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Arvind Kejriwal targeted in attempted liquid attack during 'padyatra' in Delhi's Greater Kailash

Sanjay Kumar New Delhi, Nov 30: Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convener Arvind Kejriwal was targeted in an attempted liquid attack during his



'padyatra' in Delhi's Greater Kailash area on Saturday. A man from the crowd threw a liquid at Kejriwal, who was walking with Greater Kailash MLA Saurabh Bharadwaj in a narrow lane. The security staff quickly overpowered the attacker and handed him over to the police. The police are currently trying to

ascertain the nature of the liquid thrown at Kejriwal. The attacker's identity is also yet to be confirmed. AAP has condemned the attack, criticising the BJP-led central government for the deteriorating law and order situation in the national capital. "If a former CM is not safe in Delhi, then where will the common man go?" the party asked in a statement. Bharadwaj alleged that the attacker is directly linked to BJP and posted a Facebook profile photo of the alleged accused. "BJP is frustrated as it has failed to maintain law and order in Delhi. BJP got Arvind Kejriwal attacked for raising questions on law and order. Amit Shah's failure is known to all," the party statement read.

Swearing-in of Maharashtra govt on December 5

Simmi Kaur Babbar Mumbai, Nov 30: The new Mahayuti government will be sworn in on December 5 in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi at Azad Maidan in Mumbai, state BJP unit said. "The oath-taking ceremony of the Mahayuti Government in Maharashtra will be held in the presence of Honourable Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji on Thursday, December 5, 2024, at 5 PM at Azad Maidan, Mumbai," state BJP chief Chandrashekhar Bawankule stated on X on Saturday evening. The Mahayuti comprises BJP, Shiv Sena led by Eknath Shinde, and NCP headed by Ajit Pawar. The next chief minister of Maharashtra will be from the BJP and there will be two Deputy Chief Ministers from other Mahayuti constituents, NCP chief Ajit Pawar said in Pune on Saturday. The Mahayuti, which comprises the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Shiv Sena led by Eknath Shinde, and Nationalist Congress



Party (NCP) headed by Ajit Pawar, registered a resounding victory in the Maharashtra assembly elections. By winning 132 seats, the BJP emerged as the single largest party, while Shiv Sena and NCP won 57 and 41 seats respectively. However, government formation has been delayed and suspense over the next CM continues. Ajit Pawar was

in Pune to meet 95-year-old social activist Dr Baba Adhav, who held a protest against the alleged misuse of electronic voting machines (EVMs) in the recent Maharashtra assembly polls. When asked who will be the chief minister of the state, Pawar said, "The state will have one chief minister from BJP and two deputies from other two parties of Mahayuti. Tentatively, the oath taking ceremony will take place on December 5. We have decided to move ahead with a strong vision." State BJP chief Chandrashekhar Bawankule on Saturday evening announced that the new Mahayuti government will be sworn in at Azad Maidan in south Mumbai on the evening of December 5 in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's presence. While there was no announcement yet on who would be the chief minister, BJP sources said Devendra Fadnis, who has been chief minister twice and was deputy CM in the last Eknath Shinde-led government, was the frontrunner for the top post. Ajit Pawar was another Deputy CM in the Shinde-led government.

Case against ED officer in Tamil Nadu: SC bats for striking balance between competing aspects

ST Correspondent

New Delhi, Nov 30: The Supreme Court has highlighted the need to strike a balance between the competing aspects in cases where officers of central agencies were probed by the state police. The top court was hearing a plea by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) seeking transfer of the probe in a case against its officer Ankit Tiwari, who was arrested by the Tamil Nadu Directorate of Vigilance and Anti-Corruption (DVAC) for alleged bribery, to the Central Bureau of Investigation. Observing that an accused has a right to fair investigation, a Bench of Justices Surya Kant and Ujjal Bhuyan said in a federal structure, it has to be ensured that each component retains its identity and



jurisdiction. Referring to a hypothetical situation, the Bench said if a state decides to arbitrarily arrest the Central Government officials, "this may create a constitutional crisis". The Bench observed in such a scenario, if it was said that the state would have the exclusive power to arrest, it could be dangerous to the federal structure. However, the bench said denying the state police the power to probe a case within its jurisdiction would also not be desirable. "We will consider the arguments from both sides to strike a balance between these competing aspects," the Bench said. It said that though an accused cannot have a say in the probe, he has a right to fair investigation. The counsel, appearing for Tamil Nadu, told the bench that Tiwari was caught red-handed accepting bribe and the probe into the case was almost complete. He said the police had not filed the chargesheet yet as the apex court is seized of the ED's plea. The Bench has posted the matter for hearing in January. On March 20, the top court had granted interim bail to Tiwari. While hearing the ED's plea earlier, the apex court had mulled over formulating a fair and transparent pan-India mechanism for the investigation of cases involving officials of the central probe agencies and state governments to eliminate apprehensions about political vendetta thwarting probes.

3 Hindu temples vandalised in Bangladesh's Chattogram

Dhaka, Nov 30: In a disturbing incident three Hindu temples in Chattogram, Bangladesh, were vandalised by a mob shouting slogans, amid ongoing protests and violence in the region. The attack occurred at around 2.30 pm on Friday in the Harish Chandra Munsef Lane area, targeting the Santaneshwar Matri Temple, the Shoni Temple, and the Shantaneshwari Kalibari Temple. According to reports from BDNews24.com, a group of several hundred individuals, after attending the Friday prayers, descended upon the temples, throwing bricks and causing damage to the Shoni Temple and the gates of the other two temples. The temple authorities confirmed the extent of the damage, which included broken gates and other vandalised structures. Kotwali Police Station chief Abdul Karim confirmed the attack and stated that the assailants made deliberate attempts to damage the temples. Tapan Das, a permanent member of the Santaneshwar Matri Temple management committee, recounted the harrowing events, stating that the attackers began chanting anti-Hindu and anti-ISKCON slogans as they arrived in large numbers. The violence has been brewing in Chattogram since the arrest of Chinmoy Krishna Das, a former member of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), who was detained on charges of disrespecting the Bangladesh national flag.

PM Modi 'biased' towards Adani, discriminating against Wayanad landslide victims: Rahul

Navdeep Singh Sahni

Kozhikode (Kerala), Nov 30: Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Saturday attacked Prime Minister Narendra Modi by accusing him of being "biased" towards industrialist Gautam Adani and of discriminating against Wayanad landslides victims by not providing them the due support. Rahul hit out at Modi at a joint public meeting at Mukkam here with his sister and Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi who is visiting the Wayanad Lok Sabha constituency for the first time after her huge maiden electoral victory from there. The LoP in the Lok Sabha alleged that Modi was treating Adani differently from the people of India, despite his indictment in the US, even though the Constitution says everyone should be treated equally. "PM Modi says it does not matter if Adani



has been indicted in the US and called a criminal there, in India we will not indict him," Rahul claimed. He further accused Modi of discriminating against the people of Wayanad, alleging that he was not willing to provide them the support which they were due. "This is the atmosphere in which we are operating. It is the feelings that people have toward us that gives us confidence and protects us," he said. Rahul, after paying tribute to the vic-

tims of the landslides, said his party and the UDF are standing with the people who lost family members, property and suffered in the tragedy. "Unfortunately, we are not in government and therefore, we cannot do what a government can do. So, I told my sister and (AICC general secretary) K C Venugopal that every member of the Congress and the UDF should put pressure on the government of Kerala to help the victims of the landslides," he said. He said his sister's win from the Wayanad LS seat indicates that the people have placed their faith and trust in them to represent the hill constituency in the Parliament. He also expressed confidence that "we (Congress-led opposition) will defeat the ideology of the BJP" which behaves arrogantly and allegedly spreads hate and divisiveness. "The fight is to protect the Constitution which says everyone should be treated equally," Rahul said.

Manipur not like Mizoram, we joined Union of India with defined boundaries

Tejinder Kaur Babbar

Imphal, Nov 30: A day after the Manipur government urged Mizoram CM Lalduhoma to demonstrate "better statesmanship" by being a "good neighbour" rather than fuelling hatred through "unwarranted comments", Chief Minister N Biren Singh on Saturday said Manipur is not like Mizoram, "which was once just a district in Assam". Speaking at a function for construction of infrastructure to relocate the Assam Rifles from the premises of the historic Langthabal Old Palace, Singh said, "Manipur is not like Mizoram. We have a written history of 2,000 years. Manipur merged with the Union of India as a single entity in 1949. Our boundaries were not newly created but we joined with the Union with intact boundaries." The Manipur CM's reaction came in the backdrop of a recent interview given by Lalduhoma to a national daily in which he said Singh was a liability for the

state, its people and the BJP, and even President's Rule is preferable compared to his administration. "Assam Rifles is here to serve the nation. They are not our enemies. We all are Indian citizens. The gap can be bridged through interactions



between commanders, CSOs, and intellectuals. Our common enemy is located in foreign territories, not within. The paramilitary force can deal with insurgents or unlawful activities as they see fit, but not

everyone is an insurgent," the CM said. "People ask, 'What is the Chief Minister doing?' Can the CM go and engage in firing? The CM makes policy plans—how to identify illegal immigrants, how to cancel the Free Movement Regime, and how to implement the NRC. We will never rest until we have clearly safeguarded the entire land of Manipur and its indigenous people," Singh asserted. The CM asserted that the conflict since May 3 last year is not due to corruption by the government but because of measures taken to protect the original inhabitants of the land and address the distorted histories of the state. "Naturally, those who once thrived on the drug trade will be upset with the government and against me," he added. Singh also thanked Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Assam Rifles authorities for agreeing to relocate their camp from Langthabal Old Palace.

He said, "The Langthabal Palace is a historic place. The Assam Rifles has been stationed in the state for more than 100 years for security reasons. They cannot shift immediately. Major General Ravroop and the DG understand this well. They took the demands of the people for the relocation of the force from the old palace very seriously, as it is a historical site and very close to the university campus." Later, talking to reporters, Singh said, "I would like to thank Union Home Minister Amit Shah, IGAR, and Assam Rifles authorities. They agreed to vacate the Langthabal Old Palace, which is the second palace of the state, and relocate to another area. The people had been demanding the relocation of the Assam Rifles from the old palace, but it did not materialise due to a communication gap between the Assam Rifles and the state government. I am very grateful to the Assam Rifles for agreeing to shift. This is an achievement for the government." Asked about statements made by the Mizoram CM in relation to Manipur,

Parliament must function in broader interest of people: Mayawati

Naresh Malhotra

Lucknow, Nov 30: Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) president Mayawati on Saturday called on the Centre and the Opposition to ensure that the Winter Session of Parliament focuses on the country's pressing problems rather than partisan clashes. The former Uttar Pradesh chief minister's appeal stemmed from controversies, such as allegations against the Adani Group and the Sambhal mosque survey dispute, which led to disruption in proceedings in both houses of Parliament this week. "Both the government and opposition should ensure that the ongoing Winter Session of Parliament focuses on the country's pressing problems rather than partisan clashes," Mayawati said, according to a BSP statement issued here. "Parliament must function in the broader interest of people. Both the ruling party and the opposition must demonstrate seriousness to address the challenges facing the nation," she added. The BSP supremo on Saturday addressed a meeting of senior party leaders from Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand in Lucknow and stressed on

them the need for Dalits and Ambedkarite communities to unite in their struggle for political empowerment. She stressed that the fight for the "master key to power" must intensify to free the society from the grip of "casteist and communal" forces, according to an official statement. Mayawati reviewed the party's organisa-



tional progress and directed the officials to address shortcomings at the district and divisional levels. She hit out at the BJP, accusing it of diverting public attention from pressing issues like unemployment, poverty and infla-

tion by using divisive tactics similar to the previous Congress governments. "The BJP's promises during the elections are forgotten once in power, leaving fundamental issues unresolved," Mayawati said. Mayawati also slammed Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath-led government for prioritising religious agendas over constitutional responsibilities. She emphasised that economic struggles, unemployment and lack of education continue to affect millions in Uttar Pradesh and neighbouring Uttarakhand. "The government's failure to fulfil its responsibilities has pushed the public into deeper poverty and backwardness," she said. Speaking on the legacy of Dr BR Ambedkar, Mayawati reiterated the BSP's commitment to his vision of a welfare-oriented and egalitarian society. She announced plans for programmes on December 6 to honour Ambedkar's contributions. The BSP supporters will gather at prominent sites in Uttar Pradesh, like the Ambedkar Memorial in Lucknow and the Dalit Prerna Sthal in Noida, while similar events will take place across other states. Mayawati also addressed the challenges posed by the opposition parties, urging the BSP workers to prepare for electoral battles with renewed vigour.

3 Hindu temples vandalised in Bangladesh's Chattogram

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2.30 pm on Friday in the Harish Chandra Munsef Lane area, targeting the Santaneshwar Matri Temple, the Shoni Temple, and the Shantaneshwari Kalibari Temple. According to reports from BDNews24.com, a group of several hundred individuals, after attending the Friday prayers, descended upon the temples, throwing bricks and causing damage to the Shoni Temple and the gates of the other two

temples. The temple authorities confirmed the extent of the damage, which included broken gates and other vandalised structures. Kotwali Police Station chief Abdul Karim confirmed the attack and stated that the assailants made deliberate attempts to damage the temples. Tapan Das, a permanent member of the Santaneshwar Matri Temple management committee, recounted the harrowing events, stating that the attackers began chanting anti-Hindu and anti-ISKCON slogans as they arrived in large numbers. The violence has been brewing in Chattogram since the arrest of Chinmoy Krishna Das, a former member of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), who was detained on charges of disrespecting the Bangladesh national flag. The protests and unrest surrounding his arrest have escalated tensions in the region. Tapan Das further revealed that the temple authorities did not engage with the attackers during the assault, and instead, they called for military assistance as the situation worsened.

Kerala police takes down 18k cyber finance fraud websites

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: In an indication of the wide net that cyber financial criminals have cast, the cyber division of the state police took down about 18,000 websites and 12,000 social media accounts involved in malicious activities in the last one year. Highly-placed sources said investigators removed 18,609 websites and 11,948 social media accounts from the cyberspace after serving notices to the domain registrar and social media platforms, respectively. An official involved in the operations said, "Fake e-commerce sites, websites that ran trading and job scams and sites that hosted malicious apps were among those that were taken down." Cyber fraudsters swindled a whopping Rs 635 crore from Keralites until October 28 this year, which is three times the amount from last year. With two more months left, the figure is expected to touch Rs 800 crore this year. Despite their best efforts, enforcement authorities could retrieve only about Rs 87.5 crore of the total money lost.

In all, nearly one lakh incidents of cyber financial fraud came to light in the state this year, while around 32,000 cases were registered. In about 3,050 cases, the amount swindled exceeded Rs 1 lakh. An analysis done by the police had revealed that most victims fell for trading scams (1,157), followed by job scams (1,002) and courier scams (211). Victim profiling done in cases where the amount lost was over Rs 1 lakh revealed that private employees (613), homemakers (338), businesspersons (319), NRIs (224), IT professionals (218), doctors (115), defence personnel (53), engineers (46), farmers (21) and priests (8) were among those conned.

Hirakud & Satkosia to be developed as iconic destinations of global standards

The ministry has approved the highest interest-free loans worth Rs 199.89 crore to the state for development of these two sites.

BHUBANESWAR: Two tourist spots in Odisha have been selected by the Centre to be developed as iconic tourist destinations of global standards. Hirakud and Satkosia are among the 40 selected sites from 23 states and UTs that have been approved by the Ministry of Tourism and Culture for development of tourism infrastructure under the Special Assistance to States/UTs for Capital Investment (SASCI) scheme.



Built across Mahanadi River, Hirakud Dam is one of the first major multipurpose river valley projects started in the country after Independence. Over the years, the longest earthen dam of the world has emerged as a major tourist destination for its engineering marvel. On the other hand, Satkosia is known for its biodiversity and a paradise for nature and wildlife lovers. It is the meeting point of two bio-geographic regions of the country - the Deccan

Peninsula and the Eastern Ghats. The ministry has approved the highest interest-free loans worth Rs 199.89 crore to the state for the development of these two sites. Similarly, Rs 199.17 crore, Rs 199.3 crore and Rs 198.54 crore have been approved for two sites each in Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Meghalaya respectively. Sources said the long term interest-free loan has been approved for a period of 50 years for comprehensive development of the

iconic tourist centres, branding and marketing at global scale. It will help in the growth of the economy by creating employment opportunities through sustainable tourism projects. For the projects, the state government will provide land free from all encumbrances without any cost. Agencies capable of development, management and bringing in expertise of world-class tourist assets and experiences will be roped in for the two projects. From decongesting the sites and integrating advanced technologies to promoting sustainable practices and enhancing visitor experiences, a host of measures will be undertaken as part of the scheme.

The projects will be designed for sustainable operations and maintenance to ensure that the tourist experience and services remain safe, attractive and enjoyable for both domestic and foreign visitors. Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for prioritising the tourism sector through the SASCI scheme. "Odisha is proud to have Hirakud and Satkosia included in this visionary initiative. These projects will undoubtedly elevate Odisha's prominence on Bharat's tourism map," he said.

Sabarimala sees 54 per cent surge in devotees; revenue touches Rs 63 crore

PATHANAMTHITTA: In just 12 days since the Sabarimala temple opened for the Mandalam-Makaravilakku pilgrimage season, it witnessed a 54 per cent increase in devotees compared to last year. Over 10 lakh devotees have visited Sabarimala since Vrishchikam 1. The highest crowd was witnessed on Thursday with 87,999 pilgrims.

This surge in the number of devotees also led to a significant boost in revenue for the temple and the TDB. According to TDB president P S Prashant, over 3.5 lakh more pilgrims visited Sabarimala compared to last year, generating a revenue of over Rs 63 crore. Aravana sales alone contributed to over Rs 28 crore, a significant increase of Rs 9.5 crore from the previous year. Additionally, 3.5 lakh more appams were sold, totalling Rs 39 lakh, surpassing last year's numbers.

