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Selective outrage: Judges, bureaucrats slam Rahul Gandhi's vote chori charge

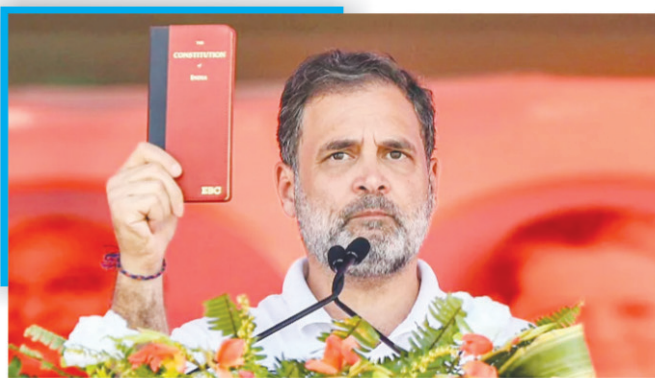
An open letter, written by 272 eminent personalities, called out the Congress's criticism towards the Election Commission and urged an end to conspiracy-laced rhetoric against institutions.

New Delhi.(Agency)

An open letter written by 272 eminent personalities, including retired judges, bureaucrats and armed officers, lashed out at Congress MP Rahul Gandhi for his repeated vote theft claims, saying that Indian democracy was witnessing a rising tide of venomous rhetoric directed toward its foundational institutions. The letter addressed to Rahul Gandhi and the Congress, said that some political leaders were resorting to provocative and unsubstantiated accusations, instead of offering a genuine policy alternative. "After their attempts to tarnish the Indian armed forces by questioning their valour and accomplishments, and the judiciary by questioning its fairness, parliament, and its constitutional functionaries, now it is the turn of the Election Commission to face systematic and conspiratorial attacks on its integrity and reputation," the letter read. Recalling Rahul Gandhi's vote chori claims during the Maharashtra and Haryana Assembly polls, the eminent personalities stressed that no formal complaint was lodged against him for "levelling unsubstantiated allegations and threatening public

servants in the performance of their duties".

"The Leader of Opposition, Lok Sabha, has repeatedly attacked the Election Commission, declaring that he has open and shut proof that the



Election Commission is involved in vote theft and claimed that he has 100 per cent proof. Using unbelievably uncouth rhetoric that what he has found is an atom bomb and when it explodes, the Election Commission would have no place to hide," they said. "He has also issued threats that whoever in the Election Commission is involved in this exercise,

right from top to bottom, he will not spare them. According to him, the commission is indulging in treason. He has gone on record to threaten that if CEC/ECs are retired, he will hound them," they added.

The letter called out the Congress's criticism of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, including calling the Election Commission a "B-team of the BJP", saying it amounted to blistering rhetoric."

Several senior figures of Congress and other political parties, leftist NGOs, ideologically opinionated scholars and a few attention seekers in other walks of life, have joined in with similarly blistering rhetoric against SIR, even declaring that the commission has descended into complete shamelessness by acting like the 'B-team of the BJP,' it stressed. "Such fiery rhetoric may be emotionally powerful – but it collapses under scrutiny because the Election Commission has publicly shared its SIR methodology, overseen verification by court-sanctioned means, removed ineligible names in a compliant manner and added new eligible voters," the letter said.

'Meri Dilli – Meri Zimmedari': Rekha Gupta's Emotional Appeal

The Sikh Times

Simmi Kaur Babbar

New Delhi, 19 November: To combat the rising pollution levels and growing filth in the city, Delhi Chief Minister Smt. Rekha Gupta, along with her entire cabinet (the Delhi Team), has taken direct charge of the ongoing cleanliness and anti-pollution campaign by leading efforts on the ground. The Chief Minister asserted that "Meri Dilli – Meri Zimmedari" is not merely a slogan but the core working principle of the Delhi Government. She said that the vision of making the national capital clean and pollution-free can be realised only when citizens and the government work together. Making an emotional appeal, she stated: "Delhi is our shared legacy. If Delhi stands united, the city will certainly become clean. Every small effort by each citizen contributes to a healthier and cleaner environment for future generations." A major highlight of the campaign is the active involvement of the entire cabinet and elected representatives across the city, who are working within their respective constituencies to curb pollution and improve sanitation. Demonstrating the government's commitment, sen-

ior officials from multiple departments have also been on the ground, inspecting cleanliness arrangements and issuing necessary directions. As part of these ongoing efforts, Chief Minister Rekha Gupta today inspected Road No. 41 near the Najafgarh Drain (formerly the Sahibi River)



and reviewed sanitation and development works in the Outer Ring Road, Meera Bagh Seva Basti, Sonia Camp, and Paschim Puri Crossing areas. She instructed officials to ensure timely completion of all sanitation and infrastructure works with the highest quality standards. The Chief Minister reiterated that this is not a one-time exercise but a sustained and long-term campaign. Water Minister Praveesh Sahib Singh Verma inspected the Hauz Khas area of the Malviya Nagar Assembly constituency, accompanied by senior officials. He directed immediate corrective action wherever deficiencies in public amenities were identified.

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PM's Lecture Was Petty, Don't Know Why Shashi Tharoor Praised Him: Congress

New Delhi.(Agency)

The Congress on Wednesday said Prime Minister Narendra Modi delivered a "petty speech" at the Ramnath Goenka Lecture and wondered how senior party leader Shashi Tharoor found any reason to praise it. Congress leader Supriya Shrinate said the Prime Minister should have spoken on his "problem with fair journalism" and claimed he thinks of the opposition party "day and night". She was referring to PM Modi's criticisms of the opposition party in his speech on Monday evening. Her remarks came a day after Tharoor said PM Modi's Ramnath Goenka Lecture served as both an economic outlook and a

cultural call to action.

Speaking to reporters, Shrinate said: "I did not find anything in the speech worth appreciating. I think the PM must answer a lot of things. He was attending an event organised by a newspaper. He should tell us what his problem is with fair journalism. He should have told us why he is not happy with those who show and speak truth...So, I didn't see any reason to appreciate him."

She added: "I don't know how he (Tharoor) found one...I found it to be a petty speech. He criticised the Congress there too. The PM thinks of Congress day and night. This is amazing." In a post on X on Tuesday,



Tharoor said he attended the Lecture at the invitation of the organising newspaper - The Indian Express.

"Attended PM Narendra Modi's Ramnath Goenka Lecture at the invitation of @IndianExpress last night. He spoke of India's 'constructive impatience' for

development and strongly pushed for a post-colonial mindset," the Lok Sabha MP from Thiruvananthapuram said on X. "On the whole, the PM's address served as both an economic outlook and a cultural call to action, urging the nation to be restless for progress. Glad to have been in the audience despite battling a bad cold and cough!" he added. At the sixth Ramnath Goenka Lecture, PM Modi spoke on the Bihar election result, saying it has sent a clear message to all state governments that their development policies will determine the future of their parties, whether they belong to "left, right or centre".

Karnataka plans new IT city at Bidadi as global investors eye Bengaluru

Shivakumar had announced the country's first artificial intelligence powered integrated city at Bidadi, which is on the suburbs of Bengaluru. At present, Bidadi is an industrial hub.

BENGALURU.(Agency)

The Karnataka government is planning to come up with yet another IT City near Bengaluru, this time at Bidadi in Ramanagara district, which was named Bengaluru South district just a few months ago. Announcing the plan, Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar who is also Bengaluru Development Minister, on Tuesday said many investors from various countries are coming forward to invest billions of dollars in Bengaluru. Shivakumar told reporters that leaders from several countries are meeting him. "They are excited about investing in Bengaluru and we are supporting their investments in every way possible. Representatives from 60 countries are participating in Bengaluru Tech Summit 2025," he said.



According to him, the local talent, innovation, technology and startups will take Karnataka in a new direction, if encouraged properly. "I always call upon the youth to compete at the global level. We will support those who come to Karnataka

seeking opportunities," he added.

Shivakumar said IT Minister Priyank Kharge and KEONICS head Sharath Bache Gowda are spearheading the Bidadi IT City idea. "There are about 25 lakh IT experts in Bengaluru and no other place on earth has this kind of talent pool. The Tech Summit will discuss the future of IT for the next three days," he said. Earlier, Shivakumar had announced the country's first artificial intelligence powered integrated city at Bidadi, which is on the suburbs of Bengaluru. At present, Bidadi is an industrial hub.

On Tumakuru Metro

The Deputy Chief Minister said they are looking at the feasibility of extending the Metro services up to Tumakuru, as many leaders, including Home Minister Dr G Parameshwara, have told.

Team Nitish's Oath Today, JDU-BJP Balance Caste Math In Minister Picks

Patna.(Agency)

Twenty-two ministers are expected to take the oath of office along with Chief Minister Nitish Kumar tomorrow during the grand swearing-in ceremony of the new NDA government in Bihar, according to top sources in the ruling coalition. The sources have said nine MLAs from the BJP, 10 from JDU, and one each from Chirag Paswan's LJP (Ram Vilas), Jitan Ram Manjhi's Hindustani Awami Morcha, and Upendra Kushwaha's Rashtriya Lok Morcha may take the oath tomorrow.

