East Azfar Maheesah told media that it seemed like it was an oil tanker explosion. "We are determining the nature and reasons for the blast. It takes time." Police officers were among the injured, he added. The home minister and inspector general also visited the blast site, but they did not talk to the press. Rahat Hussain, who works in the civil aviation department, said the blast was so big that it shook the airport's buildings.

**US disaster relief chief blasts false claims about Helene response as 'dangerous'**

Washington DC. The US government's top disaster relief official said Sunday that false claims and conspiracy theories about the federal response to Hurricane Helene -- spread most prominently by Donald Trump -- are "demoralizing" aid workers and creating fear in people who need recovery assistance. "It's frankly ridiculous, and just plain false. This kind of rhetoric is not helpful to people," said Deanne Criswell, who leads the Federal Emergency Management Agency. It's really a shame that we're putting politics ahead of helping people, and that's what we're here to do. We have had the complete support of the state," she said, referring to North Carolina. Republicans, led by the former president, have helped foster a frenzy of misinformation over the past week among the communities most devastated by Helene, promoting a number of false claims, including that Washington is intentionally withholding aid to people in Republican areas. Trump accused FEMA of spending all its money to help immigrants who are in the United States illegally, while other critics



assert that the government spends too much on Israel, Ukraine and other foreign countries. FEMA absolutely has enough money for Helene response right now," Keith Turi, acting director of FEMA's Office of Response and Recovery said. He noted that Congress recently replenished the agency with \$20 billion, and about \$8 billion of that is set aside for recovery from previous storms and mitigation projects. Here also are outlandish theories that include warnings from far-right extremist groups that officials plan to bulldoze storm-damaged communities and seize the land from residents. A falsehood pushed by Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, R-Ga., asserts that

Washington used weather control technology to steer Helene toward Republican voters in order to tilt the presidential election toward Democrat Kamala Harris. Criswell said on ABC's "This Week" that such baseless claims around the response to Helene, which caused catastrophic damage from Florida into the Appalachian mountains and a death toll that rose Sunday to at least 230, have created a sense of fear and mistrust from residents against the thousands of FEMA employees and volunteers on the ground. "We've had the local officials helping to push back on this dangerous -- truly dangerous narrative that is creating this fear of trying to reach out and help us or to register for help," she said. President Joe Biden said in a statement Sunday that his administration "will continue working hand-in-hand with local and state leaders -- regardless of political party and no matter how long it takes." Meantime, FEMA is preparing for Hurricane Milton, which rapidly intensified into a Category 1 storm on Sunday as it heads toward Florida.

**Kamala Harris rejects 'childless women' dig, discusses her own 'modern family'**

Washington DC US Vice President Kamala Harris on Sunday rejected Republican Sarah Huckabee Sanders' suggestion that the Democratic presidential candidate is not humble because she does not have biological children. Harris said the Arkansas governor's views on family were outdated and discussed her own "modern family," which includes her husband, Doug Emhoff, and his two children from his first marriage, Cole and Ella. During a town hall Sanders moderated for Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump in Michigan in September, she said her kids keep her "humble," while Harris "doesn't have anything keeping her humble." Harris responded to Sanders' comments on the popular "Call Her Daddy" podcast on Sunday, saying "I don't think she understands that there are a whole lot of women out here who, one, are not aspiring to be humble. Two, a whole lot of women out here who have a lot of



love in their life, family in their life, and children in their life." And I think it's really important for women to lift each other up," Harris added. Harris said family comes in many forms. "We have our family by blood, and then we have our family by love, and I have both, and I consider it to be a real blessing," she said. "And I have two beautiful children, Cole and Ella, who call me Momma. We have a very modern family. My husband's ex-wife is a friend of mine." The vice

president also responded to Trump's running mate, JD Vance, having previously complained he didn't want the country run by "childless cat ladies." "I just think it's mean and mean-spirited," Harris said. Sanders' office and the Trump campaign did not respond to a request for comment. Harris joined the podcast, hosted by Alex Cooper, for a conversation focused on reproductive rights, sexual abuse and student loans. The appearance was part of a broader media outreach effort by Harris as she seeks to boost her support in the final month before the November 5 election against Trump. The vice president's campaign, which has come under criticism over the amount of media interviews Harris has done so far, said she will appear on CBS' "60 Minutes," ABC's "The View," CBS' "The Late Show with Stephen Colbert" and "The Howard Stern Show" this week.

**Florida prepares for major evacuation as hurricane Milton grows stronger**

Florida. Florida prepared on Sunday for its largest evacuation since 2017 as Hurricane Milton intensified in the Gulf of Mexico on its path toward the US state's western coast, coming on the heels of the devastating Hurricane Helene. Milton, which strengthened from a tropical storm to hurricane on Sunday, was projected to make landfall on Wednesday as a major hurricane, likely hitting near the heavily populated Tampa Bay area, the US National Hurricane Center said. The new hurricane was expected to affect areas already hit hard by Helene, which made landfall further north on September 26. Kevin Guthrie, director of Florida's emergency management division, urged



people to prepare for the "largest evacuation that we have seen most likely since 2017 Hurricane Irma." "I highly encourage you to evacuate," Guthrie told Floridians in a press conference. Milton was about 780 miles (1,255 km) west-southwest of Tampa as of 7 pm EDT on Sunday (0000 GMT on Monday), packing maximum sustained winds of 85 mph (140 km) and moving to the east toward Florida at 7 mph (11 kph), the National Hurricane Center said. A hurricane watch was in effect for the northern coast of Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula.

**Iran stops, then resumes flight ops even as Israeli retaliation looms large**

World Flight restrictions have been lifted in Iran after conditions were deemed safe, reported Reuters quoting state media on Monday. This shortened the period of flight cancellations announced earlier by the Civil Aviation Organisation. A spokesperson for the organisation had earlier said that flights from all Iran's airports would be cancelled until 6 am on Monday from 9 pm on Sunday. "After ensuring favourable and safe flight conditions by the Civil Aviation Organisation, all announced restrictions are removed and airlines are allowed to carry out flight operations," state media said six hours before the end of the initial

Flight restrictions have been lifted in Iran after conditions were deemed safe, state media reported on Monday, shortening the period of flight cancellations announced earlier by the Civil Aviation Organisation.

flight cancellation deadline. The flights were initially cancelled due to operational restrictions, state media cited the spokesperson as saying without providing further details. Iran's precautionary move also came on the first anniversary of the October 7 attacks,

when Gaza-based terror group Hamas launched unprecedented armed incursions into southern Israel. Meanwhile, Israel's defence minister on Sunday declared all options were open for retaliation against arch-enemy Iran. Notably, Iran implemented restrictions on flights on Tuesday, October 1, when it launched missiles at Israel in retaliation for the killing of commanders of its proxy groups, including former Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah. Israel vowed to retaliate for the strikes, saying Iran "will pay for it." Hezbollah was dealt a crushing blow by Israel after its leader Hassan Nasrallah was killed in an airstrike in Beirut.

**We will win: Benjamin Netanyahu says as Israel battles Hamas, Hezbollah**

Benjamin Netanyahu told troops Israel "will win" as it battles militants in both the Gaza Strip and Lebanon and prepares to strike Iran, almost a year since the unprecedented attack by Palestinian Hamas militants sparked the Gaza war.

Jerusalem. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Sunday vowed to achieve victory and said his country's military "completely transformed reality" in the year since Hamas's October 7 attack, which has left the country fighting two wars. Netanyahu told troops Israel "will win" as it battles militants in both the Gaza Strip and Lebanon and prepares to strike Iran, almost a year since the unprecedented

attack by Palestinian Hamas militants sparked the Gaza war. Israel's army chief, Lieutenant General Herzi Halevi said that, one year on, "we have defeated the military wing of Hamas". Netanyahu had pledged to "crush... and destroy" the militants as fighting began last October, but troops have returned to several areas across Gaza where they had previously conducted operations against Hamas, only to find militants regrouping. In late September, Israel turned its focus north, intensifying military action against Iran-backed Hezbollah, which had been routinely sending rockets over the border from Lebanon in support of Hamas. "A year ago, we suffered a terrible blow. Over the past 12 months, we have completely transformed reality," Netanyahu said during a visit to the Lebanon border, according to his office. Hamas on Sunday called the October 7 attack "glorious" and said the Palestinians were "writing a new history with their resistance". Their attack resulted in the deaths of 1,205 people, mostly civilians, according to an AFP tally based on Israeli official figures that include hostages killed in captivity. Dozens of other



hostages are still being held. At last 370 people were killed at one location alone, the Nova rave in the Negev desert, which was commemorated with candles, prayer and music in Tel Aviv on Sunday. Destroyed, displaced in northern Gaza, the military said it had encircled the Jabaliya area after indications Hamas was rebuilding there despite a year of air strikes and fighting. Rescuers said 17 people, including nine children, had been killed on Sunday by Israeli air strikes on the area. Israel's military offensive in Gaza has killed at least 41,870 people, the majority of them civilians, according to figures provided by

the Hamas-run territory's health ministry and described as reliable by the UN. Most of Gaza's population is displaced and much of the territory's housing and other infrastructure destroyed. Despite fighting, which has escalated in Lebanon since late September, and the threat of war with Iran, Netanyahu told French President Emmanuel Macron in a phone call that Israel's actions in Lebanon would help bring "stability, security and peace in the entire region", according to Netanyahu's office. Lebanese Prime Minister Najib Mikati appealed to the international community to push Israel for a ceasefire. US Vice President and Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris said in a pre-recorded interview that Washington was "not going to stop" pressuring Israel and Arab leaders to agree a Gaza truce. The leaders of Jordan and the United Arab Emirates called for intensified international efforts to stop both wars. Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani warned the fighting could "plunge the region and the world into prolonged conflicts".

**Fresh Israeli strikes hit Beirut after people asked to leave Hezbollah stronghold**

According to Lebanon's National News Agency, Israeli warplanes launched two strikes on southern Beirut, with the first targeting the Saint Therese area, and the second targeting the Burj al-Barajneh area.

Beirut. Official Lebanese media reported four Israeli strikes on south Beirut Sunday, shortly after calls by Israel's army for residents to evacuate the Hezbollah stronghold which has been bombarded for several days. Enemy warplanes launched two strikes on the southern suburbs, the first targeted the Saint Therese area, and the

second targeted the Burj al-Barajneh area," Lebanon's National News Agency said. The NNA later reported two additional strikes, including one it described as "violent". One AFP correspondent said her windows shook after one of the strikes, while another reporter heard loud explosions. AFP live video footage captured four strikes, two of them triggering big explosions with flaming flares shooting out of thick black smoke. An Israeli military statement issued overnight Sunday to Monday said the IDF had "struck Hezbollah terrorist targets and weapons storage facilities in Beirut".