Smooth darshan despite increased crowd

The TDB president said that it is an achievement that, despite the large number of devotees compared to last year, the efforts to ensure smooth darshan bore fruit. Highlighting the new season with almost no complaints he said that the support provided by the



chief minister and ministers was vital, in addition to the joint efforts of more than twenty different government departments and agencies. He was speaking at a press conference held at the Sannidhanam Conference Hall along with Board members A Aji Kumar and G Sundaresan.

Emerging statistics

Compared to the last Mandalam season, there has been an increase in revenue with a hike of over Rs 15.89 crore as per the figures for the first 12 days. The total income generated during this period was over Rs 63.01 crore. A huge

increase in the sale of appam and aravana has also been recorded in this pilgrimage season.

Through the sale of aravana, the hill shrine earned as many as Rs 28.93 crore in twelve days compared to the previous period's collection of Rs 19.4 crore.

This is an increase of Rs 9.53 crore. Appam garnered an additional revenue of over Rs 39 lakh. Appam sales marked a new record at Rs 3.53 crore this season, compared to the previous sale of Rs 3.13 crore.

Concerns

The TDB president pointed out that the thantri has already clarified that throwing clothes in the Pampa river and rolling coconuts at Malikappuram are not part of Sabarimala rituals. The board is trying to create maximum awareness among the devotees and also planning to appoint staff to prevent such practices. The Guruswamis, the group leaders, across the states will be informed about this, he said. About the successful implementation of Virtual Queue, he said that as many as eight counters have been started in Pampa alone to allow the maximum number of devotees to enter through spot booking. Devotees will only need to carry their Aadhaar card, he said.

Tamil Nadu native collapses, dies

A pilgrim from Tamil Nadu collapsed and died of heart attack at Sabarimala temple on Friday. According to officials, Anbazhagan, 65, who was standing in line at the queue complex at Sannidhanam for darshan around 3am on Friday suddenly collapsed. Though he was immediately rushed to the Sannidhanam dispensary, his life could not be saved. Three pilgrims had died of heart attack on Wednesday and Thursday.

Devotees upset over Palani municipality levying fees for parking vehicles

DINDIGUL: Devotees visiting the renowned Palani temple have expressed severe displeasure over the parking fees levied on their vehicles by the municipality authorities. While Rs 70 is charged for parking cars for up to 24 hours, the rate increases to Rs 100 for vans, Rs 115 for trucks and Rs 150 for buses. However, the officials from Palani municipality maintained that this is not a parking fee, but a 'toll' fee. Sources said that over 50,000 devotees reach Palani town daily and the majority of them use commercial vehicles, which subsequently get parked in the municipality-owned Andavar Park, Devar Park, Aruljyothi Vidhi, Thiru Avinankudi, Ayyam Point Road Junction, Itumbankulam, Iteri Road or Valliappa Garden.

As per a court order, vehicles are not allowed on the entire girivalam path, and as a result, vehicles are parked on either side of the road inside Palani Municipality. Since the two free-parking spaces near Palani temple for devotees are always packed to the rafters with vehicles, the remaining ones have to rely on the municipality spaces by paying the one-time fee which is valid for 24 hours. The number of vehicles in these places skyrockets during Karthikai, Margazhi and Thai months. Speaking to an official from Palani municipality said, "The civic body is reeling under severe financial difficulties. Salaries of conservancy staff eat up around 72% of the municipality's revenue. It must also be noted that the visiting devotees contribute significantly to the waste generated here. Besides, this isn't a new fee. It is just a 'toll' fee which we have been collecting from tourists and devotees over the years. Just that we are strictly implementing it in the past two weeks."



Elderly couple, son found murdered inside farmhouse in Tiruppur

TIRUPPUR: An elderly couple and their son were murdered by an unidentified gang at their farmhouse inside a coconut grove at Semalaigoundanpalayam in Tiruppur late on Thursday. The deceased were identified as Deivasikamani (78), his wife Alamelu (a) Almathal (75), and son Senthilkumar (46). While eight sovereigns have gone missing from the house, police are looking into possible property-related disputes in the murder. According to police, farmer Deivasikamani was living with his wife in Semalaigoundanpalayam. The couple's only son Senthilkumar was residing with his wife Kavitha (30) and their two children at Saravanampatti as he was



working with a private IT company in Coimbatore. On Friday, the family had planned to participate in a function at a relative's house. To take his parents for the

function along with him, Senthilkumar had come to Semalaigoundanpalayam and the three had slept at their home on Thursday. Early on Friday, Vazhupuraan, a barber, had gone to the house to offer his service as per Deivasikamani's instruction the previous day. When Vazhupuraan went there, he allegedly saw Deivasikamani fighting for his life in a pool of blood outside the house with severe head injuries. The shocked barber rushed into the house and found Amalathal and Senthilkumar beaten to death. On information, the Avinashipalayam police rushed to the spot. The bodies were sent to Tiruppur Government Medical College Hospital for

autopsy.

"The family owns 14.5 acres of farmland. Their house is located in the middle of a coconut grove of about 4.5 acres. There are no houses nearby. There are no surveillance cameras in the area. Those who know that an elderly couple lives their alone may have been involved in the murder," a police officer said. AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami and BJP president K Annamalai condemned the incident and slammed TN government over deteriorating law and order situation. Speaking to reporters, Tiruppur City Police Commissioner S Lakshmi said, "Vehicle inspections are under way across TN. Seven special teams have been formed."

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Woman Maoist with Rs 2L reward arrested from Odisha forest

As a close aide of top leader Uday, she was involved in several Maoist violence incidents in Odisha, Chhattisgarh, and Andhra Pradesh.

MALKANGIRI: Security forces on Friday arrested a 29-year-old woman Maoist who was carrying a reward of ₹2 lakh on her head from Kurti forest within MV-29 police limits. The cadre, Anti Madvi alias Lakey was produced before mediapersons at the district police office in the presence of DIG (SWR) Niti Sekhar and other officers. Sekhar said Lakey was apprehended from the forest during a search operation which was initiated basing on intelligence inputs on her presence in the area. During interrogation, Lakey said she was engaged in a logistics operation in the area. A native of Pulhar village within Jangla police limits at Bijapur district of Chhattisgarh, Lakey had joined the CPI (M)'s platoon no 12 in 2017 under the leadership of Sukram (DCM) of West Bastar division. She worked in the protection team of top Maoist leader Uday and carried a self loading rifle. As a close aide of Uday she was involved in a number of Maoist violence incidents in Odisha, Chhattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh.

Sekhar said basing on intelligence inputs, the then Malkangiri SP on October 10, 2021 had launched

an operation with DVF and SOG personnel at Jajbatta forest near Katuapadar village within Mathili police limits. The team came under heavy fire near Jajbatta reserve forest. Three Maoist cadres Anil alias Muka Sodi, Marri Chinna Rao and Soni alias Paro Vekko were killed in the exchange of fire. During course of investigation it was ascertained that Maoists including Udaya, Suresh, Ramesh, Mahesh, Sushila, Muni, Dashri, Laxman, Rajesh, Kesa, Gangi, Swapna, Tulsi, Tinku, Santu, Naveen along with Lakey were among those who attacked the security forces but managed to escape.

Lakey was also wanted for her involvement in a series of crimes across Odisha, Chhattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh. She was involved in an exchange of fire in Tulsi and Daldali villages within Mathili police limits in the district in October, 2021, another encounter near Esumar village in Bijapur district of Chhattisgarh in 2018, exchange of fire near Eram village in Chhattisgarh in April, 2019 and an encounter near Tigalmeta village within Mampa police limits in Andhra Pradesh in 2021.

Rourkela police drive to bring fugitives to task

ROURKELA: In a first, Rourkela police have embarked on a week-long drive for mass proclamation of fugitives. The fugitives have been warned that their movable and immovable properties will be confiscated if they fail to appear before court on time. The drive initiated in the backdrop of sharp criticism of police over collapsing law and order situation was launched on Thursday and envisages to complete the court ordered proclamation process against 291 fugitives by December end. The move seeks to send a stern message to criminals and anti-social elements on consequences for breaking laws and also simultaneously execute pending non-bailable warrants (NBWs). Sources said officers of respective police stations armed with proclamation orders and accompanied by witnesses and band troupes have been visiting the absconding

criminals. After public announcements notices are being pasted informing the offenders to appear before court on specified time or else their movable and immovable assets would be confiscated. For execution of pending NBWs against 291 absconders proclamation orders have been obtained from the courts of the Panposh and Bonai sub-divisional judicial magistrates (SDJMs) under sections 84 and 85 of the Bharatiya Nyay Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS). Rourkela SP Nitesh Wadhvani said a large number of fugitives have been escaping law and also not facing trials. He said the target is to complete the legal process of proclamation against these warrantees by December end. The SP hoped most of the fugitives would appear in court after the notices. It is learnt, 22 police stations under Rourkela Police District have initiated the drive.

News box

Delhi air pollution: 'very poor' to 'severe' AQI recorded across national capital

NEW DELHI. Delhi remains shrouded in a layer of haze, with air quality persisting in the 'Very Poor' category across several areas, according to the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) on Saturday morning. As per the data collected at 8am, the Air Quality Index (AQI) in Anand Vihar was at 377, 370 at Ashok Vihar, 334 at Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, 366 at R K Puram, 328 at ITO, 338 at IGI Airport (T3), 377 at DTU, 358 at Dr. Karni Singh Shooting Range and 378 at Wazirpur. Several other areas reported AQI in 'severe' category, with readings from Bawana at 405, 408 at Mundka, 404 at Jahangirpuri and 412 at Shadipur. The CPCB categorises AQI values as follows: 0-50 'good', 51-100 'satisfactory', 101-200 'moderate', 201-300 'poor', 301-400 'very poor', and above 400 'severe'. According to the Air Quality Early Warning System for Delhi, smog and mist were anticipated on Friday evening and night, with clear skies predicted for today.

Track pollution levels in your city

Saturday morning is expected to experience shallow to moderate fog. Variable winds below 4 kmph are forecast for the morning, increasing to 6-8 kmph from northwest during afternoon, before decreasing again in evening hours. The meteorological department predicts shallow fog for Saturday, with temperatures expected to range between 26 degrees Celsius and 10 degrees Celsius. Delhi experienced eight 'severe-plus' air quality days this month, including two 'severe-plus'



days. The absence of rainfall, combined with local and regional emissions and unfavourable weather conditions, contributed to heightened pollution levels. The lowest recorded AQI was 303, still within the 'very poor' range. November 18 saw the AQI reach 494, marking it as the second most polluted day on record. Ten days experienced AQI readings exceeding 390.

Delhi resident loses Rs 7 lakh in sophisticated impersonation scam

NEW DELHI. A resident of North-East Delhi fell victim to a sophisticated scam, losing Rs 7 lakh to a fraudster who impersonated a relative. The scammer, claiming to be the victim's cousin, concocted a tale of impending arrest in Kuwait due to a visa issue. The victim, who lives in Bhajanpura, filed a complaint with the north-east district police on November 26. He claimed the incident occurred on August 13.

The complainant, aged 32, told the police that he received a friend request on a social media application from someone pretending to be his cousin, who works in Kuwait. "After accepting the request, they began conversing, and the scammer claimed that he needed to transfer some money into the complainant's bank account," the complainant said. The fraudster asked for his account details and phone number, promising to withdraw the funds once he returned to Delhi. The scam escalated when the complainant received a WhatsApp message from the fraudster's number, stating that Rs six lakh was deposited into his account. He was later contacted by someone claiming to be from his bank, informing him of an international transaction. Soon after, the scammer fabricated a story that the cousin's visa expired, leading to the freezing of his funds by Kuwaiti authorities. The fraudster insisted that the complainant pay a fine to "release" the money and avoid legal issues. The scam deepened when he was provided with the contact details of an alleged agent, who explained that a fine was imposed on the cousin for the expired visa, and that his passport and bank account were seized by the Kuwaiti govt. The agent demanded Rs 7.8 lakh to resolve the issue, which the complainant transferred to the provided bank account.

Man stabs family in Delhi's Mayapuri, dies after trying to escape police custody

NEW DELHI. A man stabbed his parents and uncle in West Delhi's Mayapuri. He later died after trying to flee police custody by jumping from a wall.

Police said the incident took place on November 26. They received a PCR call that three people were stabbed. A team from the local police station rushed to the spot. "The victims told us that their son, Anshuman Taneja (aged around 26-27 years), attacked them with knives. The victims were admitted to the hospital, and their son, Anshuman Taneja, was taken to the police station as a suspect for questioning," police said.

In an attempt to escape, Anshuman pushed the staff and



tried to jump a wall and fell over. He sustained a head injury. He was taken to the hospital. On November 28, he succumbed to the injury during treatment.

"All due procedures are being followed related to the enquiry into the matter, and the family members are being kept updated about the proceedings," police said.

Police scour CCTV feed to locate trader who rescued Gzb man from slavery

Ghaziabad. Police are scanning CCTV footage to trace the animal trader who rescued Bhim Singh from being kept as a slave at a farm in Jaisalmer last week.

The trader, while dropping Bhim in NCR, left a note with him, but did not give any information about himself. Police are looking for him because he will be able to give the exact location of the Jaisalmer farm where he spotted Bhim chained to a tree. "The animal trader will be able to help us complete the investigation. More importantly, he will be able to tell us the exact location in Jaisalmer where Bhim was kept as a slave. To complete this task, we will soon form a dedicated team. We are also contacting Delhi Police for help in tracing the Sikh man," DCP (Trans-Hindon) Nimish Patil told TOI on Friday.

Ghaziabad police said on Thursday they will reopen the 1993 case to investigate who had kidnapped Bhim and sold him to the herder in Jaisalmer, who confined him as a slave for three decades. According to Bhim's account, the trader hid him in his truck with goats after freeing him from the farm last week. "After 3-4 hours of driving, Bhim came out from the back of the truck and sat with the trader," a senior police officer said. After reaching NCR,



Bhim on Nov 23 walked into the Khoda police station with a letter written by the trader. On it was whatever little information Bhim could recall about his family and his abduction. Bhim's mother Leelawati said on Friday that the family



has asked cops to find the man who rescued her son. "That man is like an angel to me. Because of him, I got my son back after 31 years. We visited every temple and went to satsangs in the hope of finding Bhim. I want to invite him to my house. I

will cook for him," Leelawati said. Bhim told police that the Jaisalmer herder who kept him as a slave was "Sairam". "Sairam's minor daughter Pinky gave Bhim a Hanuman Chalisa. His elder son, Kalu, would

Circle rates set to increase, premium areas of city to see hike of up to 30%

Gurgaon. Circle rates for registering properties are set to increase in a range of 10-30%, a development that could drive up housing prices in the city, which is already among India's costliest real estate markets. The new circle rates, district administration officials said on Friday, will come into effect from Dec 1 and will be applicable at least till Mar 31, 2025. The decision to hike circle rate was taken at a meeting of deputy commissioner Ajay Kumar with sub-divisional officers and revenue department officials on Friday. Officials said most areas of the city will see circle rates hiked by 10% to 20%. But the city's most sought-after areas near Golf Course Road, Southern Peripheral Expressway and Dwarka Expressway will see hikes up to 30%. DC Ajay Kumar said the range was decided based on market value of properties within specific areas. "There are some key areas in the district where the market value is

significantly high. This is why an increase of up to 30% in collector rate was decided for those locations," he said. Kumar explained that changes in collector rates, or circle rates, are recommended by a district-level committee that carries out market research before giving its advice. New rates come into effect after the state govt gives its final approval. Officials said they have received approval from the govt, but a detailed order on the exact hike in circle rates is awaited. Realtors said property prices in Gurgaon are only expected to go up. "Despite very high property prices, Gurgaon's real estate sector leads not just in NCR, but it's also among the top performers in the country. Therefore, an increase in circle rate will bring it on par with market rate," said Mohit Kalia, vice-president (sales), Raheja Developers. Sanjeev Arora, director of 360 Realtors, said the impact of circle rate on property prices will be limited. "In most of the major micro-markets

of Gurgaon, such as Golf Course Road, Golf Course Extension Road, SPR and MG Road, property prices are already much higher than the existing circle rates. In other emerging areas also, such as Sohna, New Gurgaon and Dwarka Expressway, property prices are higher. That's why we don't foresee any major jump," Arora said. He said prices will continue to increase in the city due to high demand and limited supplies. "People across age groups and profiles take homeownership seriously. The market will continue to gain steam," he added. Those looking to buy houses in the city said property rates were already over-the-top in Gurgaon, and a consistent increase would make it completely out of reach for the middle class. "Property prices are in several crores, and it keeps on increasing. An increase in circle rate will further increase prices and the dream of owning a house in Gurgaon will become a distant dream for common people," said.

On HC's order, three HSVP offices sealed for non-compliance

Gurgaon. The offices of three HSVP officials were sealed on Friday after the Punjab and Haryana high court, angered that its repeated orders on a case over land acquisition were not being complied with, directed that this action should be taken by the end of the day. The single judge bench of Justice Harkesh Manuja, in his order on Friday, said that HSVP's "unwillingness" to comply with its orders seemed to be "willful and deliberate". He also said that he was "compelled" to take this action as the agency was "acting in violation of the basic fundamental tenets of the Constitution".

District administration officials on Friday confirmed that the offices of Gurgaon's land acquisition collector, estate officer 1 and estate officer 2 were sealed and attached. HSVP officials did not respond to requests for comment till Friday night.