From the BJP's quota, Samrat Choudhary, Vijay Sinha, Nitin Navin, Renu Devi, Mangal Pandey, Neeraj Bablu, Sanjay Sarawagi, Hari Sahni, and Rajnish Kumar may take the oath. Eight out of these nine leaders were ministers in the outgoing government. Samrat Choudhary, who was Deputy Chief Minister in the previous government, has been elected the BJP's leader in the Assembly. BJP has tried to strike a caste balance by accommodating two Bhumihar leaders, two from EBC, and one each from the Brahman and Rajput communities. It has also accommodated the Kayastha and Vaishya groups.

From the JDU quota, 10 MLAs are likely to be sworn in at the Gandhi Maidan event tomorrow. These are Vijay Choudhary, Shrawan Kumar, Ashok Choudhary, Zama Khan, Ratnesi Sada, Leshi Singh, Bijender Yadav, Shyam Rajak, Sunil Kumar and Damodar Rawat. Eight of these MLAs were ministers in the outgoing government. The JDU, too, has balanced caste equations in its ministerial choices, with four Dalits and the representation of Muslims, Yadavs, EBCs, Rajputs and Bhumihars.

Raju Tiwari, a Brahmin and state chief of Chirag Paswan's LJP (Ram Vilas), may represent his party in the new cabinet. Jitan Ram Manjhi's son Santosh Suman and Upendra Kushwaha's wife Snehlata Kushwaha are also likely to be sworn in. Nitish Kumar will be taking the oath as Bihar Chief Minister for the 10th time tomorrow after the NDA posted a mammoth victory in the Assembly polls last week. The NDA won 202 seats in the 243-member Assembly. Tomorrow's event at Patna's historic Gandhi Maidan is being planned as an NDA show of strength. Besides Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Chief Ministers of all BJP-ruled states are expected to be present at the event.



Congress Pays Tribute To Indira Gandhi On Her Birth Anniversary

New Delhi.(Agency)

The Congress on Wednesday paid rich tributes to former prime minister Indira Gandhi on her birth anniversary, with Rahul Gandhi saying that he was inspired to make fearless decisions for India from his grandmother. Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and former party chiefs Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi paid floral tributes to Indira Gandhi at her memorial, Shakti Sthal, here. In a post on X, Kharge said the exemplary and dynamic leadership of Indira Gandhi, showing immense political courage, will forever inspire. "Her unwavering resolve and lifelong dedication to public service left an indelible mark on India's journey of progress. Her ultimate sacrifice in safeguarding the unity and integrity of the nation deserves a million salutations," Kharge said.

"On her birth anniversary, we offer our respectful homage to her enduring legacy," he said. Rahul Gandhi said her courage, patriotism, and morality continue to inspire him to stand firmly against injustice.

In a post in Hindi on X, he said, "I got inspiration to make fearless decisions for India and to put national interests first in every situation from my grandmother. Her courage, patriotism, and morality continue to inspire me to stand firmly against injustice." Congress general secretary, in-charge, organisation, K C Venugopal remembered the first female prime minister as someone who steered the country through turbulent times and ushered in an era of welfare.

"Her bold leadership saw India emerge as a strong global force that stood shoulder to shoulder with superpowers and never bowed down to any pressure," Venugopal said on X.

Till her last breath, she gave it her all to our country and laid down her life for its unity, integrity and sovereignty, he said. "For generations to come, she will be revered for her service to the nation. Her life remains

one of the most important guiding lessons for us all, and we will always be inspired by her vision and dedication to our country," he said. The Congress, on its official X handle,



said, "The embodiment of 'Shakti', Indira ji steered the nation towards self-reliance, inclusive development and an advanced global standing, undaunted in the face of numerous geopolitical challenges." The party

added, "Her bold leadership and earnest commitment to justice, unity and progress continue to light Congress' path forward." Through an unshakeable resolve and bold leadership, Indira Gandhi successfully secured India's agricultural self-sufficiency, liberated Bangladesh and challenged world powers head-on to safeguard the nation's interests, the party said.

"On her birth anniversary, we honour Indira ji's fearless leadership, decisive vision and unwavering commitment to India's progress. From the Green Revolution to the liberation of Bangladesh, her bold leadership shaped a strong, self-reliant nation that bowed to no superpower," the Congress said.

Born on November 19, 1917, Indira Gandhi served as the prime minister from 1966 to 1977 and then again from 1980 until her assassination on October 31, 1984.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and former party chiefs Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi paid floral tributes to Indira Gandhi at her memorial, Shakti Sthal, here.

News box

Delhi blast: Mobile phones seized, 10 Al-Falah students stopped from leaving university campus

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Investigating agencies have confiscated cellphones of 10 Al-Falah University students, several of them in the final year, and barred them from leaving campus without permission.The students are believed to be close to the three doctors involved in the Delhi terror plot.Sources said the students were planning to leave for their hometowns and were prevented from leaving the campus without prior clearance from investigating agencies. Their phones were also taken for examination. On Tuesday, Jawad Ahmed Siddiqui, the founder of Al-Falah University, was arrested by Enforcement Directorate in connection with a money laundering case. So far, several students and faculty members have been questioned for information about operations of the module. Some faculty members have been detained too. But no student has been arrested so far.As the atmosphere on campus remained tense with visible security presence on the premises, at least 30 students had left for their homes till Tuesday, while several staff members also returned to their native states.A staff member who left the campus along with two colleagues told mediapersons that they might not return for at least two months. "Our relatives have begun questioning our activities. With the situation chaotic on the campus, we decided to return home," the staff member said.

Met factors keep Gurgaon AQI in ‘poor’ zone for second day

Gurgaon.(Agency)

The city's AQI climbed to 272 (poor) on Tuesday from Monday's 253, a rise of about 7% in just 24 hours. Sector 51 hit 332 and Gwalpahari 321, both in the very poor bracket. Vikas Sadan logged 231, while Teri Gram remained relatively lower at 194. With no change in dispersion conditions, experts don't expect much relief this week. The pollution profile over the first half of Nov tells the same story. PM2.5 was the leading pollutant on 9 of the past 17 days, carbon monoxide topped the charts once and PM10 took the lead on the remaining days. When PM2.5 dominates for more than half the month, it usually means combustion-linked sources—vehicles, waste burning and industrial emissions—are doing more damage than coarse dust. The city barely moved out of the poor to very poor categories throughout Nov. Delhi's air quality stood in the very poor bracket on Nov 17 with an AQI of 351 at 4 pm. Minimum temperatures have been running 1 to 5 degrees below normal across the capital, while maximum temperatures have also dipped. The region has mostly seen clear skies and wind speeds of 8–10 kmph throughout the day.These wind regimes, mostly from the southwest, north-northwest or north, haven't offered the ventilation needed to flush out pollutants. Delhi-NCR is likely to remain in the very poor category till at least Nov 21.Doctors say the impact of this week's spike will be immediate. Dr Piyush Goel, senior consultant (Pulmonology) at Narayana Hospital, explained why PM2.5-heavy days are particularly dangerous. "PM2.5 is one of the most harmful pollutants in the air. PM refers to particulate matter and 2.5 indicates its diameter in microns, which is incredibly small. These particles are made up of dust, industrial toxins, emissions from vehicles, heavy metals, sulphur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide and even water vapour. Because they are so fine, they travel deep into the lungs when inhaled. From there, they can enter the bloodstream. Once in the blood, they can reach the heart and raise the risk of a heart attack. They can also travel to the brain and trigger a stroke. Long-term exposure is increasingly being linked to infertility among young adults. This is why air pollution is a serious concern and why doctors advise people to use N95 or surgical masks."

With no cops in sight, vehicles flout rules on Bhangel elevated road on Day 1

Noida.(Agency)

Bhangel elevated road saw a steady stream of traffic soon after the barricades were lifted.But it was a chaotic first day. Several cars and bikes were seen driving on the wrong side, raising concerns over safety and lack of traffic police enforcement on the newly opened corridor. A traffic inspector said that they took note of the situation and deployed teams on both sides of the stretch to ensure enforcement.Meanwhile, local residents and shopkeepers have welcomed the opening of the elevated road, saying that during the construction period, the DSC Road, which runs below the elevated stretch, was dug up and remains in poor condition, severely affecting their business.People travelling from the 7X sectors to Noida and Delhi rely on this route. A resident of Sector 78, Brajesh Sharma, uses this road daily. He said the elevated road was ready but awaiting inauguration. "The DSC Road remains in bad shape and has been dug up at several points, causing frequent traffic jams and even vehicle overturning at times. The intervention of the farmers' group expedited the opening, which otherwise may have been delayed further," he said.Bhangel is one of the oldest markets of the city. It is surrounded by sectors 47, 48 and villages like Salarpur and Barola. It is a wholesale and retail hub for thousands of residents, migrant workers and students.The elevated road project was launched in June 2020 with a deadline of December 2022, but it was completed earlier this year. Traders frommarkets located below and around the elevated road are frustrated over the pathetic condition of the road and lead to waterlogging during monsoon. Imran Khan, who runs a mobile repair shop in Bhangel, said that business had suffered for nearly five years. "There is encroachment by street vendors, dumped garbage, and stray animals. There is also dust pollution, and this road is unmotorable. Initially, traders expected the elevated road project to be completed quickly, but delays and the neglected condition of the DSC Road turned the stretch into a bottleneck, discouraging customers and hurting business," he said.Due to the enforcement of GRAP stage III and the ban on all construction activities, the DSC Road repair works may take some time.