Israeli warplanes hit targets belonging to Hezbollah's intelligence headquarters in Beirut, the statement added. They had also hit "Hezbollah weapons storage facilities in the area of Beirut", reporting secondary explosions after the strikes "indicating the presence of weaponry". Earlier Sunday



evening, Israel military spokesman Avichay Adraea issued an "urgent warning to the

residents of the southern suburb of Burj al-Barajneh and Hadath" to leave these areas. "You are located near Hezbollah facilities and interests, and the IDF (Israeli military) will operate against them in the near future," he added in a statement on X. In the night from Saturday to Sunday, the southern suburbs were hit by more than 30 strikes, the NNA said, in one of the most intense barrages yet. Lebanon's Hezbollah movement and its foe Israel have been exchanging near-daily cross-border fire for nearly a year in fallout from the Gaza war. But since September 23, Israel has launched devastating air strikes on targets in Lebanon that have killed more than 1,110 people and forced more than one million to flee their homes. Israel last week killed Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah in south Beirut, a densely populated area before residents fled Israel's intensifying bombardment.

News box

### Fake certificates for TNPSC jobs: Government staff among 9 booked for fraud

**MADURAI.** The Directorate of Vigilance and Anti-Corruption (DVAC) in Madurai registered a case against assistant commissioner (state taxes) of Thiruparankundram assessment circle, deputy superintendent of police (Attur), revenue divisional officer (Kancheepuram), and personal assistant (general) to Coimbatore collector apart from five other persons on charges of cheating to secure advantage in appointments through the TNPSC group I services by availing 20% reservation under the Tamil medium quota, in connivance with Madurai Kamaraj University officials.

According to police sources, a case was booked against Assistant Commissioner (state taxes) S Swapna (34), Personal Assistant (General) to Collector of Coimbatore NA Chanheetha (40), Deputy SP (Attur sub-division) KC Sathish Kumar (40), RDO Kancheepuram M Kalaivani (37), former senior superintendent of MKU R Sathiamoorthi (62), Superintendent SC/ST Cell of Directorate of Distance Education (DDE) of MKU K Purushothaman (59), administrator of Life Educational Trust A Murali (40), programme officer of the Trust R Narayana Prabhu (41) and Coordinator of Sethupathi Institute of Higher Studies A Rajendran.

Sources said that in 2020, the principal secretary to higher education department based on the report of the V-C of MKU, directed to inquire into allegations on the DDE. Meanwhile, the Madras High Court based on a PIL plea, directed the DVAC to investigate into the irregularities committed in conducting examinations and issuance of PSTM (Person Studied in Tamil Medium) certificate by MKU. The DVAC inquired 22 candidates, who submitted their PSTM certificates issued for their appointment to Group-I services from 2012 to 2019. As many as four of them had completed their course through the DDE.

### Villagers rescue newborn from abandoned house near Chidambaram in TN



**CUDDALORE.** A newborn girl, who was abandoned behind a house in Pichavaram near Chidambaram, was rescued by the villagers on Sunday. The villagers along with the help of the police admitted the infant to a hospital for treatment.

Residents passing by an abandoned house on Madha Koil Street in Pichavaram heard cries of a baby and discovered the newborn girl lying behind the house. They immediately informed the Chidambaram Annamalai Nagar police. After the police arrived the place with ambulance service, the baby was taken to Cuddalore District Medical College Hospital in Annamalai Nagar. Following this, the infant was transferred to the District Child Protection Unit in Cuddalore, sources said.

The police have registered a case and are investigating to identify the parents of the child. "We suspect the infant was born three to four hours before she was found. We are inquiring with nearby hospitals for further information," a police source added.

### Boars, monkeys make life difficult for jangaon ryots in Telangana

**JANGAON.** Wild boars and monkeys have been wreaking havoc on crops in several villages across Chilpur, Zaffarghad, Station Ghanpur, Jangaon, Narmetta and Raganathpally mandals. Local farmers have requested forest and revenue officials to take measures to control the menace. Meanwhile, in a bid to protect their crops, ryots have been installing fencing around their fields.

After the recent rains, crops such as paddy, groundnut, pulse and cotton were cultivated. They are expected to be ready for harvest in November and December. However, wild boars and monkeys have damaged them, the ryots added. P Srinivas, a farmer from Chilpur mandal, expressed concern over the increasing number of wild boars and monkeys in the area. He said these animals were destroying crops such as cotton, maize and groundnut in the fields. Despite bringing the issue to the attention of the officials, the suggested solution was to install fencing around the agricultural fields, he said, adding that many farmers have been left to struggle on their own. Acknowledging the severity of the matter, Jangaon District Forest Officer (DFO) B Lavanya told that measures were being taken to address the issue.

## MLA Anvar lauds Stalin, tears into Kerala CM Pinarayi, LDF govt

Anvar alleged that a secret deal has been struck between the CPM and the BJP for the ensuing byelections in the Palakkad and Chelakkara assembly constituencies.

**MANJERI.** Seeking to put the CPM on the defensive further, MLA P V Anvar tried to juxtapose the 'principled and strong anti-Sangh Parivar stand' of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) in Tamil Nadu with the 'clandestine deal' between the CPM and the BJP in Kerala.

Addressing a public meeting in Manjeri on Sunday, the Nilambur MLA, who fell out with the CPM recently, said the DMK did everything to block the attempts of the BJP to win at least one seat from Tamil Nadu. He said the party gave its sure seat at Dindigul to the CPM and took the Coimbatore Lok Sabha constituency when it was known that the BJP was eyeing the seat. "DMK is the most secular and democratic force in the country. I had gone to meet the party leaders in Chennai. Where else can I go? Should I go to the RSS headquarters? If I had gone there (RSS centre), the government would have given me full support," he said. Anvar alleged that the LDF government had tried to sabotage his meeting with DMK leaders. "A secretary in the government flew to Chennai on Sunday and tried to meet Chief Minister M K Stalin, who was



attending the airshow by the defence department. He wanted Stalin to issue a statement against me," Anvar said. He alleged that a secret deal has been struck between the CPM and the BJP for the ensuing byelections in the Palakkad and Chelakkara assembly constituencies. "As per the agreement, the CPM will vote for the BJP in Palakkad and in return, the party candidate will get BJP votes in Chelakkara," he said. He reiterated his charge that it was Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan who paved the way for the BJP's victory in Thrissur in the Lok Sabha elections. Thrissur Pooram was disrupted with the intention to turn the people against the government, he said.

Anvar said he went to Chennai to seek the blessings of Stalin and the people of TN, "who successfully blocked all ways for BJP".

No intention to start a political party now, says Anvar

"I have no intention to start a political party now. I want a social movement," he said.

The venue of the public meeting in Manjeri was decorated with the portraits of renaissance leaders in Kerala, including Sree Narayana Guru, Chattampi Swamikal, Vakkom

Abdul Khader Moulavi and Saint Kuriakose Elias Chavara. Portraits of Muhammad Abdurrehman, K Kelappan, Abdurrehman Bafaqi Thangal and A K Gopalan were also placed near the venue.

The policy of his new organisation, Democratic Movement Kerala, includes creation of a new district after bifurcating Malappuram and Kozhikode districts, implementation of caste census, voting rights from non-resident Keralites and ensuring justice for the Malabar region.

Former IJML Ernakulam district president Hamsa Parakkatt and Mappillappattu artist Bappu Velliparamba were also present on the stage along with Anvar.

## Karnataka: Rain kills three, damages 150 houses in North Karnataka

**HUBBALLI/BALLARI/GADAG.** Three people were killed and over 150 houses damaged after heavy rain lashed several parts of North Karnataka on Saturday night. As predicted by weather agencies, several districts in North Karnataka came under the grip of heavy rain owing to a cyclonic activity in the Bay of Bengal.

Two people were killed in Vijayanagara district on Saturday after a lightning struck them on Sunday. The victims Narappa Banakar (55) and Prashant Banakar (45) were both from Dasanapura village of Hagaribommanahalli taluk in Vijayanagara district. In Davanagere district, 81-year-old Kulagatte Basavarajappa died after his house wall collapsed on him late on Saturday night. His son and daughter-in-law were also injured in the incident and are being treated at a hospital. They are out of danger.

Met Department sources said 130 mm of rain that lashed in a few hours in undivided Ballari district and surrounding areas caused intense floods. Heavy rain was also reported



in Raichur, Koppal, Yadgir and Kalaburagi districts. 55 mining trucks stuck in flood waters. Over 55 mining trucks were stuck in flood waters in the Sandur mining area. Local residents rescued around 25 truck drivers who were stuck inside their vehicles. The district administration said paddy, banana and chilli crops in over 9,000 hectares were washed away.

In both Ballari and Vijayanagara districts, senior officials rushed to villages where intense damage was reported. Undivided Ballari MP E Tukaram also inspected the rain-hit areas and visited villages where heavy rain was reported. In Nargund and surrounding areas of Gadag district, roads turned into mini-rivers after heavy rain on Saturday night. The region received incessant rain for over two hours, forcing people to spend a sleepless night. The rainwater got mixed with drainage water and flooded many houses.

Rain floods apartment, falls trees in Bengaluru Bengaluru: Heavy rain affected normal life in many parts of the city on Saturday night and Sunday morning. Houses and residential complexes were flooded, a compound wall collapsed damaging many two-wheelers, 15 trees were uprooted, and many roads became rivers leading to bumper-to-bumper traffic stretching for kilometers after the city received heavy rain on Saturday night.

## Mother-daughter duo, minor boy held for kidnap and murder of 6-yr-old girl

Home Minister Vangalapudi Anitha, along with two other ministers NMD Farooq and M Ramprasad Reddy visited the girl's house and consoled the bereaved family

**CHITTOOR.** Three persons, including a mother-daughter duo and a minor boy, were arrested on Sunday in connection with the suspicious death of a six-year-old girl at Punganur in Chittoor district. The 6-year-old girl, identified as Asmiya Anjum, had gone missing on September 29. She was found dead in a water tank on October 2. Police investigation revealed that a financial dispute between one of the accused and Asmiya's father, Ajmatullah, was the motive behind the murder.

Chittoor district Collector Sumit Kumar and Superintendent of Police Manikanta Chandolu oversaw the investigation. Elaborating on the case, the SP said a woman, key accused in the case, borrowed Rs 3.5 lakh from Ajmatullah. After she failed to repay the loan, Ajmatullah

threatened to file a lawsuit against her. Agitated by the threat, the woman hatched a plan to kidnap and kill Asmiya. When the girl was playing outside her house on September 29, the woman approached her and lured her to leave the spot. The woman, along with her mother and the minor boy, fed the child before choking her to death. The trio then shifted the body on a bike and discarded it in a nearby summer storage tank. "As per preliminary medical reports, there were no signs of injury or rape," said Manikanta Chandolu.