The case dates to 2010, when HSVP moved to acquire an acre of land in Gurgaon's Narsinghpur Kasan village for building sector roads. While taking possession of this 1-acre area, HSVP also took possession of an additional 0.6-acre land belonging to the same landowner without carrying out the acquisition process. The proceedings for possession of this land were officially carried out in 2011. The owner was awarded compensation for the 1-acre land, but HSVP neither assessed compensation for the 0.6-acre land, nor did it disburse any amount for it. The owner, after years of approaching HSVP for compensation, took the case to the HC in 2017. In April earlier this year, the high court directed HSVP to provide compensation to the landowner within four months. The agency did not comply with the order, and a contempt petition was filed this Sept. During the hearings, the state govt sought two weeks' time to follow the April order and HSVP repeatedly sought more time. The high court granted at least three extensions since Sept. On Friday, Justice Manuja said he took a "lenient view and gave more time to the authority" to assess and disburse compensation to the petitioner, and yet no steps were taken. "The unwillingness on the part of HSVP towards the compliance of the order seems willful and deliberate as the land owned by the petitioners was utilised since the year 2013, with possession of the same being taken over in 2011 itself. However, despite the expiry of 13 years, not even a single penny has been offered to them." HC observed that HSVP, despite utilising the petitioner's land without acquiring it, was still trying to delay and evade disbursing compensation. Justice Manuja then directed the deputy commissioner and police commissioner to attach and seal HSVP offices by the end of Friday and submit a report on compliance with the district and sessions judge. "In such circumstances, wherein the respondents are acting in violation of the basic fundamental tenets of the Constitution of India.

Most evidence on benefits of water related to preventing kidney stones, losing weight: Study

NEW DELHI. Researchers, who reviewed 18 studies on benefits of drinking water, found the most evidence related to preventing kidney stones and helping people lose weight. Drinking eight cups of water a day significantly lowered one's chances of getting another kidney stone, the researchers at the University of California San Francisco found. They added that evidence from several studies suggested drinking about six cups of water a day helped adults lose weight. However, a study involving teenagers found that drinking a little more than eight cups of water a day had no effect. Further, studies raised the possibility of benefits for patients with migraine, urinary tract infection, diabetes and hypotension (low blood pressure) despite the limited quality

and quantity of scientific evidence on the benefits of water, the authors said in the study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) Network Open. "Given the low cost and low adverse-effect profile of water, further well-designed studies should assess benefits in these specific conditions," the authors wrote. "For such a ubiquitous and simple intervention, the evidence hasn't been clear and the benefits were not well-established, so we wanted to take a closer look," said senior author Benjamin Breyer, chair of the department of urology, University of California San Francisco. "The amount of rigorous research turned out to be limited, but in some specific areas, there was a statistically significant benefit. To our knowledge, this is the first study

assessing the benefits of water consumption on clinical outcomes broadly," Breyer added. The authors said encouraging people to drink water before meals would be a simple and cheap intervention that could have huge benefits given the increased prevalence of obesity. Adults experiencing recurring headaches were found to feel better after three months of drinking more water, they added. Drinking about four more cups of water a day for eight weeks was found to help diabetic patients whose blood glucose levels were elevated. Further, women with recurrent urinary tract infections were found to benefit from drinking an additional six cups a day of water - the infections became less frequent with time.

How sand miners have laid road across Yamuna between Delhi and Ghaziabad

GHAZIABAD. In the belly of the Yamuna floodplain, at a bend of the river between Delhi and Ghaziabad, workers are busy at work, half up to their ankles in mud, half up to their waists in water. The job of the group in the water is to fasten wooden planks and tether them to the riverbed while the others lay sandbags to build an embankment right across the Yamuna. It's a road that is taking shape, joining two banks where the winding river - which cuts creeks and furrows through copious deposits of silt - is narrower than elsewhere. The area is across Panchayara village (Pachera to locals) in Ghaziabad. On the other side is Alipur, the outskirts of north Delhi. Over decades, under the guise of leases, sand miners have operated with abandon on the Yamuna floodplains to meet a voracious appetite for construction. The river's banks have also been plundered by the sand mafia, damaging its ecology and making it prone to large-scale encroachment. The building of a road, for excavators to make their way across the Yamuna and dredge sand, is an example of brazen violations the protected floodplains see. There's an official lease that's been given for these parts for mining, but no lease allows excavators on the river's banks, let alone

building a road across it. Locals in Pachera said it's not the first time the Yamuna was being "bridged" like this. This is, according to them, a post-monsoon ritual for years. A road is laid and it lasts from winter till the rains arrive, after which the river swells and it gets washed away. Once the river recedes and its currents turn docile again, about now, back come the men to build the road. The excavators follow. Pradeep Tyagi, who owns an agricultural patch on the Delhi side of the Yamuna, said trucks laden with mined river sand roll in and out daily, almost in an anti-legal procession. "I have been seeing this since 2020. This year, it began a week ago," he said. Ravindra, another villager, said earthmovers don't stop even at night. "The miners are not scared of anyone. They do as they please," he said.

In May, UP mining department officials raided the area for illegal mining activity. While the suspects fled to the Delhi side of the river, they seized an earthmover, two trucks, and seven sand-filled trolleys. Jaswinder Waraich, a bird watcher who tracks the Yamuna for avian visitors all year, said he had first seen sand bags being dumped into the river in Pachera on Nov 23. "Clandestine sand

mining is practised on both banks of the river. Last year, when some of us went to this area, we were warned about the sand mafia. Shocking to see that our natural resources are being plundered openly," he



said. In Pachera, which has a 12-hectare riverbank area, eight hectares have been officially allocated for mining for a five-year term. According to a mining department official, the mining lease covers a 15km stretch along the Yamuna in Loni, encompassing Pachera, Badarpur and Nauraspur villages. "Rules don't permit any mining right on the riverbed. Neither is it in use of heavy machines allowed. On the floodplain, excavations are not permitted beyond a depth of 3 metres and the lessee must ensure the flow of the river is not impeded in any

way," district mining officer Saurabh Chaturvedi said. "There have been accusations that in the mining-permitted area, sandbags were placed in the river to make way for heavy machines so that excavations could be carried out from within the river through the use of heavy machines, which are both in violation of rules," Chaturvedi admitted. The officer added that a notice was issued to the leaseholder recently and a team from Lucknow was also in Loni to investigate the violation. The construction activity, however, continues despite it. TOI spoke to the leaseholder, who claimed there are no violations. "The river stream in Pachera has bifurcated over the years, and an island-like deposit has formed in between. The stream on the riverbank side is just 3 to 4 feet deep, so we have placed sandbags on it to access the island area and excavate sand. Technically, there is no violation. We neither excavated sand from the riverbed nor did we impede the river's main flow," he said. According to environmentalists, sand mining itself can be severely detrimental to a river for a number of reasons. It could increase a river's gradient, lead to excessive sediment transport.

NEWS BOX

US Approves \$320 Billion F-16 Fighter Planes, Radar Systems To Taiwan

Washington. The United States on Friday said it had approved the possible sale of spare parts for F-16 fighter planes and radar systems to Taiwan, in a deal valued at \$320 million. The proposed sale consists of equipment in existing US military stocks, the Defense Security Cooperation Agency said in a statement.

"This proposed sale serves US national, economic and security interests by supporting the recipient's continuing efforts to modernize its armed forces and to maintain a credible defensive capability," the DSCA said. "The proposed sale will improve the recipient's ability to meet current and future threats by maintaining the operational readiness of the recipient's fleet of F-16 aircraft." China insists self-ruled Taiwan is part of its territory and opposes any international recognition of the island and its claim to be a sovereign nation. The United States, while not recognising Taiwan diplomatically, is a major international backer. The proposed sale includes "spare parts and support for F-16 aircraft" and "Active Electronically Scanned Array (AESA) radar spare parts and support," DSCA said. The Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office in the United States requested the purchase and deliveries were estimated to begin next year, it added. The deal was approved by the State Department, with the DSCA providing the required notification to Congress on Friday.

Crisis In Gaza Deteriorates As Palestinians Seen Scavenging In Landfills



World. The Gaza Strip has spiralled into chaos, with widespread hunger, looting, and violence, including rising cases of rape in shelters, as public order collapses, according to the United Nations.

Palestinians are suffering on an unprecedented scale, with the situation in Gaza City being described as "horrendous" by Ajith Sunghay, head of the UN Human Rights Office in the Palestinian territories.

Sunghay said the Palestinians are distressed "on a scale that has to be seen to be truly grasped". The breakdown of public order and safety has exacerbated the situation, with rampant looting and fighting over scarce resources. The UN has warned about the impending anarchy in Gaza, which is now a harsh reality. "The anarchy in Gaza we warned about months ago is here", Sunghay said. Young women, many of whom have been displaced multiple times, have highlighted the lack of safe spaces or privacy in their makeshift tents.

Cases of gender-based violence, rape, abuse of children, and other forms of violence within the community have increased in shelters, according to Sunghay. The situation is dire, with thousands of displaced people sheltering in inhumane conditions, facing severe food shortages and terrible sanitary conditions. He said for the first time, he saw dozens of women and children now scavenging in giant landfills.

The UN is being blocked from delivering aid to the 70,000 people still living in northern Gaza, due to repeated impediments or rejections of humanitarian convoys by the Israeli authorities. The UN is calling for an immediate ceasefire and the release of hostages and those arbitrarily detained. "And every effort must be made to urgently provide the full quantities of food, medicine and other vital assistance desperately needed in Gaza", UN Human Rights Office spokesman Jeremy Laurence said.

Military vehicle mows down woman protesting rigged elections in Mozambique

World. A military vehicle ran over a woman in Maputo, the capital of Mozambique, earlier this week, during ongoing protests following an election that the opposition claims was rigged. Videos shared online show an armored vehicle driving through a wooden barricade used by protesters and hitting the woman. She sustained head injuries but is not in critical condition, director of the emergency department at Maputo central hospital was quoted as saying by The Guardian. Mozambique's armed forces said they "accidentally ran over a citizen" and will cover her medical costs.

The statement expressed regret and promised that the "incident will be rigorously investigated to ensure that this type of situation does not happen again." In a separate incident, police shot and killed two protesters in Nampula, a northern city. An activist said the incident occurred when a crowd confronted officers after blocking roads and burning tires. The protests have been ongoing since the October 9 election, where Daniel Chingo of the Frelimo party, which has governed Mozambique since 1975, officially won with 70.7 per cent of the vote. Opposition leader Venancio Mondlane has rejected the results and called for protests.

Rights groups report that police have suppressed the protests, resulting in dozens of deaths, including children. Local monitoring group Plataforma Decide estimates at least 67 people were killed in the unrest between mid-October and mid-November.

Darkest election possible': Bill Clinton apologises for 'outbursts' after wife Hillary's 2016 loss to Trump

World. Former US President Bill Clinton admitted to struggling with emotional turmoil and sleeplessness after his wife Hillary Clinton lost to Donald Trump in the 2016 presidential election, as reported by the New York Post.

In his new memoir, Citizen: My Life After The White House, he described his anger and apologised for his behavior. "I couldn't sleep for two years after the election. I was so angry, I wasn't fit to be around. I apologise to all those who endured my outbursts of rage," he said. "The whole thing is hard for me to write," he added.

Clinton blamed the election result on Russian interference, former FBI director James Comey's investigation into Hillary's emails, and media coverage, calling it the "darkest election possible in the United States." He quoted social scientist Kathleen Hall Jamieson, who suggested that Russian cyberattacks and Comey's actions influenced voters. Clinton added, "If so, Putin's enablers were Comey and the political press." Clinton also addressed his ties to Jeffrey Epstein, a convicted



pedophile. He confirmed flying on Epstein's plane but denied ever visiting Epstein's private island. He regretted the connection, saying, "Traveling on Epstein's plane was not worth the years of questioning afterward. I wish I had never met him." He explained that although he found Epstein "odd," he had no idea about Epstein's crimes, saying, "He hurt a lot of people, but I knew nothing about it." Clinton also revisited his 2018 NBC interview about the Monica Lewinsky scandal, a sex scandal involving him and White House intern Monica Lewinsky. He

expressed regret over how he handled the apology question, recalling being asked if he had ever apologised to Lewinsky. He responded, "No, I felt terrible then," admitting it was "not my finest hour."

The charges for which Clinton was impeached stemmed from the same sexual harassment lawsuit. During pre-trial testimony, Clinton denied having a sexual relationship with Monica Lewinsky.

Japan to prosecute dead girl after suicide attempt kills another woman

World. Japan is prosecuting a teenager who fell from the rooftop of a shopping centre and landed on a pedestrian below, resulting in the death of both, Japan Today reported.

The incident occurred on August 31 this year, when a 17-year-old girl from Japan's Chiba Prefecture went to an open space on the 12th floor of the NEWoMan shopping complex above Yokohama Station. She climbed over a 2.5-meter glass barrier surrounding the public area and jumped from the building in the afternoon. The 17-year-old student landed on 32-year-old Chikako Chiba,

who was walking with friends. Both were taken to the hospital, where the teenager died first, followed by Chiba about three hours later. Investigators believe the teenager's fall was a suicide, though the reason is unclear. The teenager has been charged posthumously with "gross negligence resulting in death". Yokohama police said that the student was aware of the potential danger to pedestrians below. The decision to prosecute the teenager has sparked debate, with critics questioning the value of prosecuting someone who is deceased. A comment on Japan.

Adverse weather claims 15 lives in Sri Lanka, over 4 lakh civilians affected



COLOMBO. Adverse weather from a deep depression over the southwest Bay of Bengal has claimed the lives of fifteen people in Sri Lanka, according to the Disaster Management Centre (DMC) on Saturday. The DMC said

over 450,000 people have been hit by floods, strong winds, and earth-slips in the country. Fifteen people have died so far, it said. The most number of 10 deaths have been recorded from the Eastern Province. The bad weather was

caused by the deep depression over the southwest Bay of Bengal. A cyclonic storm which is expected to affect the Eastern Province would move over to the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu later on Saturday, the weather officials said. This would improve the bad weather situation in the country. However, the north, north central and eastern Trincomalee districts are expected to experience heavy rain falls over 100 mm, the Meteorological Department said. Heavy winds of over 60 km per hour are also expected to hit parts of the island. Meanwhile, the police said they arrested a school principal and a teacher over the deaths of six students due to flood waters in the eastern town of Sammanthurai while travelling on a tractor. The principal had asked the students to travel by tractor due to a lack of buses.

Bangladesh Violence: Three Hindu Temples Vandalised In Chattogram As Tensions Soar After Hindu Priest's Arrest

Religious tensions were raised in Bangladesh after the arrest of a former ISKCON member under sedition charges.

World. Amidst ongoing religious tensions in Bangladesh, a mob shouting slogans vandalised three temples on Friday in Chattogram which has witnessed the protest and unrest in the region after the arrest of former ISKCON member under sedition charges. The attack occurred around 2:30 pm in Harish Chandra Munsef Lane, located in the port city, where the Shantaneshwari Matri Temple, the nearby Shoni Temple and the Shantaneshwari Kalibari Temple were targeted, PTI reported citing news portal BDNews24.com. "A group of several hundred slogan-shouting people threw brickbats at the temples, damaging the Shoni Temple and the gates of the other two temples," temple authorities

said, as per the PTI reports.



said, as per the PTI reports. TRENDDING NOW Abdul Karim, the chief of Kotwali Police Station, confirmed the attack, stating that the assailants attempted to damage the temples. However, police said that the damage to the temples was minimal following a

confrontation between the two groups during which both sides threw brickbats at each other. A procession of hundreds arrived after the Juma prayers. They started shouting anti-Hindu and anti-ISKCON slogans," said Tapan Das, a permanent member of the Shantaneshwari Main Temple management committee.

"We did not obstruct the attackers. When the situation worsened, we called the army, who arrived quickly and helped restore order. All the temple gates were closed before noon. The miscreants arrived unprovoked and carried out the attack," further told BDNews24.com, PTI reported. Earlier, Spiritual leader Chinmoy Krishna Das, a former member of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) in Bangladesh, was arrested in connection with a sedition case and later his bail was also denied which activated the protest by Hindu community in various locations in Bangladesh, including in the capital Dhaka and Chattogram.

Boat capsizes in Nigeria: 27 dead, over 100 missing

About 200 passengers were on the boat that was going from the state of Kogi to the neighbouring state of Niger when it capsized.

ABUJA. At least 27 people died and more than 100, mostly women, were missing on Friday after a boat transporting them to a food market capsized along the River Niger in northern Nigeria, authorities said.

About 200 passengers were on the boat that was going from the state of Kogi to neighbouring state of Niger when it capsized, the Niger State Emergency Management Agency spokesman Ibrahim Audu told The Associated Press. Rescuers managed to pull 27 bodies from the river by Friday evening while local divers were still searching for others, according to Sandra Musa, spokeswoman for the Kogi state emergency services. No survivor was found about 12 hours after the incident occurred, she added.



Authorities have not confirmed what caused the sinking but local media suggested the boat may have been overloaded. Overcrowding on boats is common in remote parts of Nigeria where the lack of good roads leaves many with no alternative routes.

According to Justin Uwazuruonye, who is in charge of Nigeria's National Emergency Management Agency operations in the state, rescuers had trouble finding the location of the capsizing for hours after Friday's tragedy struck. Such deadly incidents are increasingly becoming a source of concern in Nigeria, Africa's most populous country, as authorities struggle to enforce safety measures and regulations for water transportation. Most of the accidents have been attributed to overcrowding and the lack of maintenance of the boats, often built locally to accommodate as many passengers as possible in defiance of safety measures. Also, authorities have not been able to enforce the use of life jackets on such trips, often because of lack of availability or cost.

The deal was approved by the State Department, with the DSCA providing the required notification to Congress on Friday.

Natalie Walton claimed that she could not have been the accused as she is a non-smoker and has not visited the place where the offence took place.