Marriage halls may face up to s 5L fine for waste violations

Ghaziabad .(Agency)

The municipal corporation has proposed hefty fines for violations of the solid waste management rules (SWM) 2016, in line with NGT guidelines. High-rise societies failing to segregate waste at source will face fines starting at Rs 1,000, increasing to Rs 20,000 for repeated violations. Marriage halls and bulk waste generators will face fines of Rs 5 lakh and potential cancellation of trade licence. Municipal health officer Mithesh Kumar said the corporation, apart from being a maintenance agency, is also an enforcement agency as per the mandate by the municipal act. "The corporation's highest decision-making body has vetted the fine structure that will have more teeth and will certainly act as a deterrent," he said."The violations of SWM rules have been identified under various heads: bulk waste generators, both residential and institutional; those who dump waste illegally; those who burn waste in the open; and dairy owners who dispose of



waste illegally," he said.Under the residential heads,GMC will impose a fine of Rs 1,000 on first-time offenders. This will be increased to Rs 5,000 for the second violation. If it continues, a fine of Rs 20,000 will be levied and the owner will be ineligible for availing rebates on house, water, and sewer taxes for two

years.If a marriage hall, farmhouse, or hotel is caught breaking the rules, it will face escalating penalties. The first and second violations will attract a penalty of Rs 1,000 and Rs 5,000, respectively. If they continue to break the rules, the fine will be raised to Rs 5 lakh along with cancellation of their licence. An FIR will

Noida begins converting 2003 rolls to Excel files as residents hit SIR hurdle

Noida.(Agency)

Recognising difficulties residents are facing in sourcing their 2003 electoral roll details for the Election Commission's ongoing special intensive revision, the Noida administration has started converting scanned records of the old rolls into searchable Excel files.On Nov 16, TOI reported that most people were leaving the 2003 section blank in their enumeration forms, unable to source those details from the CEO UP website. Without a search option, one needs to know the old constituency name (pre-delimitation) and booth number to download the list. Going through the list is a tedious process. In several cases, scanned copies are illegible.DM Medha Roopam told TOI the move followed consistent feedback from residents. "During SIR reviews, we were repeatedly told that people struggled to locate their part and serial numbers in the 2003 rolls. Even BLOs were often unable to guide them. So, we decided to digitise the files and make names searchable," she said, adding that a team has been working on the task for four to five days. The scanned PDFs are being converted into



Excel sheets, and by Wednesday, they will be ready for circulation to all BLOs, BLAs and RWAs or AOAs. Once these searchable lists are available, the process will become much easier for voters," she added.Ghaziabad DM Ravindra Mander told TOI that the district is taking a

different route by integrating the 2003 voter list directly into the BLO mobile app. "We've shared Ghaziabad's 2003 electoral roll with the state election commission, which is mapping it to the current rolls. The upload is nearly complete," he said."Once live, BLOs will be able to search a voter's name on the app and immediately check whether it appears in the 2003 list. This will allow quick verification, even if a voter has missed or incorrectly filled details during the digital upload of enumeration forms," Mander added.However, this data will be accessible only to BLOs. Under the SIR process, all enumeration forms collected from voters must be digitally uploaded by BLOs through the Election Commission's app. "Distribution of forms is nearly complete, and collection has begun. As BLOs start uploading data, 2003 voter list will already be fully integrated into the app," Mander said. "This will ensure BLOs can easily verify whether a voter's name appears in the 2003 rolls."Earlier, TOI reported how the SIR exercise had run into widespread confusion over the section asking for voters' 2003 details.

Haryana plans cap on doctors registering at medical termination of pregnancy centres

Chandigarh .(Agency)

A doctor won't be allowed to register with more than two medical termination of pregnancy (MTP) centres in the entire state, according to a proposal the health department is preparing.On Tuesday, when the department pulled up six districts for falling behind last year's sex-ratio-at-birth (SRB) levels, a review highlighted a structural problem in how MTP centres are staffed.Officials said the cap is meant to reduce proxy practice, improve traceability during audits and push centres to maintain their own full-time qualified staff rather than relying on signatures of doctors who are rarely present.At present, doctors often empanel themselves at multiple facilities, which makes it difficult to verify who actually conducts procedures and whether the

centres meet legal requirements at all times.Tuesday's state task force meeting chaired by additional chief secretary (health) Sudhir Rajpal saw unusually direct intervention. Rajpal directed the district administrations and health officials to work in close coordination and push the state's sex ratio to 920 this year. The latest review of SRB performance from Jan 1 to Nov 17 shows Sirsa, Sonapat, Yamunanagar, Jhajjar, Charkhi Dadri and Nuh have all slipped compared to the same period last year.Sirsa is down by 16 points, Sonapat by 10, Yamunanagar by 11, Dadri by 14, Jhajjar by 4 and Nuh by 1.Senior officials said these declines are significant because each of these districts has already been under close scrutiny for PNDT enforcement.Rajpal spoke via video conference with the deputy

commissioners and superintendents of police of six low-performing districts — Sirsa, Sonapat, Yamunanagar, Charkhi Dadri, Nuh and Jhajjar — and asked them to work with civil surgeons and take proactive steps to improve the sex ratio. He instructed these districts to carry out reverse-tracking of illegal abortion cases and maintain strict monitoring.He ordered the suspension of the medical officer of PHC Jattawali in Sirsa and the SMO of Halalpur in Sonapat for negligence and for the district's declining sex ratio.Officials said accountability at the facility level is now "non-negotiable" given the persistent gaps between enforcement and outcomes.A senior officer who attended the meeting said the message is clear.

Behind steep fall in Haryana stubble fires this year: Wet fields & farm distress

Faridabad .(Agency)

This time of the year, the air smells of carbon here. But at two of Haryana's stubble burning hotspots, there's hardly a field on fire and only stray smoke trails to follow this time.The reason is apparent from the landscape. Thousands of acres of farmland are still wet because of rains in Oct. Dry patches — with straw heaps waiting to be taken away — are interrupted by inundated and swampy fields. This is the simplest explanation why farm fires in Haryana have seen a steep fall this season, sparing Delhi-NCR the deadly paddy stubble smoke that curls around it every year.Late rains killed a chunk of the harvest — some farmers say it's up to 30% of their crop. In fields that didn't drain well, standing water has reduced the paddy to mulch. In many other fields, lingering sogginess had made burning impractical for farmers. But while that's good news for the environment, crop destruction has left farmers in distress. And in debt."The paddy harvest has come down for everyone this year," says Yogender Bhuthan, who owns 11 acres in

Fatehabad. So far, around 10,000 farmers have reported losses on land that adds up to 65,000 acres.The swampiness will also affect the next crop because some farms have developed salt crusts on the surface, which means the top soil will have to be removed before anything grows again. If that doesn't happen in the next week or so, which is the sowing window for wheat, it'll mean more losses.The reduction in crop residue output has meant, however, that getting rid of the straw bales is slightly easier. Power plants aren't the only ones collecting the bales. On Ratiya road, tractors carrying stacks of straw bales are all headed towards Chandigarh Distillers & Bottlers Ltd, which needs them for its packaging unit. There, several farmers are meeting the manager to list their bales for pickup.But with less load to manage, it's easier to keep up. "Since many fields are still waterlogged, we have got less stubble listed this year. We have been lifting the bales as soon as we are informed," says R a m e s h S h a r m a , the manager.Farmers gathered there

don't speak in one voice on why there is less residue. The rains, yes, but, according to some of them, the move to basmati from non-basmati variants (which are the ones that generate stubble) is also a factor. Basmati is more commonly grown in Haryana than in Punjab, and since it is handpicked, the harvest does not leave a residue.The possibility of stiff fines and arrest due to stubble burning, says Mahavir Singh, who owns 15 acres of land in Hasanpur village, also persuaded several farmers to divert a section of their land to other crops like cotton. "Added to that, uncertainty of whether the bales will be lifted on time led to farmers opting for diversification. The straw pickup system can falter. Last year, many bales were not picked up. Cattle fell ill and died after chewing on them and that affected milk production. So this year, some farmers went for cotton, which got destroyed because of the rains. This year, my paddy yield has fallen to 7 quintals from 10."

There's another layer farmers mention quietly. Several claim

that insurance companies are not processing their claims, leaving compensation uncertain. "When your paperwork sits in doubt, the last thing you want is a red entry in revenue records or a fine that could shut the door on future claims," says Munshi Ram, a farmer in Nagpur village. This village falls on the link road of Fatehabad-Nagpur Road from Ratiya road.Visually, there's more rain-affected farmland as one approaches Jind via Bhuna-Fatehabad road. After Narwana, farms on both sides along a section of the highway are submerged. In villages such as Bihawala, Samalpur, Darodi and Naewana Morepati, most of the farmland is inundated. "We have not received any help from govt. Several farmers applied on the portal, but they are yet to get any help. No physical verification has been done. Satellite images will show that our field has standing crop, but it is destroyed. Who will tell them this?" asks Chand Bahadur, a farmer.