He confirmed that crucial evidence and suspicious movements of certain individuals led to the arrest of suspects. He explained that after a missing complaint was lodged by Asmiya's family on September 29, 12 police teams, including

search parties with trained dogs and technical units, were dispatched to comb the town. Nearby lakes, ponds, abandoned wells, and buildings were searched with the help of municipal workers and youth.

Additionally, surveillance footage from CCTV cameras around the town was thoroughly examined, and technical teams from nearby districts were brought in to assist. Police interacted with Asmiya's family, neighbours, teachers, and others who had last seen her.

The investigation also explored potential leads involving anyone who may have previously harassed or touched the child inappropriately. The SP emphasised that no one involved in the heinous crime will be spared.

## No pay for over 100 govt college staff in 6 central districts for 11 months, families in distress

Since November 2023, these educators and support staff have gone without pay, forcing their families to grapple with a growing sense of helplessness and despair.



**TIRUCHY.** The prolonged delay in giving salaries has left 49 hourly lecturers, 34 guest lecturers, and 33 non-teaching staff from the 10 erstwhile constituent colleges of Bharathidasan University in financial and emotional distress.

Since November 2023, these educators and support staff who are working in government colleges in Tiruvur, Nagapattinam, Thanjavur, Tiruchy, Perambalur and Pudukkottai districts have gone without pay, forcing their families to grapple with a growing sense of helplessness and despair. K Ramesh (59), one among the hourly paid lecturer working in the Nilaim government arts and science college in Tiruvur for the past 12 years, is now questioning his career choice.

"In this age and in my 25 years of experience in teaching, I am working in a petrol bunk due to mounting debts and poverty. My salary is Rs 14,200 per month as a hourly lecturer, nonetheless I work for a duration equivalent to that of regular employees." G Jagadeeshwari (50), a doctorate in History, working as a guest lecturer in Orathanadu girls arts and science college, said their service is only profitable to the government as a single associate professor gets Rs 1 lakh salary per month and they get only Rs 25,000 and that too not for over a year. "I am mentally distressed and cannot decide whether to stay in this job or quit. I have lost self-respect in the family as they know I am working in a job which doesn't pay. I don't know whether we would get the salaries or not. Teaching is the only profession I have done throughout my life. I don't know anything apart from that. Even if we get the salary all the money would be enough to settle my debt." Beyond the immediate financial impact, the delay has eroded the trust between the staff and the college administration. "We have given everything to our students and our institutions, but when it comes to taking care of our livelihoods, no one seems to care. It's disheartening," shared an hourly lecturer who has been teaching at one of the affected colleges for over a decade.

## Night pharmacies under scanner over illegal sale of narcotic

These drugs, often used for pain management or anxiety treatment, can also be misused for recreational purposes.

**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM.** The Kerala State Pharmacy Council has raised concerns that some pharmacies, particularly those operating at night, are selling narcotic medicines without valid prescriptions, creating a risk of abuse.

These drugs, often used for pain management or anxiety treatment, can also be misused for recreational purposes.

In addition to Schedule X drugs, certain antibiotics classified under Schedule H and H1 too are being sold in that manner despite government efforts to control antimicrobial resistance, the council pointed out, drawing attention to the lax regulations in place. "Such questionable drug sales often occur at night when the pharmacist hands over responsibilities to salesmen. Pharmacy owners frequently hire unqualified assistants to save costs, and these individuals may not be aware of the rules, leading to careless dispensing practices," said Kerala State Pharmacy Council president O C Naveen Chand.



Regulations mandate that drugs must be dispensed under the supervision of a registered pharmacist. According to the Kerala Shops and Commercial Establishments Act, a pharmacist is required to work only eight hours, leaving assistants in charge during extended hours. Naveen Chand highlighted the importance of ensuring that prescriptions are current and that drugs are not dispensed on the basis of outdated or repeated prescriptions. He suggested that pharmacists keep a copy of prescriptions as a standard practice. A N Mohan, state president of the All Kerala

Chemists and Druggists Association (AKCDA), while acknowledging there may be isolated instances of non-compliance, said most pharmacies adhere to the regulations.

"Some establishments may compromise on rules to increase profits, but we do not support such practices. It is the responsibility of the authorities to take action, and we are ready to assist them," he said. Mohan also called for a review of the pharmacy licensing process to prevent indiscriminate approvals. The drugs control department, with 48 inspectors overseeing more than 27,000 pharmacies, faces challenges in enforcing these rules.

"Despite limited resources, we do conduct inspections and take action against stock discrepancies. We are actively working to combat antimicrobial resistance and implement a national programme to address narcotic drug abuse among children. Inspectors are also involved in various tasks, including sample collection and prosecution," an officer said.

## War, valour and values in Vietnam

In typhoon-torn Vietnam, though being room-bound for two days, we had interesting experiences last month. Some fellow golfers, who had visited the country a couple of months earlier, told us that the Vietnamese were a friendly people with values to cherish. And that, with fortitude and valour in their blood, they had rebuilt their war-ravaged country. The typhoon was to hit our city Hanoi at 7 in the evening, when we ventured out, walking up to a lake nearby. Soon, we realised that we had made a foolish decision, for we were caught in heavy downpour and wild, gusty winds. While hobbling back to the hotel, and mindful of the uprooted trees, my wife, Koumudi, harboured a fishing bait, flung unknowingly by a boy, on her trouser. While trying to remove it, she suffered an injury on her finger and it started bleeding profusely. Panicked, we shouted for help when a 10-year-old girl came running from her shop-cum-home.

She made Koumudi sit on a chair and ran inside to bring a first-aid box. She put the band-aid on the finger, saying something which we could not understand. But her smile said it all. The boy kept standing on one side, being an epitome of an apology. For the next hour or so, we were sheltered in their tiny house.

In Ho Chi Minh City, our guide, Danh Hong Puch, told us interesting facets about the Vietnamese. We were surprised to know that the kids in the country generally do not want to go to school; instead, they stay on their land and pursue their parents' profession.

Puch, who spoke monk-like, talked about the Buddha and his teachings, especially compassion. He too wanted to go back and live with his parents in a few months.



We saw the fields with built-up ornamental graves; according to Puch, the Vietnamese liked to be buried only on their property. I was reminded of the man in New Orleans, who wanted to be buried 'above land' since he had lived in swamps all his life! Pretentious human desires do not leave them even after death.

Puch introduced us to families on Unicorn Island, located in Mekong river, who have been living there for generations, rearing cattle, growing fruits and crops, and even raising beehives for honey. Some distance away from Ho Chi Minh City, we saw bunkers, which stretched up to a distance of 250 km, used by Vietnamese guerrillas and their families during the war with the US. The design of these bunkers is so scientific that despite having kitchens and wells inside to subsist, these are difficult for the enemy to detect. Guerrillas even wore sandals in the reverse manner, so that the enemy was fooled into believing that they were going in a particular direction, whereas it was just the opposite.

While in Da Nang and heading up to Ba Na Hills, we met Minh, a Vietnamese who had stayed for 22 years in California, USA, and who had returned to his moorings. He was in our group as just another member, but took care of everyone around. With us, he was extra helpful. He would caution, "Mind your head please!" and "Mind your step please!" He would offer to take pictures and suggest angles and the perfect light options.

Minh limped a bit since he had undergone a knee replacement surgery, but it did not deter him from offering a hand to Koumudi if it was a steep climb. At our luncheon, he guided us to the vegetarian counter. I couldn't help telling him, "Minh, you are a good man!" He smiled and said.

## Lessons from encounters in the wild

The biggest impediment to conservation is the conflict between humans and wild animals

While we have been celebrating 'wildlife week' across India, beginning from October 2, disturbing news has come from African countries such as Namibia and Zimbabwe. Apparently, orders have been issued to cull elephants for providing food to hungry citizens. Many of these countries have been reeling under severe drought conditions, and coupled with supply chain disruptions due to the wars in the Middle East and Ukraine, governments have been facing the daunting task of addressing the hunger of the countrymen. Drought is linked to global warming and the developed countries responsible for this have not paid adaptation funds of \$100 million annually, or the loss and damage funds agreed to in annual climate conferences. No one can do any conservation with a hungry stomach. The biggest impediment



to conservation is the conflict between humans and wild animals. With the fragmentation and degradation of wildlife habitats and forests, wild animals stray into human areas and damage crops, properties and also inflict human and livestock casualties. Though human casualties are inflicted by tigers, leopards, wolves, wild buffaloes, etc, the largest number of deaths take place in elephant attacks. Whenever a child is lifted by a wolf and an adult is killed by large carnivores or an elephant, the affected community members turn against the Forest Department. They protest and create a law and order situation. If it is not handled effectively, often members of the community turn against the conservation programmes and all efforts go in vain. Recent incidents of wolves' attacks in UP's Bahraich is one such example. In the case of Bahraich, the habitat for wolves, which historically lies between Katamia Ghat forests and Ghaghara river, has been shrinking owing to frequent changes in the course of the river. According to experts, the wolves there have cross-bred with stray dogs and the offsprings are no longer fearful of moving into human areas in search of food. The UP Forest Department has already taken five out of the six wolves into captivity. Under pressure from the community, it had no option but to capture and shift wild wolves to a zoo/safari. The reasons for tigers and leopards attacking and killing humans in the Terai belt of UP and Uttarakhand are similar. The habitats have been fragmented due to human encroachments, rivers changing course and diversion of forests for infrastructure and developmental projects. There have been several incidents of communities targeting wild animals. Apart from being poached and hunted, the animals straying into human areas are killed by the villagers. Tigers living on the periphery of forests at times attack livestock for food. They drag the kill several

hundred metres to hide it under tree groves and bushes and feed on it. Tigers are known to eat twice a week; the half-eaten carcass of the kill is often revisited. Villagers exploit this weakness of tigers and spray poison on this. The tiger gets killed whenever it revisits. Unless there is an accidental encounter, wild animals maintain a safe distance from humans and would never attack. Only when the distance is breached do the animals attack in self-defence. While perambulating forests infested by

elephants, forest officers take a lot of precautions. There have been several instances when officers on duty got killed in elephant attacks. A clear distance of 200 metres is to be maintained between the elephant and the human while moving in the forests. When the direction of the wind is from the elephant towards the human, one can afford to go a bit closer. But when the direction of the wind is towards the elephant, a safe distance of 200 metres must be kept. When we move in forests, we make sure that the colour of the vehicle is not white, nor do we wear any white-coloured clothes. In December 1977, NR Nair, the then Director, Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun, lost his life when he went too close to photograph an elephant in Karnataka's Bandipur forests. He was attacked and killed on the spot. In 1989, while working as the Deputy Conservator of Forests at Kollegal in Karnataka, I was going with my wife and kids in a Mahindra jeep on a hilly narrow road in an elephant area and was charged by an elephant from the front. We were lucky that the elephant did not touch us and turned away. If it had pushed the jeep, five of us, including the driver, would have disappeared from earth. Elephants feed on small-sized trees, which have lower carbon absorption capacity. This removes the competition. Big trees with a higher carbon absorption grow luxuriantly.