Natalie Walton has been left confused ever since she received a fine for dropping a cigarette in a village, nearly 300 kilometres from her home -- a place she had not visited in over a decade. The fixed penalty notice (FPN), addressed to Ms Walton, was sent to her parent's house in Gravesend, Kent, accusing her of littering in nearby Swanscombe. The notice, dated November 12, stated a Dartford council officer witnessed her "committing an offence" which was also recorded on a body-worn camera, on October 29 and that she needed

to pay a £75 (Rs 8,082) fine or appeal it.

The notice added that Ms Walton could be taken to court and if convicted, she may have to pay a fine "up to & £2,500 (Rs 2,69,410) for littering". As neither the payment nor the written challenge has been received, you remain liable for the offence and prosecution proceedings in the magistrates' court may begin immediately against you," the notice added. Ms Walton claimed that she could not have been the accused as she is a non-smoker and has not visited the place where the offence took place, since she was a kid. Ms Walton added she had an alibi which proved she was not even in Kent at the time of the supposed offence. "I had not been to Kent for months. Dartford council were trying to fine me & #163;75 for something I was not even there to do. It is just a bit bizarre. I was accused of littering a cigarette in Swanscombe which is honestly more absurd, as I do not smoke and have never been to the address they



have claimed I was at," she was quoted as saying by KentOnline. "I feel like a complete victim of fraud. Someone must have stolen my identity or the council's security measures are so broken they will take a name and address with no proof." Watch: Man Eats Banana Artwork He Bought For Rs 52 Crore In Auction Evidence presented

As the controversy snowballed, Ms Walton produced her bank transactions, proving she was shopping in B&M and Tesco in Staffordshire at the time of the littering incident. After her protest and examination of the evidence, the Dartford Council said Ms Walton's FPN was cancelled. "When I saw the email, I was relieved and felt so much less stressed but I still have no idea how they thought it was me," she said.

The council, meanwhile, said the real accused had given the wrong address to the officers and pointed them towards Ms Walton. "Our enforcement team requested a current photo of Ms Walton and upon receiving it was compared to the person in the footage. It was found it was not Ms Walton and the FPN has now been cancelled." The council is still investigating who the real offender is but was unable to provide a photo.

Kerala acquires 65% of land, debunks Railways' claim

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: Against Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw's claim that state government has acquired only 13% of the land required for railway development, the state's data suggests that the land acquisition crossed 65% of the requirement. Railway Minister stated that the Union government had requested 471 hectares of land for railway projects in Kerala, but the state government acquired only 64 hectares. However it included the demand for 416 hectares of land required for the Angamali-Sabarimala railway line project which the Railway Ministry has frozen.

"If we exclude the land required for a frozen project the actual demand was only 60.1798 hectares. The state government has already handed over 39.6627 hectares. The rest of the land is in the advanced stage of handing over. So there is no delay as such from the part of the state government," said an officer familiar with the development.

The state government has acquired 33 of the 40 hectares required for the Thiruvananthapuram-Kanyakumari doubling from Rs 1,312 crore given by the Railways. The minister-in-charge of railways in the state, V Abdurahman, held a meeting with the district collector and chief administrative officer of Railways to speed up the land acquisition related to the Angamali-Sabari project on November 20. In October, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and Abdurahman met Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw for the speedy execution of track doubling and Sabari rail project.

Parents wary of sending their wards to school after food poisoning case in Telangana

ADILABAD: Following the food poisoning incident on October 29 at Wankidi Ashram School in Kumurambheem Asifabad district, authorities have taken measures to improve food quality and are sourcing groceries and mineral water from outside. Additionally, all the previously stored groceries have been seized. Students Sweety and Geetha (name changed) stated that authorities have started getting mineral water cans from outside and are ensuring that meals are prepared with quality ingredients.

What went wrong

On the fateful day, students were served rice and brinjal curry for lunch and rice, tomato curry and eggs for dinner. Half of the 107 Grade 9 students consumed dinner, resulting in illness. Tragically, one student, C Shailaja, died while undergoing treatment at NIMS in Hyderabad. Another student, Mahalakshmi, who was hospitalised for 25 days is now recovering at home. She recounted: "The food was not alright. The rice had a blue tinge and I noticed insects in it at times. The vegetables used were often rotten." She first experienced stomach ache and vomiting and was rushed to Mancheril hospital before being taken to NIMS.

Parents hesitant to send kids to school

Parents are hesitant to send their children back to school. Speaking to TNIE, Rathod Rajaram, a parent, visited the school on Thursday to meet her daughter. She is one among the students who was affected by food poisoning. She was treated at a Wankidi



hospital and discharged. Another parent, R Saibrao, whose daughters study in Grade 8 and 6, visited the school after the incident. He told TNIE: "The management should allow parents to taste the food during their visits to the school so they can assess the quality of meals being served to the students." Gundi Maisaiah, a resident of Koriti in Wankidi mandal, visited the school to check on his daughter. "She had asked me to bring her soaps and a few other items. I bought them while she was having lunch. She was fortunate not to have been affected by the food poisoning," he said, adding, "Three

Warden and infrastructure issues

Investigations have revealed administrative lapses. A teacher usually serves as an in-charge warden, with appointments rotating every three months. However, some continue longer due to influence. At Wankidi Ashram School, an outsourced worker, also employed as the headmaster's driver, was acting as the warden. "They cannot do justice to teaching as well as discharge the duties as warden," he said. Recently, a warden was appointed after a transfer, but the

headmaster's harassment forced him to leave for another school within three months.

The infrastructure is also inadequate for the school's strength of 524 students. Only 324 students were present when visited, as many had gone home. Students reported waiting in long queues for limited toilets, which they are also required to clean.

After headmaster G Srinivas was suspended, a teacher was appointed as in-charge headmaster but he has reportedly shown reluctance to take responsibility. An official told this newspaper: "You can go around and see whatever you like, but we cannot provide any information as the investigation is still ongoing." Speaking to TNIE, Integrated Tribal Advisory Committee director Soyam Bheem Rao stated that the water provided to the school comes from a tanker, which is used for both drinking and bathing purposes. He emphasised the need to transfer the headmaster and other long-serving staff members. "The committee appointed by the government will interact with the students in the presence of their teachers. The findings will largely depend on what the students say about the quality of food served to them," he said.

Official finds rotten potatoes
During inspections, Additional Collector Deepak Tiwari found rotten potatoes at Moghaddhad Ashram School in Korutla mandal. The head cook was absent, leaving daily wage workers to prepare meals.

Oxford museum agrees to repatriate stolen Thirumangai Alwar idol to TN

At present, only replicas of these four idols are used for worship at Soundararaja

Perumal Temple at Kumbakonam, the Idol Wing CID said.

CHENNAI: Oxford University in London has agreed to repatriate the Thirumangai Alwar Bronze Idol, which was illegally removed from a temple at Kumbakonam in Tamil Nadu between 1957 and 1967 and is currently stored at the university's Ashmolean Museum. The Idol Wing CID has said efforts are under way to bring this idol, which is worth crores of rupees, back to Tamil Nadu within a month. The issue came to light in 2020 when the sleuths registered a case based on specific information regarding the theft of four valuable idols from the Soundararaja Perumal Temple at Kumbakonam in Thanjavur district between 1957 and 1967. The stolen idols were of Thirumangai Alwar, Kaalinga Nartha Krishnar, Vishnu, and Sridevi. They were illegally sold by unidentified idol traffickers and smuggled abroad. At present, only replicas of these four idols are used for worship at the temple, the Idol Wing CID said. Inquiries



revealed that the Thirumangai Alwar bronze idol was purchased by the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford University in 1967, while the three other idols were traced to various museums across the United States. The idol wing team compiled convincing and indisputable evidence and sent them to the relevant authorities in the US and the UK. Following this, a representative from the university came to Kumbakonam for a verification process. After analysing the evidence, the representative was convinced that the idol originally belonged to the temple. The representative submitted a detailed report to the higher authorities at the university, which accepted the fact that the Thirumangai Alwar bronze idol was illegally removed from the temple. In a recent communication to the Idol Wing CID, Oxford University expressed its commitment to repatriating the idol to India.

Stranded in forest, three women saved after 14-hour search in Kerala

KOCHI: Ending 14 hours of anxiety and tension, three women, who went missing in the Kuttampuzha forest were rescued safely on Friday morning.

The women - Maya Jayan, 46, Parukutty, 62 and Darly Stephen, 55 - of Attikulam Kuttampuzha panchayat, entered the forest on Thursday afternoon in search of the cattle they had released in the forest fringe area for grazing. As the cows returned to the hamlet in the evening, the families approached the forest department after which the search was launched. Four teams formed by the forest department in coordination with police and Fire and Rescue Services personnel scoured the forest area near Viripara and checkdam area on Thursday night but to no avail. Civil volunteers and residents too joined the forces for the search, which was stopped around 2am as there was elephant presence in the area. Around 7.30am on Friday, the forest team re-



launched the search and found the women perched atop a rock at Arakkamuthi located around 6km from the forest boundary. The team had brought modern equipment including drones for surveillance. The terrain was rough and inaccessible. The presence of wild elephants was another challenge. Members of a team were chased by an elephant on Thursday night while searching for the trio.

"We are happy as the search has yielded results and we could rescue the women safely. The terrain and the presence of wild elephants were challenging. The visibility was also low in the morning

due to mist," said Malayattoor divisional forest officer Kurra Srinivas. The women were brought to Panthapra around 9 am and the health department conducted a check up. They were tired due to the long journey and stress. "While searching for the cattle we were caught in front of a herd of wild elephants and lost our way while trying to escape. We couldn't contact our families as the phone was dead. Initially

we took refuge inside a hollow tree but as the elephants came chasing us, we climbed atop a rock where we spent the entire night. Though we heard the calls of people we didn't respond fearing elephants and hunter gangs," said Maya. "We were safe atop the rock as elephants could not reach there. Though we were tired, we didn't sleep due to fear. A herd of elephants was roaming the area till around 2 am," said Parukutty. The 40-member search team was led by forest range officer R Sanjeevkumar and Kuttampuzha CI P A Faizal.

Child marriage evil still prevalent in Andhra Pradesh's Guntur district

GUNTUR: Despite growing awareness, child marriages continue in Guntur district, with officials attributing the practice to various socio-economic factors.

According to the National Family and Health Survey-5, the erstwhile Guntur district ranks fourth in the State for child marriages, with a rate of 35.4%. The Women and Child Welfare Department identified key causes, including poverty, parental insecurity, school dropouts, traditional customs, community marriages, and migration from other States. This year, 28 child marriages have been reported in Medakonduru, Tenali, Vattichekuru, and Guntur East mandals. Many parents, fearing



for their daughters' futures and family reputation, rush to marry off underage girls.

Issues like alcoholism and broken families exacerbate the problem, with many brides being under 15 years old. While awareness of the adverse effects on girls' health and development has improved, it remains insufficient to eradicate

the practice. During a district coordination committee meeting, Guntur Collector S Nagalakshmi directed ICDS to involve government school teachers, Anganwadi workers, ANMs, and Mahila Samrakshana Karyadarshis at village and ward secretariats to identify at-risk children and prevent child marriages. Efforts will include enrolling vulnerable children in skill development courses and providing employment opportunities. She also stressed raising awareness about police, legal, and medical services available through one-stop centres for the rehabilitation of women and girls.

GUNTUR: After nine years of trial, Guntur District Court dismissed the case pertaining to the suicide of Acharya Nagarjuna University student Rishitheshwari, citing lack of evidence.

On July 21, 2015, 18-year-old Rishitheshwari's body was found in her room at the Indira Priyadarshini hostel block in the University. In a suicide note, she had written that she was deeply disturbed as seniors had harassed her and spread rumours about her. Subsequently, police had arrested three students—D Hanisha, D Jaicharan, and N Srinivas -- and the then principal of ANU College of Architecture and Planning G Babu Rao under IPC Section 306 and Section 4 of Prevention of Ragging Act for allegedly abetting her suicide.

The incident had triggered massive



protests in the two Telugu States with Rishitheshwari's family and various student unions demanding stern action against the accused.

Expressing dismay over the court's decision, the girl's parents rued that after fighting for over nine years, they expected to get justice for their daughter. Her father Murali Krishna lamented that the incidents that forced Rishitheshwari to commit suicide were

mentioned in detail in her diary, which was not taken into consideration. "Over 170 eyewitnesses were present and the forensic report also confirmed that the diary belonged to her," he pointed out.

Further, he said, "We neither have the energy nor the resources to continue this legal fight. We urge Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu and Deputy Chief Minister K Pawan Kalyan for support in the issue." (If you are having suicidal thoughts, or are worried about a friend or need emotional support, someone is always there to listen. Call Sneha Foundation - 04424640050 (available 24x7) or iCall, the Tata Institute of Social Sciences' helpline - 02225521111, which is available Monday to Saturday from 8 am to 10 pm.)

Villupuram collector urges all departments to coordinate relief efforts

The police and fire departments were instructed to safely evacuate residents from flood-prone areas.

VILLUPURAM: Collector C Palani chaired a monsoon preparedness meeting at the Marakkanam RDO office on Friday. The officials discussed precautionary measures ahead of a heavy rainfall forecast for coastal areas by the IMD due to Cyclone Fengal. The collector directed officials to ensure disaster relief centres and cyclone shelters in Marakkanam and Vanur regions are ready with essential supplies and basic facilities to accommodate people, especially the fishermen community.

The police and fire departments were instructed to safely evacuate residents from flood-prone areas. Revenue officials and village administrators

were tasked with continuous monitoring and immediate relocation of the affected people. Rural Development officers were ordered to prepare temporary shelters. The highways department was advised to keep tree-cutting equipment and earthmovers ready. The electricity board was instructed to stock power restoration equipment and deploy personnel and the water resources department was directed to monitor water levels in reservoirs and rivers, ensuring sandbags and other resources were available. Health officials were told to stock adequate medicines to prevent disease



outbreaks, while local bodies were directed to ensure uninterrupted water supply through mobile pumps. The collector, emphasising the need for swift emergency response, urged the

departments to effectively coordinate relief operations. He urged the public to report any disaster-related issues via toll-free helpline 1077, 04146-223265 or through WhatsApp on 7200151144.

Inspection along coastline

Earlier on Friday, Chief Secretary-Commissioner of Transport Department and district monitoring officer Shunchongam Jatak Chiru inspected the coastlines of Marakkanam taluk, focusing on monsoon preparedness in areas like Kazhuveli region and Nagalpakam panchayat. Jatak reviewed the water

flow from River Ongur into the Kazhuveli wetlands and its discharge into the sea. He examined whether the sand embankments at the estuary obstructed the flow. The team also visited the Nagalpakam panchayat to inspect the high-level bridge constructed across Lake Periyakulam, under the NABARD Scheme at a cost of Rs 4.25 crore. Official sources said the inspection aimed to identify gaps in monsoon preparedness and enhance disaster management efforts in coordination with local officials. The Chief Secretary has assured that steps would be taken to address any identified concerns to safeguard public safety and property, they added.

How Jharkhand defied the BJP's dominance

PEOPLE from India's margins — indeed, its original inhabitants, the adivasis of Jharkhand, have scripted a resounding victory for their identity and rights in the recently concluded state Assembly elections. A majority of the state's electorate was among the world's poorest people, bearing diverse tribal identities of the Mundas, Oraons and Santhals, combined with marginalised Hindu castes and religious minority Muslims. This diverse electorate reshaped the political arena, bringing back to power a coalition, led by the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha and its Chief Minister Hemant Soren and its partners, the Indian National Congress, the RJD and the CPI(M). The coalition won a decisive victory with 56 seats in the 81-member Assembly, with the JMM having the largest share of 34 seats. Acting in tandem, the coalition partners INC notched up 16 seats, the RJD four seats and the CPI(M) two seats. The big significance of this outcome has been noted in the ability of small people to stand up to the power of the national giants — the BJP, led by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma.

The deeper meaning of this electoral verdict lies in the intertwining of indigenous rights, democracy and development — they all came together to defeat a majoritarian religious-political campaign pitch of the BJP. As an immediate political context, the ED had arrested Soren — then Chief Minister of the state — in January this year. He walked out of jail just a few months ahead of the elections. His party leader Champai Soren (and erstwhile Chief Minister) had been lured away by the BJP. Governance seemed to be at a near-standstill on the eve of the elections. The resource abundance of the BJP, its supreme command over the state apparatus and the long-held societal roots of the RSS meant that the incumbent JMM was barely in any shape to defend its claims to power. In what was largely being anticipated by analysts and pollsters as a "close fight", an "issueless election", or even the setting in of anti-incumbency and corruption charges against Hemant Soren's government, these results have been truly unanticipated. For one, they have put the ascendant BJP on a clear backfoot. Even more, the RSS has been left without a script in what has been its long-held community bastion. Its social and cultural agenda is carried on by front organisations, such as the Vikas Bharati, the Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram and the Ekal Vidyalayas. This verdict has proven to be a confidence-booster for the INDIA bloc, especially as Hemant Soren gains stature within the coalition. He enjoys the respect and confidence of the Gandhis, Mamata Banerjee, Chief Minister of the neighbouring state of West Bengal, Lalu Prasad Yadav and Akhilesh Yadav.

So, what exactly worked for the JMM? What does this defeat mean for the BJP? And going ahead, what lessons can be drawn for other state elections and in reconfiguring national politics and India's democracy? On what worked for the JMM: First of all, the JMM in alliance with the Congress has withstood a very divisive campaign hurled on to the people of the state, emphasising on ghuspaithiya having illegally entered districts in Jharkhand. The reference was to illegal Bangladeshi Muslims having infiltrated the land-locked Jharkhand. The BJP campaign presented district-wise data about the presence of ghuspaithiyas. In further rumour-mongering and myth-making, there were claims that these infiltrators would grab the land of adivasis and take away their daughters. The adivasi attachment to their land and their jungles is a deep entanglement, protected as a community right under the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act (and similar legislation for Santhal Pargana). Many believed that a poor and illiterate electorate would fall prey to this type of rumour-mongering. It seems, in retrospect, that the pitching of a tribal identity at the forefront and its belief in the naturalist sarna religious and community rights proved to be an appropriate counter.