Surender Singh, working at an adjacent field, is distraught. He says he took four acres of

be filed under Section 269 (negligent acts that are likely to spread a life-threatening infectious disease) against them.Municipal commissioner Vikramaditya Singh Malik said there is also a provision for confiscating vehicles used for illegal dumping of waste which will be auctioned later on. If an e-rickshaw is involved, for the first two violations, the fine amount will be the same as for others and the vehicle will be confiscated after the second violation.In case of three- and four-wheelers, the fine amount will be Rs 25,000 on the first violation and Rs 1 lakh on the second with the vehicle being impounded after that. The same goes for tractor-trolleys, trucks and dumpers.Echoing Malik's sentiment, mayor Sunita Dayal said, "Over the past few years, Ghaziabad has been used as a dumping ground for waste from neighbouring districts, including Delhi. On many occasions, we intercepted the vehicles and impounded them but had to let them go in the absence of rules."

Allow panchayats to buy balers, say farmers still burning stubble

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Ram Singh stands in the middle of his one-acre field in Bhuthan Kalan, kicking at thick rows of stubble that should have been cleared by now. The window is narrowing. He has just a week before he must sow wheat. "If I get a machine, I will use it," he says. "If not, I will have to burn the straw. Wheat will not wait."The village deep inside Fatehabad's farm belt, mostly comprising farmers with small landholdings, shows gaps in govt's interventions to stop paddy stubble burning. Without access to harvesters or balers, these are farmers who don't want to burn straw but have been doing so and will continue, simply because there is no other option. Over the years, govt interventions have helped bring fires down, but reaching smaller farmers is critical to make Haryana farm fire-free.Man Singh, who cultivates the next acre, says machine charges are high for a field this small, diesel prices keep climbing, and every day of delay eats into his sowing window. "We don't want to burn," he says. "Who would choose that? But if the machine doesn't come now, what option do I have?"Farmers with four or five acres can pool costs and rotate machines among themselves. The ones with an acre or two can't afford it. In Jind's Bihawala, several farmers are sharing a lone baler, waiting for their turn to deploy it in their fields. Having at least one more would have helped, they say. In Darodi, farmers who did not get a baler say they are waiting for contractors to bring balers. If they don't come, they will burn the residue. "Govt has given subsidies to buy the machines which cost more than Rs 20 lakh. Even after subsidy, it will come to Rs 10 lakh. How can a small farmer buy such costly machines? The machines will not be used for more than 10 months. Keeping these machines is also a problem" said Dharmpal, a farmer with three acres at Bhuthan in Fatehabad.

farmland on lease for Rs 65,000 per acre for a year.

"I spent Rs 50,000 on growing paddy. Now it's completely destroyed. I can't grow wheat this season as well.

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NEWS BOX

Pregnant Indian-origin techie, unborn baby killed in road accident in Australia

MELBOURNE. . (Agency)
An Indian-origin techie who was eight months pregnant has died along with her unborn baby after she was hit by a car in Australia's Sydney city.Samanvitha Dhareshwar, 33, was walking with her husband and their three-year-old son along George St in Hornsby shortly after 8 pm local time on Friday last week when a Kia car slowed at the entrance of a carpark to let the family pass.Moments later, the Kia was rear-ended by a BMW, causing it to surge forward and hit the woman, according to a report by 7news.com, quoting police.Emergency services treated Dhareshwar, who was just weeks away from giving birth to her second child, at the scene before she was rushed to Westmead Hospital in a critical and unstable condition, where she and her unborn baby died a short time later, police said.According to Dhareshwar's LinkedIn profile, she was an IT systems analyst who worked for AlSCO Uniforms.The 19-year-old BMW driver and the 48-year-old Kia driver were uninjured.
No other passengers were in either vehicle.
Police later arrested the teenage BMW driver, identified as Aaron Papazoglu, on Saturday. He has been charged with dangerous driving occasioning death, negligent driving occasioning death, and causing the loss of a foetus.At a bail hearing, Magistrate Ray Plibersek refused Papazoglu's application, describing the incident as "an absolutely tragic case".

NRI Reveals Deal-Breaker For Indians Looking To Return To Country For Retirement: 'Horrendous Traffic'

Tokyo .(Agency)
A Non-Resident Indian (NRI) who recently returned to India alongside his wife has ignited a conversation on social media as to why others settled abroad were hesitant to return to the homeland. The user, identified as Naresh, highlighted that the 'horrendous traffic' in Indian cities was one of the biggest deal-breakers, deterring his NRI peers from retiring in India despite perks like low-cost healthcare and family support."Wife and I lived in the US for 25 years and returned to India. As we are approaching retirement age, some US friends are asking how life in India really is, as they are debating moving to India for retirement," Naresh wrote on X (formerly Twitter)."So many positives here, but you know what the deal breaker for many is? The horrendous traffic," he added.Naresh pointed out that the traffic situation needed to be addressed on war footing as it would help with the inflow of money from the NRIs to the Indian economy.
"Just think about it, NRIs with dollars to contribute to the Indian economy, but not coming back because of our chaotic traffic. There are so many hidden costs to our bad traffic."

Check The Viral Post Here:
As of the last update, the post had garnered over 7.2 lakh views and hundreds of comments, with the majority of users agreeing with Naresh's assessment.
"More than the volume, traffic sense is horrendous," said one user, while another added: "Completely agree. The chaotic traffic and terrible road safety are the single biggest reasons many NRIs hesitate to return permanently."A third commented: "In few years - I plan to live 4 months in India and 8 in USA. Don't think Traffic matters when you are retired. You are not in a rush to reach somewhere, and you have plenty of time."

Bangladesh Becomes Terror Hub: Hasina's Son Reveals LeT Camps, ISI Weapons, Delhi Attacks Linked To Militants

UNITED NATIONS .(Agency)
Bangladesh has turned into a terrorist sanctuary, and India needs to wake up fast. That's the blunt warning from Sajeeb Wazed Joy, whose mother, Sheikh Hasina, was forced to flee Dhaka in August 2024. Speaking to ANI from Virginia, Wazed didn't hold back: Lashkar-e-Taiba is operating freely across the border, thousands of jailed militants are back on the streets, and recent Delhi attacks have Bangladesh connections."I think Prime Minister Modi is probably very, very concerned about terrorism from Bangladesh," Wazed said. He claims the Yunus government has freed "tens of thousands of terrorists" his mother had locked up after years of crackdowns on militant groups.Lashkar-e-Taiba, the group behind the Mumbai 2008 attacks, is now running operations freely in Bangladesh. Wazed says LeT's local branch has direct ties to recent terror incidents in Delhi. If he's right, Bangladesh has gone from counter-terror ally to potential launchpad for attacks on Indian soil.Wazed also pointed fingers at Pakistan's ISI, claiming the spy agency armed militants who infiltrated last year's protests. "Without a doubt, these weapons had to have been supplied from somewhere in the subcontinent and the only possible source is ISI," he said, adding that video evidence shows armed people among the demonstrators.
Extradition Request Dismissed
Bangladesh wants Sheikh Hasina back to face charges, but Wazed called the legal process a complete sham. "They terminated 17 judges before the trial, amended laws illegally without parliamentary approval, and barred her defence attorneys from court," he said. "When there is no due process whatsoever, no country is going to extradite."He thanked Prime Minister Modi for saving his mother's life. "If she hadn't left Bangladesh, the militants had planned on killing her," Wazed said.

Africa hosts its first G20 and urges the rich world to do more against climate disasters

UNITED NATIONS . (Agency)
JOHANNESBURG: In South Africa ’s oldest township, volunteers in wetsuits jump into the thigh-deep water of the polluted Jukskei River to untangle a net that's designed to trap garbage but damaged by heavy rains. Without the nets, the shacks of low-lying Alexandra on the outskirts of Johannesburg could face disastrous flooding.World leaders with the Group of 20 rich and developing nations will meet this weekend in Johannesburg for the bloc’s first summit in Africa. Host South Africa wants to prioritize issues affecting poor countries, including responses to disasters made worse by climate change.South Africa will urge rich countries and international financial institutions to help more — a plea also being made at global climate talks in Brazil.
Alexandra's over half a million residents live within steps of South Africa’s richest financial district, Sandton. But flooding often submerges bridges, leaving the township's children unable to get to school. It is a "big hazard," said Semadi Manganye, a resident and co-founder of the volunteer group, the Alexandra Water Warriors.Devastating for poor

countries“The ravages of the climate are directly linked to the ravages of inequality,” Binaifer Nowrojee, president of the Open Society Foundations, a non-governmental organization promoting democracy and governance, told The Associated Press. “Countries are facing the destructive choice between growing their economies and taking climate action.”The World Bank says the poorest countries were hit by nearly eight times as many natural disasters in the decade from 2010-2020 as they were from 1980-1990.Southern Africa has been struck by strong tropical storms in the past decade, killing thousands of people and leaving nations with unbearable rebuilding costs.Cyclone Idai, which scientists say was made more powerful by climate change, ripped through Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe in 2019, causing an estimated \$2 billion worth of damage, according to the World Bank. Malawi's gross domestic product is just \$12 billion.Last year, the El Nino weather phenomenon caused one of the worst droughts in decades in the region, devastating small-scale agriculture and leaving people even poorer.