## Phogats, politics, patriarchy

Vinesh Phogat — 30 years old, Asian champion, near-Olympics champion, World Championships medalist — is a mere child, a girl who must listen to and obey the patriarch of the family, Mahavir Phogat, the man who turned his daughters and nieces into world-class wrestlers. For Mahavir, she's a chit of a girl — yes, she can easily wring your neck but, for him, she's a mere overgrown kid whom he started coaching after his brother Rajpal died, killed by a madman in 2003. She must listen to him, as she did when he started training her in Julana village over 25 years ago. Is it patriarchy that makes Mahavir Phogat tell niece Vinesh — through the press — that she should not have joined politics, and certainly not the Congress party? Patriarchy, unfortunately, seems to be the more charitable explanation for his public comments against his niece and protegee, for the other explanation is politics — Mahavir had joined the BJP along with his daughter Babita in 2019. A politician, said Nietzsche, divides mankind into two classes — tools and enemies — and those aspiring for great success in politics

become adept in using people, and being used. In the case of the Phogats, politicians seem to have divided the family into enemies of each other. Vinesh, Sakshi Malik and Bajrang Punia — married to Mahavir's youngest daughter, Sangeeta — were the face of the wrestlers' protest against then Wrestling Federation of India president Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh over allegations that he had sexually abused several women wrestlers. To Mahavir's credit, he did put himself on the right side in this significant battle for women's right to pursue a career in sports without being molested by officials or coaches — this, every insider knows, is a very big problem in sports. Mahavir, in fact, went so far as to say, in early August, that Vinesh's reaching the final of the 50kg class at the Paris Olympics represented a slap on Brij Bhushan's face. Babita, however, has been rather reticent in expressing support for her cousin Vinesh and the wrestling sisterhood, and quite mum on her party colleague Brij Bhushan; she went so far as to suggest that the protesting wrestlers were misled by the "Opposition parties".

## Punjab BJP's woes

Top brass should pay heed to Jakhar's plea

ALL is not well with the Punjab BJP. Discontent within its ranks has been brewing for a while, and now things are coming to a head. State party president Sunil Jakhar's unwillingness to stay at the helm has brought the fault lines out in the open. The former Congress stalwart has reportedly told PM Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah that there is a need to change the BJP's and the Centre's approach to issues concerning the state. Jakhar has sought prompt redressal of farmers' grievances and a review of the contentious strategy to grant frequent parole to rape and murder convict Gurmeet Ram Rahim. Both are emotive subjects in Punjab — the state's farmers were at the forefront of the year-long agitation against the three Central farm laws, while the Dera Sacha Sauda chief continues to be in the crosshairs of the Sikh community due to his alleged role in sacrilege and blasphemy cases.

The BJP, which was in power in the border state for



two successive terms as a junior ally of the Shiromani Akali Dal, is struggling to regain ground. It has poached several Congress leaders in an attempt to bolster its state unit, but the ploy has not yielded substantial electoral dividends. The saffron party drew a blank in Punjab in this year's Lok Sabha elections, though it did manage to improve its vote share. Having set its sights on the 2027 Assembly elections, the BJP cannot afford to let things drift. With farmers and Sikhs being key vote banks in the state, antagonising or ignoring them can be perilous. Though the Centre eventually repealed the farm laws, Punjab's farmers have not yet forgiven the BJP as well as PM Modi for the hardships they suffered during the historic stir. The trust deficit also stems from the Union Government's apparent reluctance to legalise the MSP for all crops. Paying heed to Jakhar's plea and doing course correction can make a difference.

## War, valour and values in Vietnam

I can write this now as the person around whom this episode hinges is no more and can't be harassed, harried, or worse. Yet, for safety's sake, let's not take his name and simply call him Mr X. My father,...

I can write this now as the person around whom this episode hinges is no more and can't be harassed, harried, or worse. Yet, for safety's sake, let's not take his name and simply call him Mr X. My father, probably egged on by an old memory, once wrote to the Headmaster of Lahore's Central Model School. Before Partition knocked the bottom out of so many lives, this was where he had studied before moving on to Lahore's famous Government College. The upshot was that he received a letter from Mr X, also an alumnus of the school, though much after my father. The Headmaster must have shown the letter to X, who then wrote to my father to say that he had grown up in Shimla, in Barnes' Court, today's Raj Bhavan of Himachal Pradesh. His father had been on the staff of the last British Governor of undivided Punjab, Sir Evan Jenkins. With Partition, the family had moved to Pakistan. In time, Mr X left for another country and did well in business. When he aged, he sold his business and returned to Lahore. As he said, he 'wanted to live out the rest of his life with family and friends'.

Someone vouchsafed Mr X's credentials for a visa to India and one summer evening, both he and his wife arrived in Shimla. I helped arrange a visit to the Raj Bhavan. No matter what politicians from both sides of the border may plot and plan, the person-to-person affection between the ordinary Pakistanis and Indians is considerable — you just have to see both nationalities living it up with friendship and bonhomie when they are in another country and on neutral ground. Mr X was able to revisit the romping grounds of his childhood and the security staff were



kind, yet careful, courteous and yet, cautious. Then, one day, Mrs X and Mr X came home for dinner. Mrs X and my mother got into a conversation. The lady, trying to open a stream of talk, I assume, asked my mother, "How many servants do you have? We manage with four." Our mother, who when she had to had been a sweeper, cook, dish-washer, wife, mother and academic rolled into one, did not know what to say. More bluntly put, I don't think she had either the interest or the patience for conversations like this. Our guest carried on, "We pay two servants

and we give the other two food." Suddenly, our rather placid and calm mother acted as if she'd been stung. "What do you mean, 'You give just food?'" Yes, we give food" was the answer. Good manners came to the fore. My mother returned to her calm and gentle state. "How nice," she said. "Should we have dinner now?" After leaving India as a child, this was Mr X's first visit to the country and it was the first time his wife had come. Expectedly, over the course of the few days they were in Shimla, the conversation turned

time and again to the similarities and common ground that we had as a people. At the same time, we also spoke of how different our countries had become. The fundamental difference seemed to emerge from the fact that the Constitution of Pakistan was adopted in 1956, while India's had come into force in 1950. Those crucial six years seem to have altered the trajectory of that country. The feudal order continued, with a limited number of individuals and families controlling both money and power. Then, one evening, Mr X and I went out for a drink and a meal. The place where we were at had several serving and retired Army and civil officers, who were also there for a drink and a meal. One introduced Mr X. Within moments, he was surrounded. A barrage of questions was fired. That inquisition of sorts could be summarised in a single sentence, "Why does Pakistan behave the way it does with India?" He did not say so, or even indicate this, but I won't be surprised if Mr X thought that this chance meeting was an ambush arranged by me. One tried one's best to extricate him from this situation, but he was quite capable of holding his own. His answer to the barrage was, "I've lived most of my life out of Pakistan as a businessman and only returned to retire." As we left, Mr X was visibly upset. He said, "Don't you realise that both our countries have become very different? You have democracy here. In Pakistan, we alternate between some sort of a democracy and military coups. There is no clear power centre. We have four: the Army, the ISI, the religious hardliners and then the weakest, the elected government."



- The polenta might bubble excessively, so be careful. Once it is cooked, let it cool in an open vessel.
- In another pan, saute the garlic and add the vegetables and meat.
- Cook this mixture until the chicken is done.
- Add sage leaves, rosemary, bay leaves, peppercorns, tomatoes and nutmeg powder to this mix.
- Let the mixture simmer for six to seven minutes. You can add some vegetable stock to avoid browning.
- Continue to cook mixture for about 40 minutes.
- Season with salt and pepper and serve it with polenta.

Chef's tip for non-diabetics: Butter, cream and cheese can be added to the polenta while cooking. This will give it a creamy texture, rich flavour and a smoother bite...

**Quinoa salad**  
**Ingredients**  
 1/2 cup Quinoa (cooked)  
 1/4 cup Yellow bell pepper (chopped)  
 1/4 cup Red bell pepper (chopped)  
 4 tbsp Basil and thyme (finely chopped)  
 1 tsp Olive oil  
 2 tbsp Fresh lemon juice  
 Salt and pepper to taste  
**Method**  
 - In a salad bowl, mix all the vegetables with quinoa and herbs  
 - Drizzle it with olive oil and lemon juice. » Season with salt and pepper and serve cold.  
 Chef's tip for non-diabetics: You can drizzle the salad with some balsamic reduction for a more enriched, gourmet flavour.



## Organic recipes for Diabetics

Diabetics needn't restrict themselves to boring soups and fat-free snacks. Try these simple recipes with unconventional grains that pack in flavour and nutrition.

Organic food is the buzz word and every nutritionist, model, health enthusiast is swearing by their daily dose of quinoa. Organic or not, grains such as polenta, couscous, barley and flax seeds suddenly find themselves in the limelight, outshining the good old rajma and chana. We get Chef Prakash Lopes, from Citrus at The Leela, to teach us healthy and delicious variations using these grains. Barley and vegetable broth

**Ingredients**

- 200 ml Barley (soaked overnight)
- 5 ml Olive oil
- 15 gm Carrots (chopped)
- 15 gm Onions (chopped)
- 5 gm Fresh herbs of your choice
- 200 gm Vegetable stock
- 1 Garlic (chopped)
- Salt and pepper to taste

**Method**

- Boil the soaked barley grains in hot water till they soften and keep aside.
- Boil all the vegetables and cook them until they are soft.
- Combine the boiled barley with the vegetable

- stock and bring the it to a boil.
- Let it simmer it for a few more minutes and season with salt and pepper.
- Garnish with chopped herbs and serve hot.

**Chef's tip for non-diabetics:** Add a dash of balsamic reduction to the soup. Alternatively, you can also add a few drops of Tabasco sauce to spice up this preparation. If you want to indulge, substitute olive oil with butter.