Israel-Hezbollah pact a fresh chance for the Middle East

THE word "opportunity" rarely appears in the same sentence as the Middle East, and for good reason, but there is a case for suggesting we are approaching an exception. An opportunity — if not for lasting peace, then at least...

THE word "opportunity" rarely appears in the same sentence as the Middle East, and for good reason, but there is a case for suggesting we are approaching an exception. An opportunity — if not for lasting peace, then at least for an end to the ongoing conflicts and the prevention of new ones — is, in fact, knocking. The question is whether political leaders will open the door.

Israel has decimated the military capability of both Hamas in Gaza and Hezbollah in Lebanon. But continuing military action on its part is running up against the law of diminishing returns as fewer high-value targets are left. Moreover, continued military efforts threaten the country's regional and global standing. The International Criminal Court's decision to issue arrest warrants for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former Defence Minister Yoav Gallant is the latest indication of the political isolation and economic sanctions that could become Israel's fate unless it changes course.

The case for a ceasefire on both fronts is strong. The recent agreement between Israel and Hezbollah requires Hezbollah (which is so weakened that it dropped its insistence that a ceasefire in southern Lebanon be linked to one in Gaza) to move its heavy weaponry north of the Litani river, away from the border with Israel. Lebanese troops will patrol southern Lebanon, and the Israel defence forces will withdraw from the area and agree not to maintain a presence. Israel has obtained assurances that under certain conditions, it would still be able to take military action against Hezbollah to frustrate the group's attempts to reconstitute itself along the border or if it were preparing to attack.

This accord, if it holds, permits some 60,000 Israelis to return to their homes after more than a year of displacement. In addition, the ceasefire will allow Israel's exhausted and overextended military to recover and focus on other challenges, including Iran, which is inching ever closer to developing a nuclear-weapons capability that would pose an existential threat to Israel. And the ceasefire should also spare Lebanon and its people further

devastation. Yes, the ceasefire will also allow Hezbollah a degree of time and space to regroup, which is why some in Israel oppose it. That said, open-ended military operations will accomplish little, as Hezbollah can be weakened but not eliminated. Israel's past failed occupation of southern Lebanon demonstrates as much. Israel's goal, which this agreement puts within reach, should be to restore deterrence.

Gaza poses a more difficult challenge. It is not clear that Hamas would agree to a ceasefire, although it is much weakened militarily and might have difficulty

a process would pave the way for the entry into Gaza of a regional stabilisation force and the establishment of diplomatic relations between Israel and Saudi Arabia. Over time, a Palestinian state, properly constituted, would enable Israel to remain both Jewish and democratic as well as prosperous and secure.

Some in Israel much prefer a future that allows for Israeli settlement of parts of Gaza and annexation of large swaths of the West Bank. And if they do not get their way, they have vocally threatened to bring down Netanyahu's government. That is a risk Netanyahu has been loath to take, given that, once out of office, he faces pending legal action and official investigations into Israel's failure to anticipate and respond to Hamas's October 7 attack.

Donald Trump, whose return to the Oval Office on January 20 is already looming over these dynamics, could prove to be the critical variable. While the Israeli right sees his return as an opportunity to achieve maximalist aims, even calling 2025 the year of Israeli sovereignty in the West Bank and an opportunity to begin reducing Gaza's Palestinian population through "voluntary emigration", Trump has expressed a desire to calm the region.

Trump is in a position to achieve this goal. Owing to events in Lebanon, Netanyahu may be sufficiently strong to stare down his right-wing coalition partners, form a new

government without them, or even get a fresh mandate from the voters. And even if not, Trump, whom the Israeli right sees as a friend, could lean on Netanyahu and his government in a way that President Joe Biden never could. It would be more difficult for Netanyahu to resist Trump's pressure and much easier for Trump to apply and sustain such pressure, given his support among American evangelicals and certain American-Jewish communities. Richard Nixon comes to mind. Nixon, it is said, was able to reach out to Mao's China because he alone didn't have to worry about Nixon. Much the same now applies to Trump. He could build on the ceasefire in Lebanon and press for one in Gaza, launching what would be a promising diplomatic process. Pulling this off would constitute quite a coup for the 47th President. The opportunity is there for the taking.



resisting one if Israel agrees to terms that are widely deemed reasonable. But will Israel agree? It should, because a ceasefire would allow the return of the more than one hundred remaining hostages in Gaza, half of whom Israeli intelligence services believe are still alive. Moreover, as with Lebanon, it is far from clear that Israel stands to gain from continuing military operations in Gaza.

Hamas is certainly unable to launch another attack like the one it carried out on October 7, 2023. But Israel's refusal to start a diplomatic process that would give Palestinians a chance to secure elements of their nationalist aspirations has made it possible for Hamas — with its insistence on endless struggle — to remain relevant. The big question, then, is whether Israel would agree to a political process that holds out the possibility (however distant, conditional and vague in terms of territorial reach) of creating a Palestinian state. In the near term, such

Cancer claptrap

A fierce backlash from leading oncologists forced Congress leader Navjot Singh Sidhu — renowned for stepping out and hitting sixes during his cricket days — to go on the back foot. With cancer specialists punching holes into his claim that...

A fierce backlash from leading oncologists forced Congress leader Navjot Singh Sidhu — renowned for stepping out and hitting sixes during his cricket days — to go on the back foot. With cancer specialists punching holes into his claim that a strict dietary and lifestyle regimen enabled his wife to overcome the dreaded "emperor of all maladies", Sidhu clarified that the diet plan was followed in consultation with doctors and had only served as a facilitator in the treatment. True to form, the former MP went overboard last week when he told the media that Mrs Sidhu had "starved" cancer cells simply by consuming haldi and neem and shunning dairy products as well as sugar. Though Sidhu's wife is a doctor, he couldn't resist the temptation of veering off the medically established path. It's laudable that oncologists reacted quickly, urging the public to not delay treatment by banking on unproven remedies. Surgery, radiation therapy and chemotherapy continue to



be the time-tested methods to cure cancer.

Sidhu alone, however, is not to blame for spreading misinformation. Social media is replete with "magic cures" for cancer and other diseases, and there is no dearth of people who lap up all the myths and untruths. Patanjali Ayurved has repeatedly found itself in the crosshairs of the Supreme Court over misleading advertisements of Ayush products. The Union Government is also at fault as a draft to amend the Drugs and Magic Remedies (Objectionable Advertisements) Act, 1954, aimed at taking stringent action against those who release deceptive advertisements, has been on the back burner for the past four years. Cutting across party lines, parliamentarians should try to ensure that the proposed amendment is not consigned to oblivion. The medical community has a huge role to play in spreading awareness about evidence-based treatment. And the public can do its bit by raising doubts about remedies that seem too good to be true.

Don't let hate-mongers run riot

A gentleman whom I have never met wrote a letter to me last week. He is 74 and holds a post-graduate degree in arts from Punjab. He begins his epistle by stating, "Your role in Punjab as the police chief..."

A gentleman whom I have never met wrote a letter to me last week. He is 74 and holds a post-graduate degree in arts from Punjab. He begins his epistle by stating, "Your role in Punjab as the police chief was very laudable." Thank you, sir. I wish to remind you that the Gita enjoins every individual to do his or her duty without expectation of a reward or recognition. Similarly, the Bible taught me that Christ was a servant of the people, and I, as his follower, should serve humanity. This is one Christian precept that I have followed. But even God likes to be praised. And I am only human. On the other hand, our Prime Minister is claiming an aura of divinity. I get the distinct feeling that he likes to be praised. In this human failing we are partners!

So, when you say that my articles are replete with "anti-Modi and anti-Hindu voices", I am astonished and constrained to respond. When did I ever speak against Hinduism or Hindus? My ancestors, like the ancestors of '99.9 per cent' of the Christians in India, were Hindus, if you include the worship of nature, like in most tribal communities, as part of Hinduism. Tribals populating the North-East are largely Christian. At present, they are politically aligned largely with Narendra Modi's party. Perhaps you forgot about their existence. I admit to criticising Modi at times. In mature democracies, criticism of rulers is an accepted practice. Rulers have to be accountable to the ruled. Before Modi and Amit Shah took over the reins of government in Delhi, I had written against Congress rulers in Maharashtra. While in service in Punjab, I had spoken in closed-door meetings against the Congress' protection of

those accused of inciting violence against the Sikhs in the 1984 pogrom. Rajiv Gandhi disapproved of my views. If you count views against wrong policies as being anti-Modi, so be it. Lynching of cattle traders and beef eaters and using bulldozers to punish Muslim offenders are anathema to fair play and justice. I will continue to speak out against affronts to the rule of law on which governance is based universally. The accusation that I am anti-Hindu is ridiculous and preposterous. This week, the US-based daughter of one of my first bosses in the police paid me a visit. Vasant Vinayak Nagarkar was a Chitpavan Brahmin from Pune. He asked me to come and stay with him and his family during my training. I did so and became a part of his family in a manner of speaking. During my career in the IPS, I have served under Hindu bosses. They have always been kind to me, with one stray exception. The majority of the officers who reported to me were Hindus. After my retirement, many of them have been in touch with me. If they felt that I was anti-Hindu, they would have kept their distance. As a human being — a Christian one — I do not and will not hate other human beings.

Religious identities were never a part of the official lexicon before the Modi-Shah duo came to power. The first Prime Minister from the BJP was Atal Bihari Vajpayee, a statesman to the core. On assuming charge of his august office, he offered me governorship, something no Christian can hope for in Modi's reign. In today's dispensation, governors have a more active role to play to ensure that single-engine governments fall in line. To identify a suitable



Christian who fits that bill would be well-nigh impossible. A strange statement made by you in your letter is that I am wrong when I affirm that terrorism cannot be exterminated by "guns and bullets" alone. My conviction is based on my experience in Punjab and the experience of law enforcers in Ireland and elsewhere in the world where terrorists have operated. You subscribe to the muscular beliefs of Home Minister Shah, who cites his government's strong-arm policies in Kashmir as evidence of that unscientific belief. I beg to differ. Terrorism continues to plague J&K and will keep doing so till the majority of the Kashmiri Muslim community is won over. My advice to you is not to accept every word that emanates from the mouths of our rulers. They are politicians. We are not. Another assertion that you make is that "Muslims have a latent mission to Islamise India". Surely, not all Muslims think of such unattainable goals! Some diehards do. They belong to the category of dreamers and extremists. Their ilk can be found among all religious

denominations. Not too much attention should be paid to such extremists. There is not a ghost of a chance that our glorious land will be Islamised. And remember that the bulk of the Muslim population in India is only concerned about feeding their children and themselves. In today's atmosphere of hate and divisions, poor Muslims are finding it difficult to eke out a living.

You pontificate that the "proselytisation practised by Christian missionaries is the worst, most shameful, inhuman" and that "converted people seek foreign guidance, showing little love for their erstwhile Hindu lineage". Truly, I find it difficult to find evidence to justify your findings. The proselytisation that led to the Christianisation of my ancestors and the local Marathi-speaking East Indians (named after the East India Company) in Bombay was effected by Portuguese missionaries in the 'Age of Faith' four or five centuries ago. As for seeking foreign guidance, statistics show that most of our compatriots settled abroad are not converts to Christianity. A stray individual may be motivated to convert. Usually, this occurs when an inter-religious marriage takes place. Such conversions will not make any dent in the dominance of the majority community in the political and social life of the nation. You end your letter by appealing to me "to show to your fellow Christians and Muslims to respect Hindus" and not to "tease, kill" them! I can only say that you have been misinformed. I have not heard of any Christian killing or being killed by Hindus but my Muslim brothers have certainly.



5 Easy and healthy non Vegetarian recipes

Adequate protein intake is crucial for muscle growth and maintenance. Today we're looking at some quick and healthy protein-rich non-vegetarian recipes that will help you clock your daily protein requirement without spending too much time in the kitchen. Let's get started!

Baked Chicken Legs

- Ingredients**
- 8 chicken legs - skinned
 - 1 teaspoon curry powder
 - 2 teaspoons French mustard
 - 1/2 cup yogurt
 - 1 cup breadcrumbs

Method

- Combine, curry powder, mustard and yoghurt and mix well. Coat chicken legs in mixture before rolling in

breadcrumbs. Place on a plate in fridge for 30 minutes.

- Preheat oven to 350 F. Grease an ovenproof dish. Place chicken legs in dish and bake turning once or twice.

- Bake for approximately 45 minutes or until chicken is cooked through and crumb is golden and crisp.

Grilled Chicken Breasts

Ingredients

- 1/3 cup mustard
- 1/4 cup honey
- 2 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 1 teaspoon steak sauce
- 4 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves

Method

- Preheat the grill for medium heat. In a shallow bowl, mix the mustard, honey, mayonnaise, and steak sauce.

- Set aside a small amount of the honey mustard sauce for basting, and dip the chicken into the remaining sauce to coat. Lightly oil the grill grate.

- Grill chicken over indirect heat for 18 to 20 minutes, turning occasionally. Watch carefully to prevent burning!

Fish Teriyaki

heat for 3-4 minutes, basting with reserved marinade frequently.

- Sprinkle fish fillets with sesame seeds. Remove from pan and serve hot.

Egg White Omelette with Veggies

Ingredients

- 3 large egg whites
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 1/2 cup thinly sliced spinach
- 1 tomato chopped

Method

- Whisk egg whites, water, salt, and pepper together in a medium bowl. Toss spinach, tomato in another bowl. Lightly coat with oil and heat over medium heat 1 minute.

- Pour egg mixture into pan and cook until eggs begin to set on bottom. Cook 2 minutes. Slide omelet onto a serving plate and garnish with reserved filling.

Prawn Salad

Ingredients

- Red chillies chopped

- 1 clove garlic
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 800 green prawns peeled and de-veined
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes
- 100 g green beans
- 100 g peas
- 1 red capsicum thinly sliced
- juice of 1 lemon
- freshly ground black pepper

Method

- Place chilli and garlic with oil in a food processor and blend until lightly chopped. - Transfer half the mixture to a mixing bowl. Add prawns and toss to coat thoroughly. Allow this to marinate for 30 minutes.

- Preheat oven to 200 °C. Transfer remaining mixture to dish. Add tomatoes, beans, and peas. Toss to combine. Microwave on high for three minutes, or until vegetables are just cooked.

- Transfer prawns to a baking tray and bake for ten minutes, or until cooked. Remove from oven and tip prawns and cooking juices into cooling vegetables.

Butter Paratha



Butter Paratha is a delicious paratha recipe which is made using butter and whole wheat dough. This simple recipe goes well with paneer and potato dishes and even with dals.

- 1 tablespoon sieved all purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon butter
- 2 tablespoons Refined oil

How to make Butter Paratha

- Step 1**
Combine salt and butter with maida. Knead well to a thick dough.
- Step 2**
Add a little oil and knead well. Stretch the dough from time to time till it has a soft, pliable consistency. Cover and keep aside for 30 minutes.
- Step 3**
Make small balls of the dough and roll them into small rotis using only little oil if required
- Step 4**
Heat a tawa over medium flame. Cook the prepared parathas on both sides till done.
- Step 5**
Serve with side dish of your choice.

Pasta Salad

Those who think that pasta recipes cannot be healthy, should try this healthy pasta salad. Counted among healthy pasta recipes, this salad recipe is made with broccoli florets and lettuce leaves.

- 200 gm gluten free pasta
- 1 cup broccoli
- 2 pinches salt
- 2 cloves minced garlic
- 2 teaspoon virgin olive oil
- 1 handful basil
- 2 small sliced tomato
- 1 dash powdered spice black pepper



- 2 teaspoon vinegar**
- 4 leaves lettuce loose-leaf**
- 1 teaspoon oregano**
- How to make Pasta Salad**
- Step 1**
For making this healthy pasta salad, boil the pasta in a pan for 10-15 mins until its tender.
- Step 2**
Drain the pasta and rinse under running cold water. Let it dry.
- Step 3**
In a serving bowl, add lettuce leaves, broccoli, tomatoes, garlic cloves. Toss nicely.
- Step 4**
Drizzle it with lemon juice, vinegar and olive oil.
- Step 5**
Season with salt, pepper, oregano.
- Step 6**
Toss all the ingredients together.
- Step 7**
Garnish with basil leaves. Serve.

Eat Healthy Foods to Stay Healthy for Entrepreneurs

Eat Healthy Foods To Stay Healthy

If you are looking to lead a healthy lifestyle in this modern world, then it is vital for you to maintain a very healthy diet along with some physical exercise. This is the most common thing that is being said by most people, but only a handful of people heed to such theories. The end result is that many of the people we see around us are either overweight or obese. If you also fall in this category, then it is high time that you gave a serious thought to a healthy body and mind in order to boost your lifespan. Eating healthy meals and

healthy food is a sure shot way to your physical well being.

What Are Healthy Foods?

There is no specific food that carries a name tag as a healthy food. If you find healthy foods in bags or boxes or in a bottle in a departmental or grocery store, then they probably are not a healthy food. These foods contain a whole lot of preservatives, additives as well as sodium added to it to boost its shelf life. Hence, eating foods like this on a regular basis might even make you overweight. You should never eat frozen or foods that contain added preservatives. Fresh fruits and vegetables as well as lean meat and fishes are considered to be healthy foods. But, make sure that you go for organic fruits and vegetables as they are the best healthy foods that you can come across in this planet.