Lobbying world leaders
Climate financing has been a focus of sharp debate between rich and poor countries at major summits like the G20.
Rich countries agreed at last year’s United Nations climate summit to pool at least \$300 billion a year by 2035 to help developing countries deal with the impacts of climate change and weather disasters. But independent experts said much more — an estimated \$1 trillion a year — was needed by 2030.One of the world's largest polluters, the United States, won't even attend this weekend's G20 summit as it boycotts over US President Donald Trump’s widely rejected claims that South

Africa is violently persecuting a white minority. That makes action on climate, or even a meaningful declaration, from the G20 a tall order.
South Africa’s own failures
The Alexandra Water Warriors have considered themselves the guardians of their environment since they formed in 2021, planting native trees to reduce urban heat and collecting and recycling trash from the river.They face the kind of challenges seen in other townships and poor settlements across South Africa, which is the continent’s most developed economy but also has some of the world’s most dramatic inequality.
An Amnesty International report released this month for the G20 summit said the South African government is failing as many as 5 million people who live in informal settlements without proper housing and services and are impacted by the climate crisis. It said they are often forced to live in vulnerable, low-lying areas close to rivers.Floods in June in South Africa’s Eastern Cape province killed more than 100 people. While South African President Cyril Ramaphosa said they were exacerbated by climate change.

Ronaldo and Musk attend Trump's dinner with Saudi prince

It is a sign that the rift between the president and the world’s richest man has healed after their fiery public divorce.

DHAKA. (Agency)
Portuguese soccer superstar Cristiano Ronaldo and billionaire Elon Musk were among the guests at a lavish White House dinner hosted by US President Donald Trump for the visiting Saudi crown prince on Tuesday.Ronaldo plays for Saudi club Al Nassr, one of a number of aging players who have been attracted to the desert kingdom's heavy spending on stars despite its rights record.The 40-year-old, whose contract with the Saudi club ends this summer, took his place near the head of Trump's table a few seconds before the president and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman entered."You

know, my son is a big fan of Ronaldo," Trump said in his pre-dinner speech, adding that his soccer-mad son Barron, 19, got to meet the legendary player."I think he respects his father a little bit more now, just the fact that I introduced you."Ronaldo was not the only soccer-related dinner guest, as



FIFA chief Gianni Infantino made yet another appearance at the White House ahead of the 2026 World Cup, which the United States is co-hosting.Ronaldo says next year's World Cup -- for which Portugal booked their place on Sunday -- will "definitely" be his last.
Also at the black-tie dinner was Space X

and Tesla tycoon Musk, in a sign that the rift between the president and the world's richest man has healed after their fiery public divorce.South African-born Musk spent five months as head of the cost-cutting Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) and accompanied Trump on a trip to Saudi Arabia in May.But the relationship collapsed in July after Musk criticized Trump's so-called "big, beautiful" spending bill and then said that the president was in investigatory files relating to the late sex offender Jeffrey Epstein.Trump responded by threatening Musk with deportation.Musk, wearing a tuxedo, was seen chatting to fellow guests at a candlelit table -- although a different one from Trump's.
During the dinner Trump also praised the Saudi prince as a "man of leadership," having earlier defended his royal visitor over the 2018 murder of dissident Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi.

Israeli airstrike on a Palestinian refugee camp in Lebanon kills 13 people, Lebanese ministry says

SIDON, Lebanon .(Agency)
An Israeli airstrike on a Palestinian refugee camp in southern Lebanon on Tuesday killed 13 people and wounded several others, state media and government officials said. It was the deadliest strike on Lebanon since a ceasefire in the Israel-Hezbollah war a year ago.The drone strike hit a car in the parking lot of a mosque in the Ein el-Hilweh refugee camp on the outskirts of the coastal city of Sidon, the state-run National News Agency said. The Lebanese Health Ministry said 13 people were killed and several others wounded in the airstrike, without giving further details.Hamas fighters in the area prevented journalists from reaching the scene, as ambulances rushed to evacuate the wounded and the dead.The Israeli military said it struck a Hamas training compound that was



being used to prepare an attack against Israel and its army. It added that the Israeli army would continue to act against Hamas wherever the group operates.Hamas condemned the attack in a statement saying the strike hit a sports playground and denying that it was a training compound.
Over the past two years, Israeli airstrikes on Lebanon have killed scores of officials from the militant Hezbollah group as well as Palestinian factions such as Hamas.Saleh Arouri, the

deputy political head of Hamas and a founder of the group's military wing, was killed in a drone strike on a southern suburb of Beirut on Jan. 2, 2024. Several other Hamas officials have been killed in strikes since then. Hamas led the Oct. 7, 2023 attack on southern Israel that killed about 1,200 people. That sparked Israel's offensive on the Gaza Strip that killed tens of thousands of Palestinians, according to the Gaza Health Ministry.A day after the Israel-Hamas war started, Hezbollah began firing rockets toward Israeli posts along the border. Israel responded with shelling and airstrikes in Lebanon, and the two sides became locked in an escalating conflict that became a full-blown war in late September 2024.That war, the most recent of several conflicts involving Hezbollah over the past four decades.

Congress acts swiftly to force release of Epstein files, and Trump agrees to sign bill

The decisive, bipartisan work in Congress further showed the pressure mounting on lawmakers and the Trump administration to make the Justice Department release its case files on Epstein.

WASHINGTON . (Agency)
Both the House and Senate acted decisively Tuesday to pass a bill to force the Justice Department to publicly release its files on the convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein, a remarkable display of approval for an effort that had struggled for months to overcome opposition from President Donald Trump and Republican leadership.
When a small, bipartisan group of House lawmakers introduced a petition in July to maneuver around Speaker Mike Johnson’s control of the House floor, it appeared a longshot effort — especially as Trump

urged his supporters to dismiss the matter as a “hoax.”But both Trump and Johnson failed to prevent the vote. The president in recent days bowed to political reality, saying he would sign the bill. And just hours after the House vote, senators agreed to approve it unanimously, skipping a formal roll call.
The decisive, bipartisan work in Congress Tuesday further showed the pressure mounting on lawmakers and the Trump administration to meet long-held demands that the Justice Department release its case files on Epstein, a well-connected financier who killed himself in a Manhattan jail while awaiting trial in 2019 on charges he sexually abused and trafficked underage girls.For survivors of Epstein’s abuse, passage of the bill was a watershed moment in a years-long quest for accountability.“These women have fought the most horrific fight that no woman should have to fight. And they did it by banding together and never giving up,” said Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene as she stood with some of the abuse survivors

outside the Capitol Tuesday morning.“That’s what we did by fighting so hard against the most powerful people in the world, even the president of the United States, in order to make this vote happen today,” added Greene, a Georgia

people mentioned in the federal investigation.
The bill forces the release within 30 days of all files and communications related to Epstein, as well as any information about the investigation into his death in federal prison. It would allow the Justice Department to redact information about Epstein’s victims or continuing federal investigations, but not information due to “embarrassment, reputational harm, or political sensitivity.”Even before the bill’s passage Tuesday, thousands of pages of emails and other documents from Epstein’s estate have been released from an investigation by the House Oversight Committee.Those documents show Epstein’s connections to global leaders, Wall Street powerbrokers, influential political figures and Trump himself. In the United Kingdom, King Charles III stripped his disgraced brother Prince Andrew of his remaining titles and evicted him from his royal residence after pressure to act over his relationship with Epstein.



Republican.In the end, only one lawmaker in Congress opposed the bill. Rep. Clay Higgins, a Louisiana Republican who is a fervent supporter of Trump, was the only “nay” vote in the House’s 427-1 tally. He said he worried the legislation could lead to the release of information on innocent

NEWS BOX

Charges framed against Hardik Patel in 2018 case

Ahmedabad. (Agency)

A local court here on Tuesday framed charges against BJP MLA from Viramgam, Hardik Patel, in connection with an FIR registered against him and six others in Nikol, where they protested as Patidar Anamat Andolan Samiti (PAAS) leaders in 2018.

The additional civil judge and JMFC at the Ahmedabad rural court, G B Siag, framed charges against Patel for unlawful assembly, rioting, criminal conspiracy, and creating obstructions for police in performing their duty.

The complaint was filed on Aug 19, 2018, after PAAS held a one-day symbolic fast in Nikol without obtaining police permission to hold the protest, said one of his advocates in the case, Parvez Pathan.

After the registration of the FIR, the police filed three chargesheets against seven persons. As co-accused in the case have filed discharge applications, the court has posted proceedings in this regard on Nov 21. Patel's discharge plea in this case is pending in the Gujarat high court.