**Couscous salad**

**Ingredients**

- 100 gm Couscous
- 50 gm Onion (finely chopped)
- 25 gm Yellow bell pepper (finely chopped)

- 25 gm Red bell pepper (finely chopped)
- 50 gm Tomato (deseeded and finely chopped)
- 20 gm Parsley (finely chopped)
- 25 ml Lemon juice
- 30 ml Olive oil

**Salt and pepper to taste**

**Method**

- Soak couscous in hot water and cover it with cling wrap.
- Keep it soaked until it softens. This should take about 10 minutes. Strain and let it cool.
- In a bowl, add all the chopped vegetables and tip in the cooked couscous once it cools.

- Season it with salt and pepper, followed by lemon juice and olive oil.
- Toss it gently with a spoon and serve cold.

**Chef's tip for non-diabetics:** You can toss in some boiled potatoes or red kidney beans to make it wholesome. You can also add a few pieces of fruit for a sweet tinge.

**Vegetable and chicken stew with polenta**

**Ingredients**

- 600 gm Polenta
- 600 ml Milk
- 100 ml Olive oil
- 20 gm Onions (chopped)
- 20 gm Carrots (chopped)
- 20 gm Garlic (chopped)
- 1 kg Chicken (chopped)
- 1 tsp Peppercorns
- 5 gm Sage leaves
- 1 tsp Rosemary
- 2 Bay leaves
- 1 kg Tomatoes (chopped)
- 1 tsp Nutmeg powder
- Salt and pepper to taste

**Method**

- Heat a litre of water and add the polenta to it.
- Cook this for five to six minutes, stirring continuously.

## Changing palettes with changing times

Over the last few years, Chennaiites have begun to relish exotic cuisines. finds out what's on plates nowadays

The cityscape has undergone a sea change especially in the culinary sphere. Since the launch of Chennai Times five years ago, a lot has changed - not just in food but people's palates and tastes as well.

So apart from the regular Chinese, Mughlai, Continental that has existed since a long time, today, you can find cuisines like Lebanese, Japanese, Burmese, Greek, Korean and more. Pratiti Rajpal, who works at a star hotel in the city, says, "We had to change our entire buffet in the last one month because people want to try out new cuisines and are more experimental when it comes to food now." They have now added Thai, sushi, hot and cold chats and much more to the menu.

Chennaiites now have evolved palettes (because of more travel and exposure to foreign cultures on TV) and want variety while ordering food, and they can't be blamed either! It is this evolving appetite that has compelled the city's restaurants and hotels to redo their menus. Chef Thomas Angerer, Executive Chef at a luxury hotel, says, "Due to the influx of new hotels and restaurants in Chennai, people have opened up to



different cuisines and are ready to try out what's new. They are open to newer concepts as well. It wasn't the same case a few years back."

And people here agree. "I love food, and more than that I like trying out new cuisines. Earlier, to try out an authentic cuisine one had to go to a star hotel. But now there're so many small restaurants and so many choices. Food has changed in this city," says Kiran P, an engineer and an ardent food lover.

Food festivals regular held across the city at eat-outs have also made people inquisitive about international food and exotic cuisines. Saurabh Agarwal, an entrepreneur who has been in Chennai for over six years, says, "I like going for food fests; it is great way to find out what different foods taste like. Over the years I have seen the change in food habits.

When I first came to Chennai, there were very few places where I could get good north Indian food. Forget north Indian, the only food easily available was different types of south Indian cuisines. Now many restaurants offer a variety. In fact, we have Korean, Greek and Lebanese restaurants as well!"

While Italian was always a favourite in this city, more south Asian cuisines are emerging.

Manoj Kurian, proprietor of a Burmese restaurant in the city, says, "My restaurant is a year old and people who come here don't feel that they are eating an alien dish. I have had a great response as well." He believes had he opened his restaurant a few years ago, it might not have done so well. "Burmese food has been in Chennai but it was thought of as street food," he adds.

From starters to desserts, a peek into the special menu finds exciting selections like Pineapple Shikanjvi, Makai Shorba, Zaffrani Murgh Tikka, Kadai Paneer, Palak Methi, Ghehoon Ki Kheer, Moong Dal Halwa and much more.

The special menu, available from April 14 to April 21 is on from 12 noon till 3.30 pm for lunch and 7 pm till 11.30 pm for dinner. It is priced at 400 plus taxes per couple. Essential dos in summer from the chef

Have high water content vegetables.

Try less spicy food. However, usage of capsicum and peppers always helps.

Eat fruits like watermelon blended with tomato or pepper.

Yoghurt drinks of low fat at

## Tadka maar ke Punjabi style!

As the city is high on its appetite binge with Baisakhi round the corner, The Funjabi Tadka (TFT) is geared up to celebrate the season of harvest with a delightful culinary spread.

intervals with salt and a little bit of sugar can make up for the loss of body salts. Experiment with cucumber, tomato and

lettuce-based salads dressed with the essence of cardamom.

Avenue, opp Tollygunge Police Station, Kolkata Venue: 19A Southern



# Congress MLA's son, seen roaming outside hospital despite arrest, sent back to jail

**Congress MLA Dharam Singh Chhokar's son, Sikandar Singh, accused of defrauding over 1,500 home buyers and siphoning off Rs 400 crore, was sent back to jail after India Today reported that he was seen roaming freely outside a Rohtak hospital.**



New Delhi. Haryana Congress's MLA Dharam Singh Chhokar's son, Sikandar Singh, who was seen roaming freely outside a Rohtak hospital, even after being arrested by the ED in a money laundering case, has been sent back to custody.

The action against Sikandar Singh came after an India Today report showed him roaming freely outside Rohtak's Post Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences (PGIMS). In its report, India Today accessed CCTV footage in which Sikandar Singh was seen leaving the hospital unlawfully despite being in judicial custody.

Sources also claimed that after leaving PGIMS, Sikandar Singh was spotted using a Fortuner SUV, staying in hotels, partying, campaigning for upcoming Haryana Assembly elections and using his phone — actions that flout legal protocols. Sikandar Singh was twice admitted to PGIMS, once from September 2 to 16 and again from September 26 to the present date. However, according to sources, Sikandar Singh does not suffer from any serious medical condition despite his hospitalisations. Law enforcement agencies in Haryana took note of India Today's report and Sikandar Singh was sent back to jail.

# Wangchuk begins hunger strike at Ladakh Bhawan

**The Delhi Police, in a letter to the coordinator of the Leh Apex Body (LAB) representing the protesters, said that the request was received at a "very short notice".**



NEW DELHI. Climate activist Sonam Wangchuk on Sunday began a hunger strike at Ladakh Bhawan in the national capital after the Delhi Police denied him permission to protest at the iconic Jantar Mantar.

"After trying everything possible to find a legitimate place for our anshan fast in New Delhi, we have finally decided to start our fast here at Ladakh Bhawan New Delhi where I was virtually detained for the last 4 days," Wangchuk posted on social media. He also stated that there are elderly men and women who walked with him all the way to Delhi from Ladakh for a period of 32 days - roughly 1,000 km.

The Delhi Police, in a letter to the coordinator of the Leh Apex Body (LAB) representing the protesters, said that the request was received at a "very short notice", and that no specific time frame was mentioned about the gathering.

"The guidelines require that applications for holding any demonstration at the Jantar Mantar must be sent at least 10 days before the planned event. It also requires the duration of the planned event to be between 10 am and 5 pm," Additional DCP Anshu Roy's letter read. It further stated that LAB's application mentioned that this "hunger strike" was planned when the expected meeting with the top leadership had not materialised.

"It is quite clear that this proposed anshan will be a prolonged one. There is no provision under the extant laws, rules and guidelines under which permission can be granted for any kind of anshan, let alone an open-ended, without timeframe, mass event, as is discernible from the application," it read.

# Post Haryana, die is cast for triangular contest in Delhi

**Congress leader Rahul Gandhi during his campaign in Haryana, albeit indirectly, said all the small parties fighting outside the INDIA bloc were doing so to help BJP beat the anti-incumbency.**

New Delhi. Haryana assembly polls are over, whatever the results on Tuesday, die has been cast hard for a triangular contest in Delhi. The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), given its track record of harming the Congress interests vis-à-vis the BJP, was never a trusted constituent of the INDIA bloc. Its role in strengthening the anti-BJP alliance was always suspect and whatever doubts remained got cleared during the Haryana assembly polls. The ruling party in Delhi and Punjab, first pushed for an alliance in Haryana carrying forward from the last Lok Sabha polls a few months back. They, however, broke away most haphazardly when everything looked settled giving rise to suspicion about their seriousness about the cause of fighting BJP together. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi during his campaign in Haryana, albeit indirectly, said all the small parties fighting outside the INDIA bloc were doing so to help BJP beat the anti-incumbency. His comments came after Arvind Kejriwal said no government would be formed in Haryana without the support of the AAP.

This statement has been deduced as Kejriwal not being averse to joining hands with the BJP post-results in Haryana. While Rahul Gandhi has been guarded in his comments, his brother-in-law and party general secretary Priyanka Gandhi's husband was more direct in his attack. "When they release Baba Ram Rahim for 20 days before the elections, who has charges of murder and rape, and you (BJP) release him to campaign... I would say having Kejriwal ji come out of prison just in time so that he can campaign in Haryana, I think these are premeditated actions of the BJP," Vadera said while speaking to a news agency. Though it may just be a coincidence, Kejriwal getting bail after the alliance talks between Congress and AAP collapsed has set tongues wagging.

# AAP minister Bharadwaj hits out at BJP over Delhi bus marshals

**Bharadwaj pressed BJP leader Vijender Gupta for clarity on when the official order would be issued.**



NEW DELHI. AAP leader Saurabh Bharadwaj on Sunday addressed the ongoing controversy surrounding the recruitment of bus marshals, accusing the BJP of avoiding its commitments. "Yesterday, BJP was exposed on camera. The AAP and Congress are doing everything, and BJP is only running away. We have seen Vijender Gupta running away." He added that Gupta stated the Lieutenant Governor (LG) had accepted the Delhi government's order to induct the marshals. Bharadwaj pressed BJP leader Vijender Gupta for clarity on when the official order would be issued. "We just want to know when the order will be passed and at what time," he said. On Saturday, Delhi Police detained Bharadwaj and other AAP leaders as they protested outside the L-G's residence, calling for the regularisation of bus marshals and civil defence volunteers.

# UP woman kidnaps child in Delhi due to social stigma over being 'childless', arrested

**To make sure that her in-laws are not shocked by the sudden discovery of a child, Nirmala lied and gave them the "good news" of her pregnancy, well before time.**

NEW DELHI. A 37-year-old Nirmala Devi (name changed), who had been unable to conceive in her wedlock, was facing constant humiliation at her in-law's house in Bulandshahr.

Fed up of humiliation, she made up her mind to become a mother by hook or by crook. "Why can't I just steal...?" an evil thought crossed her mind and she decided to rob some mother of her child.