Add More Grains And Fiber In Your Food

It is very important for you to go for high fiber and whole grain diet especially if you are obese or overweight. There are numerous health benefits that you would gain by going for whole grains and high fiber diet. It will help in preventing heart related diseases, diabetes as well as protect you from certain types of cancer. It is ideal for you to include a lot of bran, fruits and vegetables in your daily intake and reduce the amount of white foods like rice or white flour in your diet. It will help in boosting your digestion and will also make you feel full very soon so that you eat less.

Reduce Sugar And Salt Consumption

You need to reduce the intake of salt to prevent high blood pressure. You should replace your salty snacks diet with healthy fruits and a vegetable diet to reduce salt intake. Never ever think of sugary sodas and juices for breakfast and substitute it with unsweetened iced tea. Replacing the sugar with sugar free pills is also not very ideal in the long run.

Foods Low In Cholesterol

It is highly important for you to reduce the intake of foods that are rich in bad cholesterol and bad fat. They will easily get stored in your body and add on to your body weight. It would be better for you to consume lean meat and try to consume lean chicken or turkey over red meat.

Author Bio

Arijit Roul is a health and nutrition expert who has written many articles and blogs on the healthy health foods that people need to take to be fit and healthy. You can read some of the interesting articles on beregnbmi.dk.



Blame game over bus marshals in Delhi

'Digital Arrest': People Are Losing Crores To Scammers How To Remain Safe

Delhi CM Atishi defended AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal who was accused by the BJP of directing to remove the bus marshals from November, 2023.

them was pending with the L-G. Participating in a discussion over the issue, Atishi said the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) will not field any candidate against Leader of Opposition Vijender Gupta from Rohini assembly seat if he convinced Lieutenant Governor (L-G) V K Saxena to approve the proposal for reinstating 10,000 bus marshals. Speaking on a lighter note, the chief minister also said she will campaign for Gupta in the elections if he got the proposal approved by the L-G.



She defended AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal who was accused by the BJP of directing to remove the bus marshals from November, 2023. In his letter on October 20, 2023, Kejriwal had said the bus marshals should not be removed and action need to be taken against the officers who stopped payment of their salaries, she said. The chief minister asserted that the presence of uniformed marshals prevented incidents of misbehaviour with women and girls in the

buses. But the L-G got them removed without caring for the safety of women, she charged. The ruling AAP MLAs hit at the BJP alleging they got the bus marshals removed through the L-G and thereby created livelihood problems for them and their families. The BJP legislators retorted saying the bus marshals were removed on the direction of Kejriwal, the then chief minister, and now AAP was doing politics over their reinstatement.

BJP MLA Abhay Verma questioned the ruling party saying why was it in power if it can not give back bus marshals their jobs. Gupta sought answers from Atishi saying the AAP government deployed bus marshals and then removed them. "It is surprising that the ruling party is saying the opposition BJP should give the bus marshals their jobs back," the LoP said, and claimed that a committee suggested by the chief minister to regularise the bus marshals was not yet formed. The L-G wrote to Atishi to start the regularisation of bus marshals and in the interim provide them jobs for four months, he said. The AAP government has not done anything to implement it, he said. Urban Development minister Saurabh Bharadwaj attacked Gupta, saying he tried to evade meeting the L-G along with the CM for reinstatement of the bus marshals. He said the AAP legislators were still prepared to go to the LG if the opposition BJP members accompanied them to help reinstatement of the bus marshals.

NEW DELHI: The ruling AAP and opposition BJP MLAs indulged in blame game over the issue of removal of the bus marshals on the first day of the last session of the five-year tenure of the Delhi assembly on Friday, with Chief Minister Atishi saying the proposal to reinstate

Newlywed woman dies in geyser explosion while bathing at in-laws home in UP

New Delhi. A newlywed woman lost her life in a geyser explosion while bathing at her in-laws' home in the Mirganj area of Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh. The incident occurred on Wednesday, just five days after her wedding. The woman got married to Deepak Yadav from Pipalsana Chaudhary village on November 22. Originally from Kale Ka Nagla village in Bulandshahr, the woman was settling into her new home when the accident happened.

According to her family, the woman went to the



bathroom to bathe in the evening but did not come out for a long time. Concerned, her husband and family members called out to her multiple times, but she did not respond. When they broke open the bathroom door, they found her lying unconscious on the floor, and the geyser had exploded. The family rushed her to a hospital, but doctors declared her dead on arrival. The police were informed about the incident, and her body was sent for a post-mortem examination. The cause of the explosion is not yet clear, and the police are investigating the matter.

Need tree census in Delhi, authority to verify tree officer's work: SC

NEW DELHI. The Supreme Court on Friday stressed upon the need for a census of trees in the national capital and said it wanted to create an authority to supervise the work carried out by a tree officer. A two-judge bench of the apex court, led by Justice Abhay S Oka and Justice Augustine George Masih, said the issue over the strict implementation of the provisions of the Delhi Preservation of Trees Act, 1994, required immediate attention. The bench of the apex court passed these remarks after hearing an application seeking to restrain the Delhi government from allowing the felling of trees without the top court's permission.

"Apart from tree census, that order we are going to pass, we also want to create an authority. That authority will verify whether the tree officer has done a proper job. Somebody has to supervise the permission granted," the bench of the apex court said.

Praising lawyers appearing before it in matters related to the preservation of the environment and protection of trees, the apex court said the advocates were very cooperative, and they have always taken a far stand before the court. After hearing this, the Additional Solicitor General (ASG) Aishwarya Bhati said, "We are grateful.

Your lordships are doing it for our better future, our children's better future." The bench asked the lawyers appearing in the matter to give suggestions on the basis of which the authority should be constituted. "We are of the opinion that not only individual experts are required, but an institution had to be involved in this process also," it said.

"We always believe that in environment matters, harsh orders are warranted," the bench noted.

Terming it as very important the issue concerning strict implementation of the provisions of the 1994 Act, the apex court, said, "To enable the counsel appearing for the parties to address us on the issue, we direct that the petition shall be listed on December 18." Last week, the apex court proposed to set up a committee of experts and said without the panel's nod, the felling of trees in the national capital cannot take place.

Archaeological body flags alterations to Sambhal mosque, hurdles in inspection

New Delhi. The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), in an affidavit, has highlighted the challenges faced in inspecting the Shahi Jama Masjid in Uttar Pradesh's Sambhal, which was recently rocked by violence following a court-mandated survey of the mosque. The affidavit, accessed by India Today, also highlights several modifications done to the Jama Masjid, which is an ASI protected site.

The affidavit was filed by VS Rawat, Superintending Archaeologist (Meerut circle), before the local court in Sambhal that commissioned a fresh survey of the mosque following claims that it was built after demolishing a temple that stood there. The survey on November 19 triggered massive violence in Sambhal that left five people dead and 20 police officers injured. The ASI affidavit mentioned that the Mughal-era mosque, declared a protected monument in 1920, has

undergone several unapproved modifications. The affidavit also said that the masjid management committee conducted various



additions and modifications to the structure over time. The affidavit claimed that even ASI officers were often barred from entering the site for inspections. Despite the challenges, the ASI, with the support of the district administration, managed to inspect the site in 1998. Another inspection

was carried out on June 25, 2024, which revealed further modifications to the monument.

The affidavit further stated that whenever unauthorised modern interventions were noticed, complaints were filed with the local police, and showcause notices were issued to the violators. However, restrictions on regular inspections made it difficult for the ASI team to ascertain the extent of violations or the current status of the monument accurately, the affidavit said. On Friday, the Supreme Court asked the

trial court in Sambhal not to proceed with the mosque survey case till the masjid committee moves the High Court. The top court also directed that the report of the advocate commissioner, who conducted the survey of the mosque, should be kept in a sealed cover and should not be opened in the meantime.

Man dies by suicide in Gujarat after being cheated of Rs 40 lakh in loan fraud

The accused took Rs 40 lakh from the victim on the pretext of getting him a loan worth crores from Union Bank.

NEW DELHI. A man in Bhavnagar, Gujarat, died by suicide after being allegedly cheated of Rs 40 lakh by two individuals who promised to secure him a large bank loan. The man, identified as Praveen, left behind a suicide note and video naming four people responsible for his death. Praveen, who was engaged in constructing houses, had reportedly been struggling with mounting debts after he borrowed money to pay the agents who assured him of a loan worth crores from Union Bank. According to his suicide note and video, the agents identified as Raju Solanki and Mehul Makwana had gained his trust over the past year. They convinced him to pay Rs 40 lakh in instalments, claiming it was required to facilitate the loan approval. Praveen's financial troubles deepened as he borrowed money from friends and relatives at high interest rates to meet the agents' demands. Despite repeated



assurances that the loan would be processed, it never materialised and the moneylenders from whom he had borrowed started pressuring him for repayment. In the video recorded before his death, Praveen expressed his anguish, saying, "I don't want to die, but I am helpless. I was cheated by people who promised me a loan and took Rs 40 lakh. Now they claim they can only return Rs 20 lakh and say the rest has been spent. He

further appealed for justice for his family, urging authorities to punish the accused and ensure his wife and son receive the money owed.

He also named a woman who allegedly cheated him of Rs 5 lakh.

On receiving the complaint, Praveen's wife approached the Ghogha Road police station. The police have registered a case against the two agents, Raju Solanki and Mehul Makwana, and two moneylenders, Gautam Meer and Deepak Garagewala. An investigator officer at Ghogha Road police station said, "We have retrieved the suicide note and video in which Praveen mentions giving Rs 40 lakh to Raju Solanki and Mehul Makwana for a loan that was never approved. He also names the two moneylenders who pressured him for repayment. An investigation is underway to verify all claims and ensure justice is served."

"Those Who Consider Power As Birthright...": PM Modi Rips Into Opposition

Bhubaneswar. Slamming opposition parties for propaganda against the BJP-led NDA, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday asserted that they have "crushed" the spirit of the Constitution and rejected all norms of democracy. PM Modi, addressing party workers in Bhubaneswar, also said that the opposition has only one aim, "to somehow capture power by misleading people". "Those who consider power as their birthright have not been in power at the Centre for the last decade," he said in an apparent dig at the opposition. The prime minister said it is quite natural that there would be ideological differences among political parties on different issues, and that they have the right to express their views and resort to agitations. "During my tenure as Chief Minister and PM, I saw different colours of politics. I admit that a constructive opposition is normal in a democracy. There can be differences of opinion on any decision," he said. PM Modi said everyone, however, can now feel a big difference in the manner protests are organised. "The spirit of the

Constitution is crushed and all the norms of democracy are rejected." The PM said that from the very beginning, the opposition parties were not ready to accept the fact that people gave their mandate to the BJP-led NDA. "Denied of power for the last decade, such parties are now filled with so much anger that they do not hesitate to conspire against the country and its people. They are misleading people with 'jhoot aur afwah ki dukan' (lies and rumours)," he said. PM Modi noted that such false propaganda is a big challenge for people of India, and BJP workers and "those who love the country and respect the Constitution should be more alert and vigilant to foil such attempts and expose the lies". He also said the BJP dedicatedly worked for the development of Odisha even when the party was not in power in the eastern state. "The Odisha poll results surprised many big political experts, who had completely rejected the idea of BJP forming government in the state... BJP's election success in Odisha, Haryana, and



Maharashtra has created a new confidence in the entire country. This is the specialty of BJP and the capability of our workers," asserted PM Modi.

The BJP respects and gives priority to the rich culture and tradition of Odisha, he said. "I am happy that due to the efforts of the BJP, Odisha's tribal daughter Droupadi Murmu ji is the President of the country today. This has boosted the confidence of daughters from all sections of society. Her journey will inspire many generations to come," the PM said. On the All India DGP/IGP Conference that got underway

in Bhubaneswar, he said it is being held in Odisha for the first time, though the event has been taking place since the British period. "We want to give priority to Odisha not only in the country but also on the world map," he said, adding that after the BJP formed government in the state, it has implemented the National Education Policy and other central schemes. Besides, "Operation Demonstration, 2024" will be organised in Puri on the occasion of Navy Day on December 4, and the 'Pravasi Bharatiya Divas' in Bhubaneswar from January 8-10. PM Modi said the BJP government has also started fulfilling the promises made during the election. "The state has launched the 'Subhadra Yojana', which will be a symbol of women empowerment.

Under the scheme, the government promises to provide ? 50,000 to one crore women in five years. Similarly, the government has started procuring paddy at a price of ? 3,100 per quintal as was promised," he said.

Simple ways to become a

Better cook



While eating out is the most popular activity, learning to cook does not seem to be so of late. In fact, it also does not seem to feature among the top-five resolutions. If you are among the health conscious, who plan to eat healthy this year, it is more effective if you learn to cook it yourself. All you need to do

is get rid of the awe around cooking. It is no rocket-science. Just remember some things for a hassle-free, healthy cooking...

➔ Make a commitment

Always remember that learning is a process and not just a single step. To become a good cook, you will require some

time to master in it. It is much more than reading a recipe and following a set of instructions. Says food blogger Vidhi Ravjani, "Often you may lose hope and just feel like ordering something from your neighbourhood restaurant, but try to remember your goal. Figure out what went wrong in the first dish you made and don't repeat it the next time

around."

➔ Pay attention

The first rule when you just start out cooking is to be attentive. Turn off your TV, don't talk on the phone or don't surf the internet while you are cooking. Be aware of what the food looks like or what it smells like etc. Paying attention to what you're cooking, also saves you from unwanted disaster. For example, if you have put something on the stove and get busy talking on the phone, chances are that the dish could end up getting burnt as you are distracted.

➔ Organise well

The trick to becoming a better cook is by keeping everything you need while cooking at hand. Since you are not used to the whole process of cooking, you may forget about having everything prepped and chopped before you begin. Before you start, make sure that you have all the ingredients you require for the dish so that you don't have to do any last-minute running around.

➔ Taste your food while you cook

Don't wait for your cooking to get done completely. Flavour is built up in layers — when you taste the food in various stages of being cooked, you will get different flavours. For example if you are cooking with tomato, you will notice how the flavour of a tomato sauce deepens as it cooks or how a carrot goes from a simple vegetable to a rich and sweet dessert. Also when it comes to seasoning, always remember that there's more to it than salty or sweet. Many dishes can also be fixed easily with a jolt of acidity.

➔ Keep it simple

Just like you don't become an excellent driver until you have spent a considerable amount of time on the road, similarly you won't become a chef in a day. Begin by learning a few basics — a vegetable or chicken soup, an omelette, dal and chawal are a few. Repeat them until you are satisfied with the result. Move over to another dish only when you have mastered the simple ones.

➔ Shop with care

As a beginner, you may feel that the real cooking starts in the kitchen, but you are wrong. It really starts in the market. Select the ripest of fruits, the deeply coloured vegetables or the fresh variety of meats. Devote an extra 10 minutes to choose the best ingredients as it will save you hours of cooking time.

➔ Get the right equipment

There are a few essential equipments that you need to have. These include a skillet, woks, roasting pans, slow cookers, casserole dishes and salad bowls. Home baker Geeta Subodh says, "Besides these, a well-stocked kitchen includes a saucepan, cutting boards, one for meat and one for vegetables. Use a big cutting board — the bigger the board, the more room you will have for quickly prepping ingredients. You should also have a set of mixing bowls and measuring cups and spoons."

➔ Keep a well-stocked pantry

You shouldn't think of your kitchen as just an ordinary kitchen. While you are making a shopping list, and as you cook and use the ingredients, keep your pantry in mind. Every time you reach the bottom of your ginger-garlic paste or vinegar bottle, always jot it down on your list, so that you won't come up empty-handed the next time you are about to cook.

Tried fresh fruit popsicles yet?



Want to get your kids to enjoy fruit and still indulge in a chilled treat? How about making some fruit popsicles? They're a healthier alternative to aerated drinks and high-sugar syrups. These popsicles are not just a natural fix, but thus also make for a smarter dessert idea. They help you stay hydrated and give you an energy boost.

What's more, you can use just about any fruit — strawberries are in season, so start with those. Here are a few tips on how to make the cold sticks...

HOW TO MAKE THE COLD POPS

- Mash the fruit in a bowl and spoon it into the popsicle moulds.
- Add some juice or lime water for extra taste.
- Place these in the fridge.
- When semi-set, insert a stick in each and re-freeze.
- When set, run the moulds under cold water to ease out the pops.

DIFFERENT KINDS

There's a lot to try out. Use fresh orange or

mosambi that are always in season. Mix pomegranate (the fruit has a low glycaemic-index and is recommended for obese and diabetic patients) with lemon and a little cinnamon. Try hibiscus with pomegranate by mixing hibiscus tea with pomegranate juice, opt for peach pulp with honey or make the popsicles yoghurt-style by adding fresh yoghurt to the mix. With the summer coming up soon, you can also make coconut water popsicles as the fruit is high in potassium and extremely hydrating.



Five foods that help you remain fit, healthy and active

New Delhi: In today's world we have to be fit and healthy in order to cope with the ever-mounting pressures of a globalised life. Exercising in the gym and gardening alone won't keep you fit. You are what you eat and it is imperative you consume healthy foods.

Eating food rich in carbohydrate, proteins, minerals and vitamins after exercising make helps you boost your immunity.

Here are some foods that will help you to stay fit and energised throughout the day:

Apple:

'An apple a day keeps the doctor away'. There are different types of apples available in the market. Apples contain essential fibres, carbs and vitamins. You can use apple in salad, juice, smoothies to avoid boredom of eating an apple as it is.

Eggs:

An egg is one of the most loved foods for athletes. Eggs contain high amount of protein. You can eat an egg at any time of the day. It provides you all the protein that a body needs to repair.