This court issued an arrest warrant against Patel two months ago for his continuous absence during the court proceedings. In Oct, Patel approached the high court for quashing of the non-bailable warrant, and the high court quashed the warrant on his undertaking that he would regularly attend the court proceedings. After the quashing of the arrest warrant, Patel was present in the court for the first time, and the court framed the charges against him. He appeared on the rural court campus at Navrangpura wearing a mask.

Ahmedabad: Parents oppose Loyola’s plan to switch to ICSE

Ahmedabad. (Agency)

Authorities of St Xavier's Loyola School in Naranpura organized a meeting with parents on Tuesday to seek consent for their decision to discontinue the Gujarat Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Board (GSHSEB) curriculum for the primary section and affiliate with the Indian Certificate of Secondary Education (ICSE) Board. The move was met with resistance from the majority of parents, especially those with younger children. The school currently operates as a private institution for Classes 1 to 8 and offers grant-in-aid education for Classes 9 to 12 under the Gujarat Board. The management is seeking approval from the education department to transition the primary section to the ICSE board starting next academic year.

In a letter to parents ahead of the meeting, the school assured them that current students would have the option to remain with the Gujarat Board until their batches are fully phased out, while also offering the choice to switch to ICSE.

During Tuesday's meeting, which involved parents from the primary section, the school management attempted to convince them to agree to the ICSE switch, citing the benefits of the curriculum in the age of technology. However, over 50% of the attendees voiced their opposition. The primary concern among dissenting parents is the anticipated increase in school fees that would come with the transition to a non-grant-in-aid ICSE affiliation.

Karnataka to prepare fresh DPR for Mekedatu project: Dy CM Shivakumar

BENGALURU. (Agency)

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Tuesday said the State Government will prepare a new DPR (Detailed Project Report) on the Mekedatu balancing reservoir project and submit it to the Centre. Speaking to media persons after holding a meeting with senior officers, the DyCM said they discussed the measures to be taken by the state government to implement the project. They have to submit the DPR again with all the details about the project, including the extent of land, including the forest that would be submerged. Shivakumar, who also holds the water resources portfolio, said the State government would submit a new report after addressing the shortcomings in the earlier report. He said that the government has opened the Mekedatu office in Harobele, and a separate office consisting of Chief Engineer and CCF has come up in Ramanagar.

Congress padayatra delayed it, says Basavaraj Bommai

Haveri MP and former CM Basavaraj Bommai said the state government should not bring politics into the Mekedatu balancing reservoir project and work closely with the Centre to get all approvals.

The Haveri MP appealed to the Centre to get the Detailed Project Report (DPR) approved so that the state can go ahead with the project.

Speaking to media persons in Bengaluru, Bommai accused the Congress of having done politics of padayatra over Mekedatu, which was the reason Tamil Nadu went to court with a miscellaneous application. “Had the Congress not undertaken the padayatra, the project would have reached an advanced stage by now.

Because of their padayatra, Tamil Nadu filed a miscellaneous case,” he said. “We knew that it (Tamil Nadu's application) was going to be thrown out.

One more deer dies on Tiruchy-Chidambaram NH, activists slam forest department

According to forest department sources, a spotted deer was found inside the rainwater drain along the highway near Kallagam on Tuesday morning.

TIRUCHY. (Agency)

The Tiruchy-Ariyalur-Chidambaram highway, which runs alongside a reserve forest, is turning into a death trap for small animals that stray on to the road. On Tuesday, a spotted deer fell into a rainwater drain, frightened by speeding vehicles passing on the stretch following which animal activists reiterated their demand to the forest department for a permanent solution to protect the animals.

According to forest department sources, a spotted deer was found inside the rainwater drain along the highway near Kallagam on Tuesday morning. Upon getting information, personnel from the forest department tried to rescue the animal, but found out it had died.

M Daniel, a farmer and activist from Kallagam, said deer often stray out of the the reserve forest near a lake in the village and enter agriculture fields in Kallagam. Pazhanganatham, Keela Arasur, Pullambadi,



Muthuvathur in Tiruchy district and Malvai and Mela Arasur in Ariyalur district. "Most often, the animals get fatally hit by speeding vehicles while they try to cross the highway. Despite repeated appeals, the forest department has not taken any action in this regard," Daniel told.

Quoting from an RTI reply he received from the forest department in response to his query about setting up a sanctuary on the Kallagam lake, Daniel said the district forest officer G Krithiga had stated that there was no proposal

for such a project.

“As a reserve forest beside the lake houses several spotted deer, it is usual for the animals to come out in search of water or food. On such occasions, the animals may get hit by speeding vehicles on the highway. Awareness is being created for drivers to slow down when they cross the stretch," the DFO stated in the reply. But locals say no driver slows down in the stretch, as no warning signs have been placed about animals crossing. The forest officials have no idea of the details of the population of the animals in the reserve forest, Daniel alleged.

The least the forest department could do to protect the animals is instal signboards to alert drivers, he added. When contacted, forest range officer VP Subramanian told that the enumeration of deer and other animals in the forest would take place once in three years. "Drivers must go slowly in the stretch. Action will be taken to fix sign signboards on the stretch," he said.

18,500 revenue staff boycott SIR work in Tamil Nadu but impact mixed

CHENNAI. (Agency)

The federation of various associations of revenue officials in Tamil Nadu (FERA) said 18,500 revenue staff began their boycott of all Special Intensive Revision (SIR) related work on Tuesday as announced earlier. This is apart from employees of other departments including rural development and social welfare, FERA added.

While FERA said SIR work took a significant hit across TN as a result and impact of the boycott would be stronger in coming days as pending work mounts, senior officials contended that SIR works were, by and large, continuing as usual. Reports from different districts indicated

that the work continued in municipal corporations without any noticeable impact but a moderate impact was observed in other places. FERA had announced the boycott citing extreme work pressure, an unrealistic timeline, inadequate training and inadequate human and financial resources for the roll revision exercise. M P Murugaiyan, state coordinator, FERA, told that Revenue Secretary P Amutha and Commissioner of Revenue Administration M Saikumar met with FERA representatives. He said they had assured they would convey

FERA's demand to extend the enumeration period beyond December 4 to the Election Commission of India as only the commission could decide on



it. Both officers also promised to instruct the district administrations to prevent the “harsh treatment” meted out to the staff and the pressure to work till 1 am daily, Murugaiyan said.

“We have sought the assurances in writing. We will continue to boycott the SIR work on Wednesday,” he said, pointing out that an anganwadi worker in

Kumbakonam, deputed as a booth level officer, had attempted to end her life. He said a large number of teachers were engaged in urban areas where work seemed unaffected. As the work to be done by revenue staff is being dumped on teachers, they are also put to great hardship, he said. In districts like Madurai, Virudhunagar, Dindigul and Kanniyakumari, revenue officials said 300 to 500 employees boycotted SIR work.

Jagatsinghpur police probe terror links of accused sheltering 30 illegal Bangladeshi immigrants

JAGATSINGHPUR. (Agency)

Jagatsinghpur police has launched an investigation to ascertain any possible terror link of the accused who harboured nearly 30 illegal Bangladeshi nationals in houses built on government land for the last four years.

On Monday, the district administration razed around 17 illegal structures - 10 houses in Behrampur slum and seven unauthorised constructions in Satapura village, which were being used to shelter Bangladeshi infiltrators. The houses were built by encroaching on government land by main accused Sikandar Alam (40) of Dhanipur village. Sikander is at large.

Police sources said Sikandar and his brother Abdul Motalif Khan (38) of Behrampur and sisters Sawan Ajmi (39) of Patkura in

Kendrapara, Parween Bibi (34) of Paikakul village and Badrunisha (30) of Dhanipur, were providing shelter to the illegal immigrants. While Sawan and Parween have



been arrested, the remaining three accused are on the run.

The incident has exposed serious administrative lapses as the intelligence wing, police and revenue officials could not detect the presence of 30 illegal immigrants in Behrampur and Satapura for the past four years.

HC: Family can’t interfere with woman’s choice to have MTP

Mumbai. (Agency)

The Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act does not allow any interference with the personal choice of a pregnant woman in terms of proceeding with termination, said Bombay high court. It permitted a 19-year-old to undergo the procedure to terminate a 23-week pregnancy after doctors detected foetal abnormality.

"The MTP Act leaves no scope for interference by the family or the partner of the pregnant person in matters of reproductive choice," said a bench of Justices Revati Mohite Dere and Sandesh Patil in a recent order.

The teen petitioned HC to seek termination of her pregnancy, which at the time of filing the petition was under 24 weeks. She married at the age of 18 and alleged being subjected to domestic violence. She approached a doctor earlier for an MTP well within the permissible timeframe, HC noted, and expressed surprise over why the hospital in Navi Mumbai did not allow the procedure when her pregnancy was under 21 weeks. An MTP can be done till 24 weeks under the legally mandated limit under certain conditions, HC noted. It observed that even now, a civic medical board, which was directed on Nov 11 to examine her, said she was 23 weeks and four days pregnant.