But Nirmala was unsure of committing such a crime in Bulandshahr as to how would she be able to make up a story of giving birth to a child given her condition. So, she decided to come to Delhi and was staying in the capital for the past three months with her relatives and finding the right target.

To make sure that her in-laws are not shocked by the sudden discovery of a child, Nirmala lied and gave them the



"good news" of her pregnancy, well before time. She even used to send her pictures to her in-laws, somehow depicting her bulged belly. Now came the last and most difficult stage of her plan - stealing a child. On October 5, Nirmala saw a girl child playing on the street in front of her house in Rohini. "She enticed the child with a packet of snacks, kidnapped her and took the victim child to the house of her known in Sector-5, Rohini," Deputy Commissioner of Police

(Rohini) Guriqbal Singh Sidhu said. Soon, the family of the two-year-old girl noticed the disappearance of their child and raised an alarm. The police were intimated which then lodged a case and started searching for the missing girl by analysing the CCTV footage of the cameras installed in the vicinity of the place of occurrence. The DCP said the kidnapped girl was rescued once they scanned through CCTV footage. Nirmala's questioning was nothing but a wretched-turned-sordid tale of a childless mother. The accused woman told the cops that she got married in 2017 in Bulandshahr, UP but had no child out of the wedlock so far. Therefore, in order to get rid of her image of a barren woman in her matrimonial home she decided to kidnap a child.

# New Delhi railway station tops in annual earning, Howrah, Chennai Central follow

NEW DELHI. The New Delhi railway station, designated to be developed as a world-class station, has retained its top position among the country's 100 most earning and busiest railway stations for the financial year 2023-24, according to data released by the Railways. West Bengal's Howrah station stands second and Chennai's MGR Central third. These three railway stations among the top 100 have set examples in annual earnings and passenger footfalls together. New Delhi railway station earned more than Rs 3,337 crore during the year, registering 39,362,272 passenger footfalls, followed by Howrah with an annual earning of over Rs 1,692 crore with 61,329,319 passengers and Chennai's MGR Central

with a revenue of Rs 1,299 crore from 30,599,837 passengers. Other railway stations, all categorised as NSG-1 (Non-Suburban Grade-1), which followed the above three are Secunderabad station, generating an annual earning of Rs 12,76 crore from 27,776,937 passengers; Hazrat Nizamuddin with Rs 1,227 crore from 14,537,686 passengers; Lokmanya Tilak terminal in Mumbai with Rs 1,036 crore from 14,680,379 passengers; Ahmedabad in Gujarat with Rs 1,010 crore from 18,260,021 passengers, and Mumbai CST with Rs 9,82 crore from 51,652,230 passengers, as per the data. In



addition to these NSG-1 stations, Pune railway station in Maharashtra and Anand Vihar in Delhi also have figured among 100 top earning stations. Pune registered

an annual earning of Rs 9,76 crore from 22,256,812 passengers and Anand Vihar recorded Rs 8,44 crore from 12,235,275 passengers.

According to the official assessment of earnings, 22 stations of NSG-1 are among 100 top in terms of revenue generation. The data shows that 16 stations of Northern Railway are among 100 top earning stations, followed by 15 stations of Southern Railway, 11 of Central Railway, 9 of East Central Railway, 7 of Eastern Railway, and 6 of Northern Central Railway.

# Delhi police unearth gun-making unit at UP's Meerut flat, two arrested

NEW DELHI. Delhi Police has dismantled a network of illegal supply of firearms and busted a factory in UP's Meerut where firearms were being manufactured and eventually supplied to the criminals of the capital, an official said on Sunday.

Apart from this, two accused including a supplier and owner of the factory of illegal weapons were placed under arrest.

Special Commissioner of Police (Special Cell) Devesh Chandra Srivastava said on an input, a team of Central Range (Crime) nabbed one Ikram, a Meerut resident, who came to Delhi to supply illegal weapons to some criminals. "Two country-made pistols and six live cartridges were recovered from his possession. A case under Arms Act was registered and he was arrested accordingly," Srivastava said.

On interrogation, the accused Ikram disclosed that he procured weapons from one Mashook Ali, also a Meerut resident.

"On the basis of technical surveillance and at the instance of accused Ikram, the team succeeded in apprehending Mashook Ali, from Meerut City," Srivastava said.



When put through sustained interrogation, the accused, Mashook Ali, revealed about an isolated flat in Kashi Ram Colony in Meerut, where a factory was set up by him for manufacturing illegal weapons. Immediately, the cops raided the place and found 14 country-made pistols, 41 barrels

and eight tools, which were used for manufacturing the illegal weapons. "Mashook Ali also confessed that he manufactured more than 80 country-made pistols," the officer said.

The officer further said the accused Mashook runs a mobile shop and was also found previously involved in many criminal cases of Arms Act, Cheating, Forgery Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Act, 2019 etc. Further probe is on, he added.

This neutralising of the network comes in the backdrop of many gun firing incidents in the national capital. On September 27, three people fired 20 rounds of gunshots inside a luxury car showroom in West Delhi. Then, the very next day, on September 28, a man fired three to four rounds outside a hotel in Mahipalpur. On the same day, there was another shooting in Nangloi, at a sweet shop.



# What are kids Reading?



Geronimo Stilton, Captain Underpants, Wimpy Kid, Percy Jackson...kids today have much to choose from.

Pranksters George Beard and Harold Hutchins are terrorised by their principal, the mean Benjamin Krupp. They get back, and how! They turn him into a reluctant superhero who wears just briefs and a cape! If you are a 10-year-old, you would have got the story by now. This is the tale of Captain Underpants, a hot favourite among pre-teens. Then, there's the adorable mouse who publishes 'The Rodent's Gazette'. He scouts around for news instead of cheese and craves a vacation. That's Geronimo Stilton. He also has a sister, Thea Stilton, who has a separate series in her name. There's a big smile on kids' faces as they read the squiggly text that literally shivers when Geronimo is afraid. Books for kids are big news now. There was a time when interest in books came down and technology turned temptress. But, authors such as J.K. Rowling hooked kids back to the page. Luckily, others

rushed in to meet the demand. Divya Chandran's sons Adhvik and Dhaman picked up the reading habit seeing their parents read. Today, her elder one reads National Geographic's NG Kids Magazine (for ages 6-14). There's also an NG Little Kids Magazine (for ages 3-6). "Adhvik loves reading about wildlife. So, I make it a point to pick up books on the subject. Dhaman likes The Berenstain Bears. When we let kids read books relating to the topics they are interested in, it keeps the reading habit alive," she says. But, yes, she does check if the books are age-appropriate. **Adventure is cool** J. Yashasvi finds Captain Underpants cool because it combines adventure, school life and an element of magic. His mother Nandini says she tries to ensure her son reads a mix of modern-day tales and vintage kids' books. So, Roald Dahl and Enid Blyton are a vital part of his reading list too. Of late, parents and schools are encouraging children to read, if only to keep them off electronic gadgets. Book

stores hold events for children. Online store Flipkart is working at initiatives such as book readings with famous children's authors, to draw in young readers, says Anil Goteti, director-retail. Niranjani Ramanathan, who runs JustBooks library in Coimbatore, says parents are keen on books that showcase Indian culture and tradition in an easy-to-read manner. Probably why, publications by Tulika Books, Karadi Tales and Amar Chitra Katha are very popular. "It helps that most new international titles are available here too." That way, children keep pace with what others in their age group are reading across the world. Niranjani says that a library helps because when children visit it, they end up seeing and picking up books they would have never been exposed to otherwise. Anu Vignesh's daughter Mayanka, a Class V student, is a huge fan of Enid Blyton. She's loves horses too, and so, an encyclopaedia on horses is popular on her

reading list. So are pre-teen books such as the St. Claire's series. Rema Giridhar's daughter Layanaya, 9, reads a lot of Amar Chitra Katha and Geronimo Stilton. "We allow her to read what she wants to. When she chooses a slightly higher read, we step in as censors, so that she reads the right books," she says. Abhirami, 15, is a voracious reader. She grew up abroad and so also reads books that are unfamiliar here. Her mother Vasanthi, an avid reader herself, says she has always encouraged Abhirami to read. "We have gently nudged her to try books a little higher than her level. This has ensured she reads all books, not just those she is used to or is comfortable with," she says. Thanks to this, Abhirami reads Jane Austen, Charles Dickens, Jerome K Jerome and PG Wodehouse. But, she also loves Asterix! Sometimes, children's reading habits rub off on adults. That's what happened

with Vasanthi. "Abhirami tells me about the new authors she's reading. It's lovely because these are authors who were not around when I was a kid. At any age, it's nice to read

kiddie books," she says, rushing off to read her daughter's copy of Jacqueline Wilson's Hetty Feather. "I've to return it tonight!" **What sells online** Anil Goteti of Flipkart says that Indian authors such as Ruskin Bond, R.K. Narayan and Sudha Murthy are amongst the most popular kids' authors. Adventure is a top seller, followed by the fantasy genre. And, despite the influx of new authors

and titles, Enid Blyton and R.K. Narayan are still a hit. **Top-Sellers** Ages 5 to 7 Geronimo Stilton, Roald Dahl, Captain Underpants, Wimpy Kid, Dr. Seuss Ages 8-10 Wimpy Kid, Famous Five, Hardy Boys, Nancy Drew, Amar Chitra Katha, Percy Jackson and Narnia Ages 11-15 Lord of The Rings, The Hunger Games, Calvin and Hobbes, Artemis Fowl, Tintin and Twilight

## Recipe: One pot

# Spanish rice and prawn



A one pot dish for those hurried afternoons  
Preparation time: 4 minutes  
**Cooking time: 16**  
**Serves: 4**  
**Ingredients:**  
1 onion, sliced  
1 red and 1 green pepper, de-seeded and sliced  
50g chorizo, sliced  
2 garlic cloves, crushed  
1 tsp olive oil  
250g basmati rice  
400g chopped tomatoes

in the prawns, with a splash more water if the rice is looking dry, then cook for another min until the prawns are just pink and the rice tender.



# Rabbit's Ruse

Lion was not very happy with his ministers. So he decided to test them. Would they pass the test?