Milk:

Drinking a glass of milk in the morning is very good as it contains calcium, proteins and hydrating properties which help your body get energised. You can have a glass of milk before going to bed as it helps your body to get the rest it needs. You can add fruits to milk and have healthy shakes.

Chicken Breast:

Chicken Breast contains protein and it supports muscle development.

Salmon:

Salmon is an excellent source of vitamins and Omega 3 fatty acids which are believed to keep your heart healthy. It is also high in protein.



Tried some Gujarati Parsi?

Want to get your kids to enjoy fruit and still indulge in a chilled treat? How about making some fruit popsicles? They're a healthier alternative to aerated drinks and high-sugar syrups. These popsicles are not just a natural fix, but thus also make for a smarter dessert idea. They help you stay hydrated and give you an energy boost. What's more, you can use just about any fruit — strawberries are in season, so start with those. Here are a few tips on how to make the cold sticks... HOWTO MAKE THE COLD POPS - Mash the fruit in a bowl and spoon it into the popsicle moulds. - Add some juice or lime water for extra taste. - Place these in the fridge.

- When semi-set, insert a stick in each and re-freeze. - When set, run the moulds under cold water to ease out the pops. DIFFERENT KINDS There's a lot to try out. Use fresh orange or mosambi that are always in season. Mix pomegranate (the fruit has a low glycaemic-index and is recommended for obese and diabetic patients) with lemon and a little cinnamon. Try hibiscus with pomegranate by mixing hibiscus tea with pomegranate juice, opt for peach pulp with honey or make the popsicles yoghurt-style by adding fresh yoghurt to the mix. With the summer coming up soon, you can also make coconut water popsicles as the fruit is high in potassium and extremely hydrating.



SC bars Aakash Institute to amend Articles of Association plan

NEW DELHI. The Supreme Court on Friday directed Byju's subsidiary Aakash Institute not to implement the resolution to amend its Articles of Association (AoA), which was passed at the EGM (extraordinary general meeting). While on November 20, the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) blocked the resolution, it was later stayed by the Karnataka High Court. The resolution is said to have the potential to dilute shareholding rights of certain investors. A Bench led by Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna and Justice PV Sanjay Kumar directed Aakash to approach the NCLAT within seven days. As per reports, both Aakash and Manipal Health Systems, which is a shareholder, informed the SC that they would not pursue the writ petition in the Karnataka High Court against the NCLT order. Reports suggest the NCLAT has been directed to decide the case uninfluenced by the decision of the high court. Singapore VII Topco, entity owned by



Blackstone, which holds a 6.97% stake in Aakash had filed a mismanagement and oppression petition with the NCLT and investors had argued that whatever changes proposed aimed at diluting their stake in the company. Aakash Institute is the profitable subsidiary of beleaguered edtech firm Byju's.

Gold loans grow over 50% in seven months

MUMBAI. Loans against gold jewellery by banks have grown by 50.4% in the first seven months of the current financial year. The sharp increase comes even as credit in every other personal loan segment grew in single digits. Data on sectoral deployment of bank credit released by RBI on Friday showed gold loans outstanding as of Oct 18, 2024, at Rs 1,54,282 crore. At the end of March 2024, total gold loans outstanding stood at Rs 1,02,562 crore. The year-on-year growth was 56%, compared to 13% in October 2023. Bankers said the spike in gold loans in the first seven months could be attributed to several factors, including a shift from NBFCs and a preference for secured loans over unsecured ones. Bank loans to NBFCs have shrunk by 0.7% to Rs 1.5 lakh crore during the first seven months of the year. Bankers also noted that the rise in gold loans could be due to the increase in its prices, which provides borrowers an opportunity to repay old loans and secure higher new loans. Some analysts view the growing demand for gold loans as a sign of financial distress. Last month, RBI directed banks and finance companies to review their gold loan policies and procedures, instructing them to rectify any deficiencies within three months. This followed a review that uncovered irregular practices, such as hiding bad loans through evergreening.

In the personal loan segment, the year-to-date growth in home loans was 5.6%. The home loan books of banks rose to Rs 28.7 lakh crore. Year-on-year growth in home loans was 12.1%, compared to 36.6% in October 2023. The next highest growth was in credit card outstanding, which rose by 9.2% in seven months to Rs 2.81 lakh crore. The increase in outstanding credit was in line with the rise in online transactions during the period. However, growth in other personal loans, including unsecured loans, was sluggish at 3.3%.

Bank credit growth slows to 12.8% in October

NEW DELHI. Non-food credit of banks registered a growth of 12.8 per cent in October as against 15.5 per cent in the year-ago month, according to the Reserve Bank of India's latest data. In October, non-food credit of lenders stood at Rs 167.54 lakh crore as against Rs 148.52 lakh crore in October 2023, the data showed. The slowdown in the credit growth compared to the previous year can be attributed to a higher base effect due to the merger of HDFC Ltd and HDFC Bank and RBI measures such as higher risk weights and the proposed Liquidity Coverage Ratio (LCR) norms, CareEdge Ratings said in a recent report. The decrease in advances growth in



October was mainly on account of dip in growth in personal loans and credit to the agriculture sector. Personal loans registered a growth of 15.8 per cent (y-o-y) at Rs 52.79 lakh crore in October 2024 as compared with a 18 per cent in the year-ago month. This slowdown was largely due to decline in growth in other personal loans (11.5 per cent vs 22.9 per cent), vehicle loans (11.4 per cent vs 20 per cent) and credit card outstanding (16.9 per cent vs 28 per cent). However, housing – the largest constituent of the personal loan segment – recorded an accelerated y-o-y growth of 17.8 per cent in October 2024 as against 14.3 per cent, the data showed. Credit to agriculture and allied activities registered a growth of 15.5 per cent (y-o-y) in October 2024, compared with 17.4 per cent seen in the same month of last year.

Q2 Growth Numbers Disappointing But 6.5% GDP Target For Fy25 'Not In Danger': CEA

Real GDP growth print of 5.4 per cent is on the lower side and it is disappointing, but there are some bright spots, says Chief Economic Advisor V Anantha Nageswaran.

Chief Economic Advisor V Anantha Nageswaran on Friday said that second quarter GDP growth at 5.4 per cent is disappointing but maintained that overall growth projection for FY25 at 6.5 per cent is "not in danger". The Economic Survey projected India's GDP to grow at 6.5-7 per cent in 2024-25, down from a high of 8.2 per cent in the preceding financial year. "Real GDP growth print of 5.4 per cent is on the lower side and it is

disappointing, but there are some bright spots," Chief Economic Advisor V Anantha Nageswaran said while addressing media on Q2 GDP data. Agriculture and allied sector and construction sector are some of the bright spot, he said, adding, record production estimates for kharif foodgrains as well as promising rabi crop prospects augur well for farm income and rural demand.

On the basis of second quarter number, it cannot be said that 6.5 per cent number is in danger as the low second quarter number is not a trend, he said. He exuded confidence that economy shows resilience underpinned by steady demand and strong manufacturing and service sector activity. Talking about other bright spot, he said, labour market shows signs of growth, with an easing unemployment rate and expanding formal workforce, with notable increases in manufacturing jobs and a strong inflow of youth into organised sectors. Better growth in labour incomes holds the



key to sustained demand growth and capital formation in the private sector, he said, adding, global crude oil prices remaining low, bodes well for economic activity and price stability.

India's economic growth slowed to near two-year low of 5.4 per cent in the July-September quarter of this fiscal due to poor performance of manufacturing and mining sectors as well as weak consumption. The gross domestic product

(GDP) had expanded by 8.1 per cent in the July-September quarter of 2023-24 fiscal and 6.7 per cent in first quarter of current fiscal (April-June 2024). The previous low level of GDP growth at 4.3 per cent was recorded in the third quarter (October-December 2022) of financial year 2022-23. With regard to challenges, Nageswaran said geopolitical conditions remain fragile and may continue to impact domestic inflation, supply chains and capital flows. Elevated asset prices globally is a risk factor, he said, adding, exports face greater uncertainties due to potential policy development elsewhere and an uncertain outlook for monetary policy and economic growth in advanced economies.

Limits to states' capacity on capex, capital-intensive growth in private corporate sector and the regulatory environment are medium- to long-term risk factors for economic growth, he added.

Capex slowdown helps govt cut deficit by 6.6 per cent in Apr-Oct

NEW DELHI. The slowing down of capital expenditure has helped the central government keep its books in order with fiscal deficit contracting by 6.6% in the first seven months (April-October) of the current financial year, according to the released by the government. The fiscal deficit (difference between total receipts and expenditure) during the period was Rs 7.5 lakh crore, which is 46.5% of the budget target of Rs 16.13 lakh crore. In the same period the previous year, the fiscal deficit had breached Rs 8 lakh crore mark. The central government's spending on infrastructure and other assets (capex) has dropped by 14.7% to Rs 4.7 lakh crore during the first seven months of the year. Last year during the same period, the total capex was Rs .5 lakh crore. In the current financial year, the Centre has a target of spending Rs 11.11 lakh crore on capex.



Revenue expenditure of the government – the spending on salaries and pension payments – increased by 8.7% to Rs 20 lakh crore. The total expenditure of the government breached 51.3% of the budget target of 48.2 lakh crore. Meanwhile, the growth in gross tax collection during April-October has moderated to 10.8%, down from 12% up to September. In October 2024, the gross tax collection remained stagnant at Rs 2.2 lakh crore, registering a growth of only 1.64%. Corporate tax collection in October 2024 registered a

decline of 14% to Rs 26,365 crore compared to Rs 30,686 crore in the same period last year.

In the April-October period, corporate tax collections remained stagnant at Rs 4.88 lakh crore as compared to Rs 4.82 lakh crore. Income tax collections during till October registered a growth of 20.2% to Rs 6.3 lakh crore. Central gross domestic product collections increased by 11% to Rs 5.2 lakh crore.

The government has set a target of limiting the fiscal deficit to 4.9% of the FY25 gross domestic product (GDP). But now with moderation in capital expenditure, and higher dividend by the Reserve Bank of India, the government might reduce the fiscal deficit further. According to an India Ratings estimate, the fiscal deficit could come down to 4.71% of the FY25 gross domestic product.

No credit risks so far for Adanis as group has good cash balance: Crisil

Crisil said there has been no negative actions so far by the group's lenders and investors following the US indictment of the group founder chairman Gautam Adani.

MUMBAI: Ratings agency Crisil report released on Friday ruled out any credit risks for Adani Group in the medium term. It said the group has sufficient liquidity and operational cash flows to meet debt obligations and the committed capex. Crisil said there has been no negative actions so far by the group's lenders and investors following the US indictment of the group founder chairman Gautam Adani. The group has flexibility to cut certain discretionary capex depending on developments in financial markets and future capital availability, the agency said, adding it has a healthy operating income and cash balance that reduces dependence on external debt to sustain operations. On November 20, after a complaint by the US justice department and the Securities and Exchange Commission, a New York court had indicted eight people of the group including chairman Adani, along with cousin Sagar Adani and Vneet Jaain, key functionaries of Adani

GDP growth rate slumps to near two-year low of 5.4% in July-Sept

NEW DELHI. INDIA'S REAL Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth slumped to a seven-quarter low of 5.4 per cent in July-September 2024, pulled down by "sluggish growth" in manufacturing and a deceleration in mining and quarrying, data released by the National Statistics Office (NSO) on Friday showed. The 5.4 per cent growth rate in Q2 is lower than 6.7 per cent in the April-June quarter and 8.1 per cent in July-September 2023. It is at least a percentage point lower than the consensus estimate arrived at through a poll of economists. Several factors added up to what Chief Economic Advisor V Anantha Nageswaran described as a "disappointing but not alarming" lower growth rate in Q2. Going forward, he said, doubling down on deregulation, expanding state capacity for public investment, and improving hiring and compensation policies in the private sector, will

improve growth prospects and turn the second quarter numbers into a fading memory. "Bulk of the slowdown has been predominantly due to the manufacturing sector. And some of it is partly due to the presence of excess capacity elsewhere and imports dumping in India and naturally the manufacturing process slowed down," he said. Manufacturing, which accounts for over 17 per cent of the total Gross Value Added (GVA) output, grew by just 2.2 per cent in July-September as against 7 per cent growth in April-June and 14.3 per cent growth in the corresponding period last year. Mining and quarrying seem to have been sharply hit by the extended rainfall as it recorded a contraction of 0.1 per cent in July-September compared with 7.2 per cent growth in the previous quarter and 11.1 per cent in the year-ago period.

There were some bright spots though,

Nageswaran said. "Agriculture has done quite well. The other bright spot is construction. Over the last full year, the construction sector has been growing at very high single digits and continued that growth rate in the first half of the current financial year as well," he said. To a question on the need for an interest rate cut, the CEA said the numbers were available for all to see, including the RBI. "They know what to do and I will not be commenting on this," Nageswaran said. When asked if there is risk to the Economic Survey's growth projection of 6.5-7 per cent for the full financial year he said, "It is too soon to say that even 6.5 per cent is in danger. I don't think we should extrapolate too much." The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has projected a much higher GDP growth rate of 7.2 per cent for 2024-25 and 7.



Green Energy for alleged securities and wire frauds and corruption of \$265 million to government officials back home to win power contracts. The charges relate to alleged violation of the SEC guidelines that led to false and misleading statements in bond offer documents.

I would know if large amount paid: Adani CFO Mumbai: Maintaining that no bribes were given to govt officials to secure contracts, Adani Group CFO Jugeshinder Singh on Friday said he would come to know if large amount was paid. The individuals named in allegations will respond and contest charges at the proper forum, he added.

India signs \$98 million deal with ADB to enhance horticulture yields

NEW DELHI. India has signed a \$98 million loan agreement with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to improve horticulture crop productivity, the ministry of finance announced on Friday.

"The Government of India and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) today signed a \$98 million loan to improve horticulture crop farmers' access to certified disease-free planting materials, which will boost their crops' yield, quality, and resilience to climate impacts," ministry of finance said in a statement. The loan agreement, part of the "Building India's Clean Plant Programme," was signed by Juhvi Mukherjee, joint secretary, department of economic affairs, ministry of finance, and Kai Wei Yeo, officer-in-charge of ADB's India Resident Mission.

"ADB funding will promote plant health that is vital for improving productivity of farmers," Mukherjee said after signing the agreement. ADB representative Yeo highlighted that the project falls in line



with the government's Atmanirbhar Clean Plant Programme (CPP), which focuses on improving plant health management. "It will help develop regulatory framework and institutional systems to effectively implement the CPP for horticulture in India. The project will involve close consultation with private nurseries, researchers, state governments, and growers' associations to ensure its success and sustainability,"

he said. According to the finance ministry, the project aims to set up clean plant centers equipped with state-of-the-art laboratories for disease diagnostics, staffed with trained experts.

These centres will maintain disease-free foundation materials and roll out a clean plant certification scheme. Accredited private nurseries will be tested and certified to ensure farmers have access to high-quality planting materials.

These centers will be set up using disease-free foundation materials and roll out a clean plant certification scheme. Additionally, accredited private nurseries will be tested and certified to ensure farmers have access to high-quality planting materials.

The project aims to boost crop productivity and help farmers tackle climate change challenges by providing disease-free materials that enhance long-term resilience, as rising temperatures impact pest and disease behavior.

"The plant health management promoted through the project will also help farmers adapt to climate change, as rising temperatures not only cause extreme weather events but also affect pest and disease behavior" the ministry said. The project will be implemented by ministry of agriculture and farmers welfare, along with the National Horticulture Board and the Indian Council of Agricultural Research.

NEWS BOX

Not KL Rahul Aakash Chopra picks Axar Patel as DC's captain in IPL 2025

New Delhi. Former India cricketer Aakash Chopra picked Axar Patel as the captain of Delhi Capitals for IPL 2025. Aakash went for Axar over KL Rahul as DC's captaincy option. He felt that Axar had been really underrated and showcased confidence in him to run the team well. There could be a toss-up between Rahul and Axar for the captaincy option for the Capitals as they let go of Rishabh Pant ahead of the auction. DC managed to acquire the services of KL Rahul for Rs 14 crore in the IPL 2025 mega auction. Who will be the captain? Their situation is like KKR. It could be Axar Patel. I don't mind him being the captain. If you give me the option, I would say make Axar the captain. He is extremely underrated, a very mature, fantastic performer, and he will run the team very well. He is someone who will command respect," Aakash said on his YouTube channel.



Who can captain Capitals?

Aakash pointed out that Faf du Plessis also could be another captaincy prospect for the Capitals. He was bought by the franchise for Rs 2 crore after RCB released him. KL Rahul could be the other option. The third could be Faf du Plessis if they wish, but they might not play Faf from the start because they used the Right To Match card for Jake Fraser-McGurk. So I am thinking between Axar and Rahul but the management hasn't given any clarity yet. My vote goes towards Axar because his performances on this ground have been exceptional," he observed. Axar was retained by DC for Rs 16.50 crore ahead of the auction. He is also the only player left in DC's core squad from IPL 2020 final.

Aakash also called Rahul a steal buy for Rs 14 crore.

"When they couldn't take Shreyas Iyer and Rishabh Pant, they said they were getting KL Rahul for 14 crore. An absolute steal buy. Someone might say fair price, but I would say an absolute steal because it is a very small ground and has a flat pitch," he said.

Border-Gavaskar Trophy: India brave rain and train to conquer pink-ball demons

New Delhi. India are leaving no stone unturned in their preparation to face the challenge of the pink-ball Test in Adelaide. Stand-in captain Jasprit Bumrah cautioned against complacency following the historic win in the series opener in Perth, stating that India would begin from zero ahead of the second Test. The team seems fully committed to embodying that mindset in their preparations. While preparations with the pink ball commenced during the Perth Test, India are maximising their opportunity to train in Canberra, where they will play a two-day warm-up match against Australia's



Board President's XI on Saturday and Sunday. India arrived in Canberra on Wednesday and held their first training session at the Manuka Oval on Friday, a day after meeting Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese at Parliament House. The focus of the session was entirely on acclimatising to the pink ball. Not even a steady spell of drizzle could deter India from training on Friday at the Manuka Oval.