The medical board's report said an abnormality was detected in the foetus. "The abnormality may indicate other health issues, including heart, kidney and gastrointestinal issues," it suggested. The board, thus, said she could be permitted an MTP with the "informed consent" of the pregnant teen and her parents. HC interacted with the doctors and the teen. She said she wished to terminate her pregnancy.

"We are conscious of the petitioner's right to reproductive freedom, her autonomy over the body, and her right to choice, privacy and dignity, all of which are constitutionally protected," HC said. It observed that the delay occasioned was purely beyond the teen's control, who approached doctors well within the 24-week period.

Jagatsinghpur police probe terror links of accused sheltering 30 illegal Bangladeshi immigrants

Besides, the Bangladeshi nationals managed to acquire fraudulent documents such as fake Aadhaar cards and birth certificates.

Police said a hunt is underway for Sikandar who fled after removing hard disks of CCTV cameras. He is suspected of having possible terror links and ties to extremist modules. Investigators have found that for nearly a decade, he worked in the merchant navy and an oil refinery, travelling to at least five countries. He was also running an unregistered madrasa in his village.

Preliminary investigation suggested that Sikandar facilitated the illegal entry of Bangladeshi nationals, provided them shelter, and allegedly involved them in unlawful activities. Police also suspect that the women and girls trafficked from Bangladesh were exploited.

Mumbai weather: Sunny skies, pleasant temperatures; AQI remains poor

Mumbai. (Agency)

The data for this weather forecast has been sourced from AQI.in, providing residents with comprehensive information to plan their daily activities and weekly schedules accordingly.

Mumbai residents are greeted on November 19, 2025, with a sunny and pleasant morning, setting a refreshing tone for the day. The maximum temperature is expected to reach around 27.4°C, while the evening will cool down to a comfortable 22.5°C. This follows yesterday's 'poor' air quality, which registered an AQI of 200, marking it as the highest recorded this month. Clear skies and moderate humidity are anticipated today, accompanied by gentle winds, while the upcoming week promises consistently pleasant weather. However, precautions such as wearing masks in traffic-heavy zones are advised due to potential lingering air quality concerns. Today's weather in the city is characterized by

clear skies. There are no chances of rain, making it an ideal day for various outdoor activities. The maximum temperature is projected to hover around 27.4°C.

The evening hours will bring a noticeable cool-down. Temperatures are expected to settle at a comfortable 22.5°C. This provides a pleasant transition from the daytime warmth. Humidity levels are currently moderate, standing at 45%. This ensures that the day will not feel excessively sticky or uncomfortable. Gentle winds are also expected throughout the day.

The maximum wind speed will be 18 km/h, offering a light breeze. This contributes to the overall pleasant atmospheric conditions. The evening promises a cool and calm atmosphere.

Air Quality Concerns

Yesterday, Mumbai's air quality was officially marked by an AQI of 200. This



reading placed it firmly into the 'poor' category. This level of air quality might still persist in certain parts of the city today. Major pollutants recorded included PM2.5 at 92 µg/m³ and PM10 at 119 µg/m³. Additionally, elevated CO levels were noted, reaching 279 µg/m³. These specific readings provide a detailed picture of the air

composition. These figures indicate that sensitive groups, such as individuals with respiratory issues, might have experienced discomfort. Such conditions can pose challenges for vulnerable populations.

While today's clear weather conditions could assist in slightly dispersing pollutants, caution remains important. It is advisable to avoid prolonged exposure to outdoor air in congested areas. This recommendation aims to minimize potential health impacts.

For those commuting or heading into traffic-heavy zones, especially during peak hours, wearing a mask is a good idea. This can help mitigate exposure to airborne particles. Sunglasses and sunscreen are recommended as must-haves for the afternoon. The sun is expected to be strong during these hours. For the evening, a light jacket might come in handy as temperatures dip slightly.

New India-US bridge over troubled water

In a world increasingly defined by fragmentation and flux, the relationship between India and the US remains one of the few partnerships with the potential to shape a more stable, democratic, and innovative global order. The recent confirmation of a new US ambassador to India—a close aide of Donald Trump, albeit with no prior diplomatic or India experience, Sergio Gor—signals Washington’s intent to reinvigorate ties with New Delhi at a time when both countries face shared challenges and converging opportunities.

President Trump’s recent remarks about Prime Minister Narendra Modi, calling him “a strong leader and a great friend”, mark a notable shift in tone from earlier weeks of undiplomatic statements and social media posts. While recent frictions over tariffs and trade imbalances have strained the relationship, the current moment appears to offer a chance to reset. Encouraging signs point to the possibility of a new bilateral trade deal, which could unlock growth, investment, and innovation across sectors ranging from pharmaceuticals and semiconductors to clean energy and artificial intelligence.

But to seize this moment, both sides must confront and clarify the geopolitical realities that shape their choices. At one time, both Washington and New Delhi saw the spectre of Chinese assertiveness looming large—from the Himalayas to South China Sea, from cyber intrusions to supply chain dependencies—and made common cause in recognising the need to constrain it. But after the recent ‘G2 Summit’ in Busan, there is renewed confusion about whether the US still sees China as a strategic competitor and global rival, or whether we are witnessing the dawning of a co-operative condominium arrangement between the two great powers of four times.

For India, the challenge is existential: we must defend our sovereignty while accelerating our development. Washington must decide whether it is strategic—balancing deterrence with diplomacy, and maintaining influence in a region where its primacy is no longer assured—or as Trump’s recent silence on the Quad suggests, the Indo-Pacific is no longer a priority.Seen from New Delhi, a deeper US-India partnership is not merely desirable; it is imperative. Yet, it cannot be built on sentiment alone. It must be anchored in structural reforms, mutual strategic clarity, and a shared vision for the 21st century.First, both countries must remove the impediments that have long hampered economic cooperation. The legacy of US tariff policy—particularly the withdrawal of India’s benefits under the generalised system of preferences during the first Trump administration, and the punitive 50 percent tariffs this year that have cost jobs in India and done real damage to our exporters—leaving deep wounds that could turn into lasting scars. measures were aimed at protecting American industry, they also signalled a retreat from the strategic vision of the last quarter-century. A renewed push to reduce tariffs, eliminate regulatory barriers, harmonise standards, and facilitate cross-border investment would send a powerful message: that economic alignment is a pillar of strategic trust.

Second, India must continue its path of economic reform—not just to attract foreign capital, but to ensure policy certainty and transparency. Investors, both domestic and foreign, seek stability in taxation, clarity in digital regulation, and predictability in dispute resolution. In Trump’s America, where executive volatility has become a feature of governance, India’s steadiness can be an asset—but only if it is matched by reformist ambition.Third, the movement of people must be restored as a cornerstone of bilateral ties. The Indian diaspora in the US—now over 5-million-strong—has been a bridge of talent, entrepreneurship, and cultural diplomacy. Yet recent restrictions on work permits, H-1B visas, and green card processing have frayed that bridge. Liberalising skilled migration, especially in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics fields, would not only benefit both economies but also reinforce the human dimension of the partnership.

How Bihar's regions tipped the scales

Despite the caste arithmetic suggesting a closer contest, all five regions of Bihar swung towards the NDA. The opposition alliance’s inability to garner EBC votes in some pockets and consolidate Muslim votes in others made a big difference. Chirag Paswan and Upendra Kushwaha had their roles clearly cut out

The narrative surrounding the recent Bihar assembly election has been constructed in several overlapping ways. It has been interpreted as an expression of gratitude to, and trust in, a leader who is perceived to deliver on promises; as evidence of women emerging as anchors of voting decisions in poor households; and as a demonstration of how a tone of masculine arrogance can weaken emotional connect with voters. Across these different readings lies one clear lesson for the political class: admiration does not automatically translate into endorsement, especially among an electorate as politically attuned as Bihar’s.The verdict itself has left little ambiguity. The NDA increased its tally dramatically, from 125 seats in 2020 to an emphatic 202. By contrast, the Mahagathbandhan suffered its worst performance since 2010, finishing with just 35 seats. These headline numbers are striking enough, but the real clarity emerges when the mandate is broken down regionally. A closer look at the five principal regions of Bihar shows how differently each area responded to the two competing alliances, rewarding some strategies while punishing others. As with the rivers that mark many of their boundaries, each region flowed in a particular direction.Take Tirhut first. Bordered by the Ganga and Gandak rivers and accounting for 73 seats, it forms the largest bloc in north Bihar. Tirhut was widely expected to witness a tight contest. This expectation stemmed from the substantial presence of one of the key Extremely Backward Classes (EBCs)—the Mallah community—whose leader, Mukesh Sahani, had crossed over to the MGB. As the VIP defector, he was projected as a deputy chief ministerial face of the MGB and expected to draw the fishers’ community towards the alliance. His arrival was also seen as a direct challenge to Nitish Kumar’s sustained cultivation of the EBC bloc since 2005.Yet, the results in Tirhut mirrored the broader state mandate. The NDA’s tally jumped by 22 seats to 64. Its vote share rose sharply, from 39 percent to 46.6 percent. Much of this increase stemmed from the consolidation of its core vote blocs, aided significantly by Chirag Paswan’s Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) rejoining the alliance. Although the MGB lost these 22 seats, its vote share, interestingly, also increased—by about 2 percentage points to 38.4 percent. This suggests that while the alliance did benefit from some Mallah EBC votes, the combined return of Chirag Paswan and Upendra Kushwaha’s Rashtriya Lok Morcha shored up both Dalit Paswan and Kushwaha votes behind the NDA. A similar story unfolded in the Mithila region west of the Koshi river. This region has a significant presence of Muslims, Yadavs, and Mallahs, leading many analysts to



expect an uptick in MGB’s performance. Sahani’s roots in the region added weight to that expectation. Yet, the NDA increased its tally from 32 to 36 seats. Its vote share rose by about 6 percentage points, reaching 47.4 percent. The outcome reflected a noticeable improvement in the NDA’s internal coordination, which enabled smoother transfer of votes across allies and ensured that each party’s core bloc remained intact. This was an important correction for the NDA, given that some of these blocs had shown signs of drifting in the 2020 election.