A large, green forest, was ruled over by Lion — the undisputed king of the jungle. He wanted to give the impression that he was kind and benevolent. To win the trust of his subjects, he thought it would be a good idea if he selected his ministers from amongst them. After mulling over the idea for a long time, he chose Bear, Monkey and Rabbit to assist him. Bear represented the big animals, Monkey the medium-sized ones and Rabbit the small ones. This way, Lion hoped to achieve the right balance. **Honesty** Everything went well for some time. Then Lion realised that he could not kill any animals when Bear, Monkey and Rabbit were his ministers, because they would want to protect their own. So, once again he put on his thinking cap and pondered over the problem. "If I get rid of these three ministers, I can do what I please without being answerable to anyone," he thought. Very soon, he came up with an idea. He smiled broadly and his whiskers twitched excitedly. The plan was extremely simple. Lion called his ministers for a high level meeting. Greetings were exchanged and he requested them to be seated. Lion said, "You have been with me for a while now. I want to make sure that the high position you hold has not spoiled you. So I am going to test you." "What is the test?" asked the bewildered ministers.

"I am going to ask each of you a question. I want an honest answer. Will you promise to be absolutely honest?" "We will, we will," the three ministers chorused. "What is the question, Your Majesty?" Deciding to go in order of size, Lion turned to Bear. "Tell me, how does my mouth smell?" Honest Bear told lion the truth as promised. "It smells foul, Your Majesty." Lion gave a royal roar. "How dare you! This amounts to treason. Your position has gone to your head." The next instant lion jumped on Bear and killed him. Next he looked at Monkey and posed the same question. Monkey decided to be crafty, having witnessed the fate of the bear. "It smells as fresh as a rose," he lied. "You liar! Do you think I am a fool to be taken in by your flattery?" He grabbed Monkey by the neck and shook him till his teeth rattled. Then he killed him. Only Rabbit remained. Lion faced him and repeated the question. Rabbit sniffed and cleared his throat. "I am sorry, Your Majesty. I am unable to answer your question. I have a bad cold and am unable to smell anything. If you grant me a couple of days to recover, I can answer your question," he bluffed. "Honestly!" he added for good measure. Lion nodded his regal head and dismissed Rabbit. Delighted that his ruse had worked, Rabbit sped away. Needless to say that he never returned.



All people lamenting how kids these days don't read much, wake up and smell the coffee. Kids are very much reading, and a lot, because parents today are making an effort to ensure their kids start early and get hooked to reading by the time they can read independently. And it's a habit that seems to stay, once they get going. Mridula Charlu, a senior manager at an IT firm says it's been two years since their family of four took a library membership at their neighbourhood branch of Just Books "because we all love books. We used to go to the library once a week on Saturdays, now we are not so regular," she admits. She started reading books to her now nine-year-old daughter Arundhati when she was barely one. "And then while potty-training her, we gave her books to read to keep her entertained while she sat...that's where it really started, she laughs. "By the time she was three, she was reading independently. Now, I have to tell her to stop reading, go out and play. My husband and I read a lot as well, so I guess she picked the habit from us." Arundhati has a group of about six other classmates, who exchange books between themselves and read. Her son Agastya, now a little over four years, and Arundhati read every night before they go to bed. Some classics are also downloaded on the iPad for them to read. There may be other many encouraging factors too, apart from enthusiastic bookworm parents. The number of good libraries that allow books to be ordered from home and are delivered at the doorstep have increased. So have activities around books — new book launches are accompanied by storytelling sessions

for children. Many libraries conduct monthly activities for kids around a theme or book that could include painting, craft, making up their own stories — all of which lead kids towards more stories and more books. Divya Purandar is a familiar figure in Bangalore's bloggers' circles as the one who blogs at One Story A Day. It all started for Divya and her then three-year-old son Abhay when they were in America. She was bowled over by the books and library system there. She started this habit of reading her son one story a day and it's become an inseparable part of their life over the last four years. "Now he's picked up reading on his own and I get him books from early readers' series thrice a week," says Divya. She's a member of three libraries "just for him", and apart from borrowing, also buys him books every month. "He's not really a voracious reader and doesn't grab each and every thing I get him, but now I discover he's interested in reading books on adventure, cars, and mythology, especially Amar Chitra Katha." But why then are so many rueing that kids don't read? Mridula points out that there are two kinds of children — those that read and those that don't. Umesh Malhotra, CEO of Hippocampus library, says there are two categories of parents — those who are educated and have always believed in the power of reading, and those who are schooled and focus mostly on academics and struggle to realise the importance of the reading habit in their children's lives. "The average starting age of reader in our place is about 3.5 years and we have upward of 3,000 members. Many mothers bring their kids to our library when they are as young as one, and we have seen them evolve as readers till they are about seven. Parents have taught children the alphabet by the time they are three, and they specially take time out to make them read," he observes. Varsha Pillai, mother to Aadya, who's just a little over two, has been reading to her daughter since she was one. She started identifying things in books before she turned two. They graduated from hard board books, to touch and feel, to small stories like

# Taking baby reading Steps

the Baby Einstein series. Books are also great company for children on long journeys, she's realised. Varsha believes there are many takeaways to children learning to read early. "She is able to identify and recognise things around her. Recently we went to the Mysore zoo and she recognised a Toucan because she'd seen it in a book." Apart from going to the library regularly, Varsha also buys second-hand books that can be rough-used, and come at a much lower cost than rather expensive children's books otherwise.





NEWS BOX

Manchester United boss Erik ten Hag plays down pressure after Aston Villa draw

New Delhi. Manchester United manager Erik ten Hag reaffirmed his alignment with the club's senior management despite the team's dismal start to the season, following a 0-0 draw against Aston Villa on Sunday.

"We are all on board together, on one page, we know what we are working through it's a long-term process," Ten Hag said.



showed the belief and faith we have." A win would have relieved some of the pressure on Ten Hag, and United came close, with Bruno Fernandes almost breaking the deadlock in the second half when his long-range free kick struck the bar.

Mohsin's quest to rise above challenges with Honda Racing India

CHENNAI. The stage was set for IDEMITSU Honda India Talent Cup NSF250R's concluding race of the season. The technicians from the team were at it too, crossing out all the checklists required in order to ensure a smooth ride for the participants.

Having pocketed the overall title with a victory just 24 hours or so ago in the six-lap Race 1 of the fifth and final round, Mohsin could



afford to relax. But that didn't mean he wasn't willing to go full throttle in his last assignment as he was hunting for his eighth win of the season. However, he was denied by Savion Sabu, who displayed nerves of steel, to capture the 8-lap Race 2.

Honda Racing India, on their part, are cognizant of the challenges the riders face and have been looking to enhance their support in the near future. It's mainly performance-driven. Miss out on a race due to injury and that could hurt their chances of generating income.

Lebron, Bronny James create NBA history as 1st father-son duo to play together

LeBron James and his son Bronny created NBA history as they became the 1st father-son duo to play a match together. LeBron and his son created the historic moment when they stepped out on court for the pre-season game between LA Lakers and Phoenix Suns.



New Delhi. LeBron James and his son, Bronny, made NBA history on Sunday night by playing together for the first time during a pre-season game between the Los Angeles Lakers and the Phoenix Suns.

entered the game at the start of the second quarter, joining his father on the court. The crowd at Acrisure Arena in Coachella Valley erupted in cheers when Bronny's name was announced.

his 3-point attempt. Bronny was substituted after playing just over four minutes, and LeBron followed shortly after.

LeBron, beginning his 22nd season in the NBA at age 39, has long expressed a dream of sharing the court with one of his sons. This dream became a reality after the Lakers selected Bronny with the 55th pick in the 2024 NBA Draft.

California before declaring for the draft, had a remarkable journey, especially after recovering from a cardiac arrest over a year ago. Although he is expected to spend much of his rookie season developing with the South Bay Lakers in the G League, it's anticipated that he will play alongside his father in a regular-season game soon.

This rare occurrence mirrors other iconic father-son duos in North American sports. In baseball, Ken Griffey Sr. and Ken Griffey Jr. played together for the Seattle Mariners in the early 1990s, and hockey legend Gordie Howe shared the ice with his sons Marty and Mark for the WHA's Houston Aeros and the NHL's Hartford Whalers.

St Lucia Kings win maiden CPL title, beat Amazon Warriors by 6 wickets

- The Kings defeated Amazon Warriors by 6 wickets
Chase and Jones' 88-run stand gave Kings the win
Kings ended their 11-year wait for the title



New Delhi. After an 11-year wait, the Saint Lucia Kings claimed their first-ever Caribbean Premier League (CPL) title on September 6, defeating the defending champions, Guyana Amazon Warriors, in a thrilling final.

Formerly known as the St Lucia Zouks, the Kings had endured a long CPL history without success. In 2023, they finished third but were eliminated in the playoffs by the now-defunct Jamaica Tallawahs.

memorable performance to secure the championship. The final was marked by a remarkable fifth-wicket partnership between Roston Chase (39\*) and Aaron Jones (48\*), whose 88-run stand powered the Kings to victory.

17th overs to reduce the equation to 19 off 18 balls. They comfortably reached the target with 11 balls to spare, with the game ending anticlimactically on a wide bowled by Imran Tahir.

We've been really consistent throughout the competition. At one stage, I thought it was time to pack our bags, but we always believed in the depth of our squad.

Sidespin to overspin: Varun Chakravarthy talks secret to success

Gwalior. India spinner Varun Chakravarthy made his comeback to the national team after nearly three years. On his return, the spinner scalped three crucial wickets to script the downfall of Bangladesh's batting.

Speaking in the post-match press conference, Chakravarthy said that he was not bowling the traditional side-spin anymore, but had transitioned into an over-spin bowler. Over-spin is a weapon used by spinners to put additional revs on the ball, which dips the ball faster than usual due to the Magnus Effect.

IND vs BAN, 1st T20I: Highlights | Match Report

Bangladesh do not know how to score 180 runs: Najmul Shanto blasts batters

Gwalior. Bangladesh captain Najmul Shanto was not happy with his team's performance in the 1st T20I match against India. Bangladesh were hammered by 7 wickets in the first fixture of the 3-match series.

"I wouldn't say we played badly. We are a better team than this. We haven't done well in this format for a long time, but I don't believe we are such a bad team," said Najmul Shanto.

individual player. I think the batting unit didn't do well today. There will be aggression in the way we approach our scoring, but sometimes we have to select the



balls correctly. We will think about it, but we can't rush in changing our approach," Shanto said.

The Bangladesh captain blamed the conditions back at home stating that the team is so used to playing in 140-150-run conditions that they do not know how to score 180 runs in good batting conditions.

Bangladesh in fact, have breached the 180-run barrier only 4 times in the last 2 years, out of 45 matches played. The scores have come twice against Ireland and twice against Sri Lanka.

"We have the ability, but we have room for improvement in our skills. We have been batting in this way for the last ten years. Sometimes we do well. We have to make some changes, perhaps where we practice back home.



"It's a minute technical aspect of spin bowling, but it took me more than two years. I gradually tested it in TNPL and IPL. While the mental aspect also had to be worked on, the major chunk of effort I put in was on my technical side."