Assistant coach Abhishek Nayar, who supervised India's preparations in the absence of Gautam Gambhir, emphasised the players' determination to optimise their training time in the lead-up to the second Test, which starts on 6th December.

"Part of coming to Australia is that you have to be mentally tough. The keenness of the players you saw batting is a testament to that.

"A lot of times when there's rain, groundsmen are hesitant to open up the wickets because they're unsure how the ball will behave. But seeing the players eager to go out and face the new ball, fast bowlers, and spinners was a positive sign. In Australia, you generally expect good conditions. It was encouraging to see the team trying to get accustomed.

Premier League: Leicester City appoint Ruud van Nistelrooy as new head coach

Former Manchester United forward Ruud van Nistelrooy was appointed as the new manager of Leicester City, the Premier League club announced on Friday.

New Delhi. Leicester City have announced the appointment of former Manchester United striker Ruud van Nistelrooy as their new head coach. The 48-year-old Dutchman has signed a contract running until the end of the 2027 season, replacing Steve Cooper, who was dismissed following a 2-1 defeat to Chelsea last Sunday. Van Nistelrooy will attend Leicester's Premier League match against Brentford on Saturday, although first-team coach Ben Dawson will lead the

team on the day. The new manager is set to officially begin his duties the following day, with his first match in charge scheduled for Tuesday against West Ham United. In his first statement as Leicester boss, Van Nistelrooy expressed enthusiasm about the role: "I'm proud, I'm excited," Van Nistelrooy said in a statement. "Everybody that I speak to about Leicester City Football Club is enthusiastic. They have great stories about the quality of the people working at the club, the supporters and, of course, the recent history of the club is impressive. I'm excited to start and to get to know everyone and give everything I can for the football club." The club's chairman, Aiyawatt Srivaddhanaprabha, welcomed the Dutchman, highlighting his winning mentality and experience: "It is my pleasure to welcome Ruud to Leicester City," chairman Aiyawatt



Srivaddhanaprabha said. "He joins a club with a rich history, passionate supporters, and a talented squad, and we are all excited to see the impact he can have as we embark on this new chapter together. "Ruud's experience,

knowledge, and winning mentality will undoubtedly bring great value to us, and we look forward to supporting him in achieving success for our fans and our club." Van Nistelrooy's managerial career includes a stint at PSV Eindhoven, where he won the Dutch Cup during the 2022-23 season before stepping down. Most recently, he served as interim manager at Manchester United, securing three wins and a draw in four matches before being succeeded by Ruben Amorim.

His appointment marks a significant chapter for Leicester City, a club that enjoyed a fairy-tale Premier League title win in 2015-16 but experienced relegation in 2023. They quickly bounced back to the top flight under Enzo Maresca, who later joined Chelsea. Currently 16th in the Premier League and one point above the relegation zone, Leicester face a critical period as they seek stability under their new manager.

Kane Williamson becomes 1st ever New Zealand batter to complete 9000 Test runs

New Delhi. Former New Zealand captain Kane Williamson became the first ever New Zealand batter to complete 9,000 Test runs. He achieved this feat on Day 3 of the 1st Test between New Zealand and England at the Hagley Oval in Christchurch. Williamson also became the third-joint fastest batter to do so. Williamson achieved the huge feat during New Zealand's 2nd innings in the 18th over, bowled by Gus Atkinson, as he received a huge round of applause from the crowd. Australia's Steve Smith is the fastest batter to achieve the record feat, followed by Brian Lara. Williamson became the third-fastest batter alongside Kumar Sangakkara and Younis Khan to achieve the feat in 103 matches. As England continued to dominate the proceedings in the 1st Test, Williamson came to New Zealand's rescue. In the 2nd innings, Chris Woakes provided England with a solid start, dismissing both New Zealand openers early. Tom Latham edged one to the slip cordon, while Devon Conway



mistimed a pull shot to wide mid-on, leaving the hosts in a tricky position. However, Kane Williamson and Rachin Ravindra steadied the innings with a composed partnership, ensuring no further damage.

England's bowlers maintained discipline, offering very few loose deliveries, keeping

the pressure on the home side. The contest remains evenly poised as Williamson and Ravindra focus on rebuilding the innings.

Fastest to 9000 Test runs (by matches taken)

99 - Steve Smith

101 - Brian Lara

103 - Kumar Sangakkara

103 - Younis Khan

103 - Kane Williamson

Williamson's brilliant return

Former New Zealand captain Kane Williamson made a return to the Test side as if he had never left. On Day 1 of the 1st Test between England and New Zealand, the star Kiwi player scored a magnificent 93, braving the tough conditions.

However, Williamson missed out on a well-deserving hundred as he departed for 93, just seven runs short of the three-figure mark. This was the first time since 2018 when Williamson departed in, his nervous nineties and could not complete his hundred in Test cricket.

Manchester City boss Pep Guardiola feels past success keeping sack questions at bay

New Delhi. Pep Guardiola, one of the most successful managers in modern football, has admitted he is under pressure to turn Manchester City's fortunes around after a rare slump in form. The reigning Premier League champions are on a six-game winless streak, with five losses and one draw across all competitions, ahead of their high-stakes clash with Liverpool at Anfield on Sunday. Despite signing a two-year contract extension last week that ties him to the Etihad Stadium until 2027, Guardiola acknowledges that his position is not unshakable. However, the Spaniard credits the unprecedented success he has brought to the club—six Premier League titles in seven years and 18 trophies overall—



for giving him a cushion from the sack. "At this football club you have to win and if you don't win, you will be in trouble," Guardiola told a news conference on Friday.

"I know the people say: 'Why is Pep not in trouble, why is Pep not sacked?' What we have done the last eight years is why I have this margin. What's for sure is I want to stay. I want to do it. But the moment I feel I am not positive for the club another one will come. It has to be." Guardiola stressed his determination to rectify the team's form, but admitted it is a daunting challenge. "I have to find a solution. I'm trying every day. I have to prove myself now, just like I have always done," he said. City's recent struggles have left them eight points behind Premier League leaders Liverpool, and a defeat on Sunday would widen the gap to 11 points. Guardiola downplayed title aspirations at this stage, describing them as "unrealistic" given the team's poor run. "In the situation we are in, it is not realistic to think about big targets," Guardiola said. "The focus is on the next game and regaining momentum. Thinking about winning the title in November or December has never been realistic, even in good situations.

Indian pacers review bowling with pink ball before AUS Test: Tough for batters

The Indian speedsters opened up about their experiences of bowling with the pink ball ahead of the 2nd Test vs Australia. India lead the 5-match series 1-0 vs Australia.

New Delhi. The Indian pacers gave a review of bowling with the pink ball ahead of the 2nd Test vs Australia. India will face Australia in a pink-ball Test at the Adelaide Oval, starting December 6. Before the 2nd Test, India prepared for a practice game vs Australia Prime Minister's XI at the Manuka Oval. However, Day 1 of the two-day practice contest was delayed due to rain in Canberra. In a video released by the BCCI on their social media, the Indian pacers admitted the uncertain nature of the pink ball and how it could pose a tough challenge



for the batters.

"I think when we picked up the pink ball, it was slightly bigger than the red ball. The seam, the little bit that I know, is tied up, which makes it heavier, and it does give a lot more off the seam. For me, it is going to do more than the red ball, in terms of shine and also when the lights come on. Also takes away for reverse swing. As bowlers, we are also learning a few more sessions to go

before the game," Prasidh Krishna said in the video. Watch the video here. "The seam is not visible very quickly. Some batters are there who bat while seeing the sign. But the pink ball doesn't show from which side shine is there. This is coming off after skidding," Mukesh Kumar added.

India have played only 4 pink-ball Tests and have managed a win in three of those. Their only loss came against Australia in 2020 when the team was bundled out for their lowest Test score of 36

runs. "It's tough for the batters, there is a lot of bounce from the pink ball," Akash Deep said.

Yash Dayal also opened up about bowling to India's veterans Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma. "I have bowled to Virat and Rohit bhai, and I feel that the ball is not swinging a lot, the seam position has to be straight. If you keep the line and length intact, the ball will do things on its own," Yash Dayal said.

Imran Patel, 35-year-old cricketer, dies of cardiac arrest at Pune stadium

Imran Patel, a 35-year-old professional cricketer, died on Wednesday night after suffering a massive cardiac arrest during a league match at Pune's Garware Stadium. While walking back to the pavilion due to chest and arm pain, the opening batsman suddenly collapsed, shocking players and spectators alike.

New Delhi. Imran Patel, a 35-year-old professional cricketer, died after suffering a fatal cardiac arrest during a local league match at the Pune Stadium on Wednesday night. Patel, an all-rounder, collapsed while walking back to the pavilion after

complaining of chest and arm pain. Patel, opening the batting for his team, had faced only a few overs when he signalled discomfort and informed the on-field umpires of pain in his left arm and chest. With their consent, he began to leave the field but collapsed unexpectedly just moments later. The incident, captured live as the match was being streamed, prompted immediate action from teammates and officials, who rushed him to a nearby private hospital. Sadly, he was pronounced dead on arrival, with doctors confirming a massive cardiac arrest as the cause. The cricketing fraternity and the local community have been left in shock by Patel's sudden demise. Known for his exceptional fitness and active presence on the field, his demise has sparked conversations about the increasing incidents of cardiac-related deaths in sports. "He didn't have history of any medical condition," said



Naseer Khan, another cricketer who was part of the match, was quoted as saying by the Times of India "He was in good physical condition. In fact, he was an allrounder who loved the game. We're all still in shock." Imran is survived by his wife and

three kids, including a four-month-old daughter. Besides managing a local cricket team, Patel owned a real estate business and a juice shop, making him a respected and loved figure in the area. This tragic incident comes just months after another cricketer, Habib Shaikh, passed away under similar circumstances during a match in Pune. While Shaikh had a known history of diabetes, Patel's sudden cardiac arrest, despite his apparent good health, has left many baffled.

Tributes have poured in from teammates, fans, and prominent figures in the local cricketing community, all mourning the loss of a player and individual who embodied passion and commitment. A condolence meeting is being planned to honor Patel's memory, with calls for increased awareness and preventive measures for athletes' health and safety.

Mouni Roy

Gets Trolled For Bold Red Carpet Look In Thigh-High Slit Outfit: 'She Is Uncomfortable'



Mouni Roy, known for her impeccable style, made a striking appearance at the GQ Men of the Year event. However, her bold choice of attire became a topic of heated discussion among netizens. The actress graced the red carpet in a daring thigh-high slit outfit with a sheer gold skirt and geometric metallic accents adorning the bodice. The ensemble featured a strapless design that showcased her toned frame, paired with statement earrings and stiletto heels. Her sleek ponytail and dramatic eye makeup added to the overall glam factor. While Mouni confidently posed for the paparazzi, her video quickly went viral, sparking divided opinions online.

Though her fans lauded her confidence, many on social media were unimpressed with the look. One user commented, "Worst dress." Another wrote, "She looks so uncomfortable in that." A third chimed in, "She is not slaying it at all... She is too uncomfortable with her dress." Some also compared her look to Priyanka Chopra's recent fashion choices, with one remarking, "Copied Priyanka Chopra's dress." Others expressed disappointment, saying, "Mouni used to look good earlier... I don't know why she's wearing such hopeless clothes."

Despite the online trolling, Mouni Roy is no stranger to experimenting with her style and is often applauded for taking risks. Mouni Roy began her career with the popular television series *Kyunki Saas* and *Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi* and rose to fame with her role in *Naagin*, which solidified her position as one of the leading actresses in Indian television. Transitioning to films, she made her Bollywood debut in *Gold* alongside Akshay Kumar and has since appeared in notable projects like *Brahmastra: Part One - Shiva*. Recently, Mouni was seen in the web series *Sultan of Delhi* and the drama series *Showtime*. She also co-hosted the Indian adaptation of *Temptation Island* with Karan Kundrra, showcasing her versatility beyond acting.



Shraddha Kapoor

Arjun Kapoor Share Hug At Reunion; Half Girlfriend Fans Say 'Our Riya And Madhav'

Shraddha Kapoor and Arjun Kapoor brought back a wave of nostalgia as they reunited on the red carpet at the GQ Men of the Year event. The duo, who shared sizzling chemistry in their 2017 hit *Half Girlfriend*, delighted fans with their warm camaraderie. As Shraddha posed for the paparazzi in a stunning black mini dress paired with white thigh-high boots and a glittery bag, Arjun arrived in style, donning an all-black ensemble. The two greeted each other with a friendly hug and a cheek kiss, their bond evident even after years. The moment didn't end there; they shared a lighthearted chat on the red carpet before posing together for the cameras, flashing their brightest smiles.



Fans of *Half Girlfriend* were thrilled to see "Riya Somani" and "Madhav Jha" together again. Social media quickly buzzed with excitement, with comments flooding in. "Riya Somani & Madhav Jha from *Half Girlfriend*! My favorite movie," wrote one fan. Another added, "They make us cry every time. Such a nice pair!" The reunion brought back fond memories of their on-screen romance, leaving fans emotional and asking for another collaboration.

What's Next for Arjun and Shraddha

Arjun Kapoor is currently riding high on the success of *Singham Again*,

where his portrayal of Danger Lanka has received rave reviews. Expressing gratitude, he shared a heartfelt note on Instagram, saying, "Ending November on a high note with a heart full of gratitude for all the love you've shown to *Singham Again*"

Shraddha Kapoor, meanwhile, is basking in the success of *Stree 2*. While she won't play the lead in the upcoming *War 2*, reports suggest she might join Hrithik Roshan and Jr NTR for a special song in the film. Shraddha and Arjun's red-carpet reunion has not only delighted *Half Girlfriend* fans but also reignited hopes of seeing this charming duo on screen once more.."



Lin Laishram's Anniversary Wish For Hubby Randeep Hooda Is Adorable: 'Classmate From Piano Lesson'



Randeep Hooda and Lin Laishram are among the loved couples in B-town. Last year, they tied the knot in Imphal, Manipur, following Meitei rituals, in presence of their near and dear ones. Their traditional wedding ceremony quickly caught the attention of the people on the internet, who praised the actor for embracing his bride's culture with his heart. They also complimented Lin for being connected to her roots. And guess what? It's been a year since Randeep and Lin have gotten married. Today, November 29, the couple is celebrating their first marriage anniversary. To mark the special occasion, Lin shared a wholesome picture featuring her husband on Instagram Stories.

She posted a picture of the two playing the piano, with just their hands visible. Lin wished her husband on their first anniversary, saying, "Happy 1st anniversary to my classmate from piano lesson." Randeep re-shared the picture on his Instagram Stories with just two red heart emojis. This year, Randeep and Lin celebrated their first Diwali as husband and wife. And the special occasion surely needed to be commemorated on social media. On November 1, the couple shared a collaborative post on Instagram, where they were dressed in vibrant ethnic outfits. While Randeep opted for a yellow kurta and white pyjama, Lin twinned with her husband in a yellow Anarkali suit set. In the caption of the post, Randeep wrote, "1st Diwali as Mr. & Mrs. From us to you, #HappyDiwali."

Likewise, Lin also celebrated her first Karwa Chauth, although Randeep couldn't be by her side. But that did not dim her festive fervour. On October 20, she shared a post on her Instagram account highlighting how she listened to Randeep's sweet request of skipping the fast for him. Lin posted two pictures, one of which showed her dressed in a gorgeous red sequin saree paired with a matching blouse and another that showcased all the snacks she was planning to munch on while binge-watching. In the caption, she wrote, "Happy First #KarwaChauth Husband Since you said no fasting, I've got a basket full of snacks, Netflix queued up, and my dance moves ready! #KarwaChauthVibes."

'Actors Cross Boundaries During Kiss': Sayani Gupta On Intimate Scenes



Sayani Gupta, known for her roles in films and shows like *Margarita with a Straw*, *Inside Edge* and *Four More Shots Please*, has never shied away from intimacy on screen. Sayani recently shared an unsettling experience about filming intimate scenes during an interview with *Radio Nasha*. The actress recalled an incident when a co-star tried to linger on with a kiss even after the director had called for a 'cut.' She also highlighted the importance of having intimacy coordinators on set, a practice she first encountered during *Margarita with a Straw* in 2013.

Discussing her experiences, Sayani remarked, "I could write a book about intimacy and I am grateful that intimacy coordinator is a profession that has come to India finally." She emphasised that while intimate scenes are often highly technical and straightforward to execute, they can sometimes lead to uncomfortable situations due to inappropriate behaviour. The actress recounted an incident where a fellow actor crossed boundaries by continuing to kiss her after the director had called her "cut." She described the moment as unsettling and an example of indecent behaviour, adding that such actions, though subtle, are unacceptable. She did not name the co-star though.

With the growing presence of intimacy coordinators in India, Sayani Gupta further opened up about the challenges actors face on set, recalling a particularly vulnerable moment during the outdoor shoot of *Four More Shots Please* in Goa. In an interview with *Radio Nasha*, she described having to lie on the beach in a tiny dress while surrounded by a large crowd. "I felt so vulnerable at that point because some 70 men were standing in front of me. There was not one person on set who was next to me, there wasn't even much staff also... with 800 extras," she shared. The actress expressed her discomfort and the lack of support in such situations. "I was like, 'I just need one person to be with a shawl,'" she added, highlighting how actors' safety and comfort are often overlooked on sets. She pointed out that this lack of consideration isn't limited to intimate scenes but can occur in various scenarios where personal boundaries are compromised.