Originally, Chakravarthy had debuted for India in the run-up to the T20 World Cup 2021 but was dropped right after the team's unsuccessful campaign in the United Arab Emirates.

Women's T20 World Cup: Why India's semis chances look grim despite Pakistan win

India registered their first win of the Women's T20 World Cup 2024 over Pakistan, beating them by six wickets. However, they still have a lot to do to qualify for the semi final.

New Delhi. India finally opened their account in the Women's T20 World Cup 2024 as they beat Pakistan by six wickets in their second match on Sunday, October 6 at Dubai International Cricket Stadium.

In reply, India chased down the target in 18.5 overs courtesy of good contributions from Shafali Verma (32 off 35) and captain Harmanpreet Kaur (29\* off 24). Arundhati

Reddy was adjudged Player of the Match as she registered her career best figures of 3/19 in four overs. Following their victory, India are in the fourth spot in the five-team group with one win from two matches having a net run rate of -1.217.

Hence, India still have the worst net run rate among teams who've won in Group A with New Zealand (+2.900), Australia (+1.908) and Pakistan (+0.555) sitting above them.



The Harmanpreet Kaur-led side will next face Sri Lanka in their third fixture on Wednesday, October 9 at Dubai International Cricket Stadium.

The Asia Cup Champions are yet to register their first win of the tournament, having been hammered by Pakistan and Australia. The

Women in Blue will desperately need to beat Sri Lanka by a huge margin to get their net run rate into positive before they face the defending champions Australia in their last fixture on October 13.

If India don't improve their net run rate in the next game, they will have to depend on New Zealand to also beat Australia and win all of their matches. In such a scenario, India will directly advance to the semi-finals by winning their last two fixtures against Sri Lanka and Australia.



# Natasa Stankovic

**Announced First Project Post-Separation; Mamitha Baiju Shares BTS Photo With Thalapathy Vijay**

Months after her separation from India cricketer Hardik Pandya, Natasa Stankovic is ready to let go of the past and move forward, with her major focus being on her professional career. The Serbian model went back to her homeland following her separation four years after the marriage. However, upon returning to India, Natasa filmed her first project. On Saturday, Tere Krke, alongside singer Preet Inder.

Thalapathy Vijay's decision to quit acting to concentrate on his political career has undeniably disappointed his die-hard fans. One of his many fans who were disheartened was Malayalam actress Mamitha Baiju. During a promotional event of her last release, Premalu, she expressed regret at not being able to share screen space with Vijay and had acknowledged being a fan of him since Ghilli. The interview had gone widely viral. And that is probably

why the makers of Vijay's last film have roped in Mamitha to play a pivotal role in the film. Actor Shivaji Satam, best known for portraying ACP Pradyuman in CID, recently reflected on a heartfelt moment with Sanjay Dutt during a challenging chapter in Dutt's life. Facing accusations tied to the 1993 Mumbai blasts, Dutt confided in Satam while juggling exhausting court hearings by day and late-night film shoots. Though ultimately acquitted of charges related to the bombings, Dutt was sentenced to six years in prison under the Arms Act in 2007 for illegal possession of weapons.

Sujoy Ghosh's Kahaani (2012) was a turning point in his career. The filmmaker showed his ability to create a gripping narrative on a modest budget. After facing setbacks with previous projects like Jhankaar Beats and Aladin, Ghosh poured his heart into Kahaani, which turned out to be a massive success, earning Rs 79.20 crore globally on a budget of just Rs 15 crore, according to Sacnilk. Ranveer Singh previously announced his next big film with Aditya Dhar. The untitled film boasts a stellar cast including Sanjay Dutt, R. Madhavan, Akshaye Khanna and Arjun Rampal. Now, a Peeping Moon report claims that 19-year-old Sara Arjun has been cast as Ranveer's love interest in the film.



# Nita Ambani

**Sends a Special Message To Manish Malhotra For His New Store: 'My Good Friend...'**

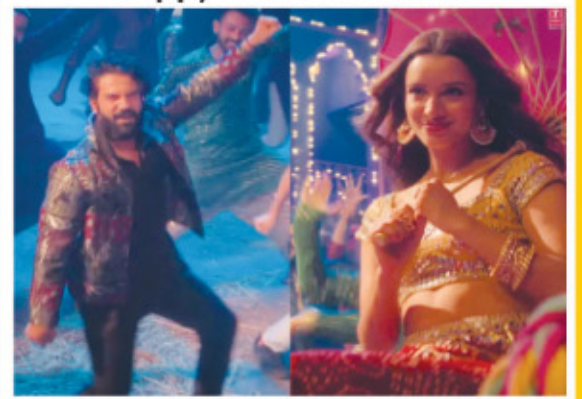
Nita Ambani attended Manish Malhotra's store launch on Saturday night at Jio World Plaza. The businesswoman looked stunning in a green saree and carried a Hermes Kelly handbag that caught everyone's attention. While she posed for the paparazzi, Nita Ambani gave a sweet shoutout to Manish. In a video shared by a paparazzo, Nita Ambani was seen telling, "I am here to wish my good friend, Manish Malhotra all the very best for his new show at the Jio World Plaza." Watch the video below:

Besides Nita Ambani, the store launch was attended by veteran actress Rekha, Bollywood starlet Kriti Sanon and soon-to-debut star Shanaya Kapoor. For the grand occasion, Rekha was seen wearing a beige saree. She posed for the cameras before she went to wish Manish. A video also showed Manish personally escorting Rekha. He was seen holding her hand as they walked past the cameras. Meanwhile, Kriti looked gorgeous in red. The actress draped a shimmering red saree and her backless blouse had the fashion police impressed. Also attending the launch was Shilpa Shetty and Karan Johar. The actress looked gorgeous in white and was also seen catching up with Karan.

Vijay Varma was also present on the occasion. The IC 814: Kandahar Hijack star was seen wearing a stylish pink and black Manish Malhotra shirt with a pair of pants. He styled the outfit with a chic pair of sunglasses.



**Vicky Aur Vidya Ka Woh Wala Video: Rajkumar Rao, Triptii Dimri Groove To Pawan Singh's Peppy Track Chumma**

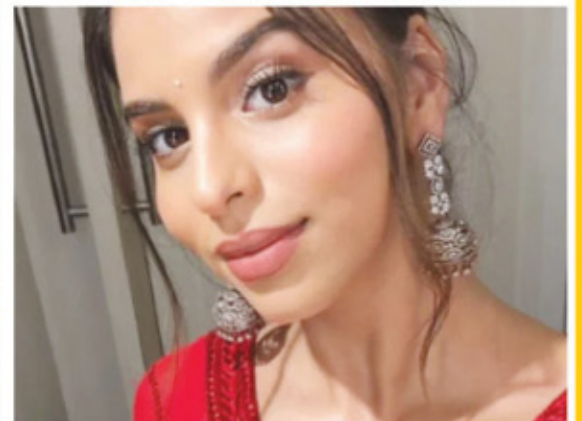


Rajkumar Rao and Triptii Dimri bring their charm to the latest track from their upcoming film Vicky Aur Vidya Ka Woh Wala Video. The song, titled Chumma, is a high-energy number sung by Pawan Singh with music composed by Sachin-Jigar, and it's poised to become the next desi party anthem. In the music video, Rajkumar's character eagerly waits for a glimpse of Triptii, as they both dance to the upbeat track. With vibrant performances by Pawan Singh, Rupali Jagg, Rupesh Mishra, and Mansa Jimmy, this song is designed to get listeners on their feet. Pawan Singh, who lends his voice to the song, also makes a special appearance, joining Rajkumar and Triptii as they dance with a lively group of background performers.

Vicky Aur Vidya Ka Woh Wala Video is a comedy centered on a lost sex tape of a newly-married couple in the '90s. Alongside Rajkumar and Triptii, the film stars Mallika Sherawat, Vijay Raaz, Rakesh Bedi, Archana Puran Singh, Tiku Talsania, and Mukesh Tiwari. The trailer teases the couple's frantic efforts, aided by their family, to recover their "suhagraat CD" in the scenic town of Rishikesh.

The film is set to hit theaters on October 11, where it will face competition from Alia Bhatt's Jigra. In a recent conversation with Mid-day, Raaj Shandilya said, "The idea was that a huge population of our country is coy, yet children are born every second. We are living in a world where any video can go viral within seconds. So, we decided to make a film for the middle class that has a message with a lot of humour and romance. I also wanted to explore the plight of the people at whose expense we laugh. [At the same time], we wanted to explore how people from small towns facing this dilemma would feel." Shaandilya also talked about his writing process and mentioned that he writes his comedies keeping the audience's reception in mind. He continued, "When I am writing, I am conscious that it should be something that the majority enjoys and no one should get hurt."

**Puppy Videobombs Suhana Khan's Makeup Tutorial, Check Out Her Reaction**



The festive season is officially here and Suhana Khan is spreading the joy by sharing some quick makeup tips perfect for the celebrations. In her recent video, Shah Rukh Khan's daughter shared the secret behind her hit festive looks. But it was her pet dog who stole the limelight by videobombing right in the beginning. When Suhana was about to start the tutorial, her furry friend ran into the room and jumped on her lap to see what was going on. The Archies actor was unable to resist, as she paused to play with her dog. She was seen laughing and cuddling the pooch after which she gently took her pet out of the room and finally continued with the tutorial. The video featured Suhana in a gorgeous red sequin saree by Manish Malhotra. The festive season is officially here and Suhana Khan is spreading the joy by sharing some quick makeup tips perfect for the celebrations. In her recent video, Shah Rukh Khan's daughter shared the secret behind her hit festive looks. But it was her pet dog who stole the limelight by videobombing right in the beginning. When Suhana was about to start the tutorial, her furry friend ran into the room and jumped on her lap to see what was going on. The Archies actor was unable to resist, as she paused to play with her dog. She was seen laughing and cuddling the pooch after which she gently took her pet out of the room and finally continued with the tutorial. The video featured Suhana in a gorgeous red sequin saree by Manish Malhotra. Even though Suhana was running late for a party, she managed to share her quick and easy three-step makeup routine with her followers. While applying her makeup, she mentioned that many people were messaging her to find out where she was, but she was determined to complete her tutorial. Sharing the video on Instagram, she wrote, "When you say you're reaching in 5 but you're still at home curling your hair. I know a thing or two about getting ready in a rush, and here's a snapshot of what it looks like." Next, Suhana Khan is gearing up for her upcoming action-thriller King, marking her first with her father and Bollywood superstar, Shah Rukh Khan. The project has seen a lot of excitement among fans, who are eager to witness the camaraderie between the father-daughter duo on screen together for the first time.