The Seemanchal region, which borders Bengal and includes the Bhagalpur area, told a more nuanced story. With its sizeable Muslim population, ranging from around 68 percent in Kishanganj to roughly 40 percent in the three adjoining districts, Seemanchal was widely expected to consolidate behind the MGB. It was presumed to occur partly at the cost of the Asaduddin Owaisi-led All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen, which had won five seats with 7.4 percent of the vote in 2020.However, AIMIM retained its five seats and increased its vote share to 9.9 percent. This shift indicates that although Muslim consolidation against the ruling alliance did occur in places, the pattern was far from uniform. Muslim-majority constituencies displayed a willingness to experiment with alternatives.The most striking shift occurred in the Magadh-South East and

Shahabad-Bhojpur regions. These areas still retain pockets of Left influence and are home to several OBC and EBC caste groups. In 2020, the Left’s organisational networks had significantly boosted the MGB, helping it secure 39 out of 69 seats in Magadh and 19 out of 22 seats in Bhojpur. The NDA, by contrast, had managed only 28 seats in Magadh and just two in the Bhojpur belt.In 2025, this picture changed dramatically. The NDA surged to 57 seats in Magadh and 19 in the Bhojpur region, supported by a substantial rise in vote share—13 percent in the former and 16 percent in the latter. For the MGB, this reversal stemmed from several factors. The RJD struggled to expand beyond its core Muslim-Yadav support in certain pockets, the Left parties saw their earlier momentum dissipate, and the Congress remained organisationally weak. Meanwhile, the NDA benefited from careful ticket distribution, the resolution of internal rivalries, and more efficient vote transfers among allies. Except for a few localised disruptions, this cohesion translated into a near-clean sweep.Taken together, the regional verdicts underscore a larger point. The 2025 Bihar election was shaped less by arithmetic and more by the ability of alliances to hold their blocs together while expanding into new social groups. The NDA managed this consistently, while the MGB faltered in the areas it needed to grow. That is what ultimately tipped the scales.

Telangana deflation casts light on factor keeping India's rate low

Plummeting rural demand could presage a more acute agrarian distress—less money in the hands of farmers or a lower inclination to spend. The worry for the state is acute

Statistics can confirm, challenge, or confound. In the case of October’s retail inflation rates for Telangana and the nation, it can clarify too. Both the counts notched up records, but of different kinds. The national retail inflation rate printed at 0.25 percent, the lowest since the beginning of this Consumer Price Index series a decade and a half ago. On the other hand, in Telangana retail prices fell for the fourth time in five months—one of the dozen states that faced deflation in October. Among the causes contributing to both phenomena are GST rate cuts, higher bases a year ago, and lower food prices, which command a substantial combined weight in the CPI. It should be a moment to cheer—high growth estimates at a time of low inflation. However, economists advise a degree of caution. They argue that food inflation is unlikely to hold low for long because of a number of factors ranging from supply constraints to extreme climate events and geopolitical disruptions. Experts also point out that the shift to a new CPI series next year will affect calculations, as food items will carry less



weightage; non-food inflation is higher for most other categories at present.

The other side of the coin is seen in Telangana, the only state

to have registered a deflationary run this long. Between June’s -0.93 percent and October’s -1.16 percent, the state rate has remained subterranean—except in August, when it rose marginally to 0.94 percent before slipping again. Both urban and rural Telangana are in the same boat, though the price falls are sharper in the villages. Though this is good news for consumers, it isn’t so for producers.

Plummeting rural demand could presage a more acute agrarian distress—less money in the hands of farmers or a lower inclination to spend. The worry for Telangana is acute because the state is running short of cash and, with GST rationalisation, stands to lose a substantial amount of revenues, at least in the short term. In other words, it cannot spend to spur the economy. This is the time to plug farm input shortages in the short term, measure and address rural indebtedness, and improve irrigation

for better long-term prospects. The same could be said for many other parts of the country.

Lapses on the terror trail proved fatal

Police, intelligence agencies failed to anticipate and prevent attack near Red Fort

THE Jammu & Kashmir police, the Haryana police and Central intelligence agencies may well be justified in taking credit for averting a series of major terror attacks by busting the Kashmir-Faridabad terror module. However, that does not exempt them from explaining why they failed to catch suicide bomber Umar Nabi, who was driving the car that exploded near the Red Fort on November 10.Of course, there was a flurry of activity after the incident. Within hours of his return from Bhutan on November 12, Prime Minister Narendra Modi summoned a Cabinet meeting regarding the car blast that claimed 15 lives. The Cabinet noted that the explosion was a “heinous terror incident”. The Union government had given an indication to this effect when it handed over the probe to the National Investigation Agency (NIA) on November 11.The Cabinet stated that the investigation into the incident be pursued with the utmost urgency and professionalism so that the perpetrators, their collaborators and sponsors were identified and brought to justice without delay. It did not point a finger at any organisation or country. This was at variance with the press note issued by the J&K police on their success in unearthing “an interstate and transnational terror module, linked with proscribed terrorist organisations Jaish-e-Mohammed and Ansar Ghazwat-ul-Hind.”

The operation “led to the arrest of key operatives and the recovery of a massive cache of arms, ammunition and explosives, during coordinated searches in J&K and other states,” the police added.The Cabinet expressed its appreciation for “the timely and coordinated response of the authorities, security agencies and citizens who acted with courage and compassion in the face of adversity. Their dedication and sense of duty are deeply commendable”.This formulation is somewhat ambiguous, though it leans in favour of the manner in which everyone concerned acted after the terrorist act. This is in keeping with the Cabinet’s focus on the incident itself. Thus, it distanced itself from the J&K police’s press note which claimed credit for arresting the ‘key operatives’ and the recovery of arms. It also steered



clear of the points made by Faridabad Police Commissioner Satender Gupta in his media briefing on November 10—a few hours before the Delhi incident. Gupta gave details of the operation conducted by the Faridabad police in which they had taken a doctor hailing from Kashmir into custody. All India Radio, which gave an account of Gupta’s briefing, said his name was Mujjabal (actually, it is Muzammil). The police officer also revealed that the doctor was arrested 9-10 days earlier; media reports have stated that the arrest was made on October 30. Significantly, the Police Commissioner had admitted that a person was absconding and a probe was in progress in that matter. There have been a spate of media reports stating that the timely detection of the terror module prevented it from carrying out a series of blasts which would have resulted in a large number of fatalities. These reports are obviously based on ‘sources’, indicating that the police

and intelligence agencies are giving briefings to journalists. It would be best to await the result of the NIA investigation to know the granular details of the conspiracy, though some of the background briefings would contain some truth.What is certain, however, is that the state/UT police concerned and Central intelligence services failed to prevent the terror attack and apprehend the perpetrator, even though they knew for days that a member of the terror module was on the loose. They owe the country an explanation for this lapse. Clearly, the J&K police’s claim that ‘key operatives’ had been apprehended was wrong. There can also be little doubt that the police investigation at the Al Falah University in Faridabad and the interrogation of Dr Muzammil would have revealed that the absconder was Nabi.Under these circumstances, why were all the resources of the state governments concerned and the Centre not used to apprehend Nabi? This was the first

terrorist act in the national capital after Modi assumed office in May 2014. It is good that the political leadership has assured that the “conspirators, collaborators and sponsors” of this terrible act will be found and meted out exemplary punishment. However, as the probe progresses, the powers that be must also focus on this insistent question: Why was Nabi not found and stopped before he could carry out the attack near the Red Fort?

The Cabinet expressed its gratitude to those countries which condoled this terror incident. These nations and the rest of the international community would be relieved that PM Modi has kept rhetoric in check and, as of now, not indicated a desire to reactivate Operation Sindoor. Nothing makes the major powers more jittery than a military conflict between two nuclear-armed states.On his part, Modi wants the India-US trade deal to be finalised. US President Trump has made positive noises on it, but these may change if armed hostilities were to recur. Also, Modi would not want Trump to get a fresh opportunity to claim credit for ending another round of war between India and Pakistan.

While these inhibitions have made PM Modi exercise caution, it can be surmised that the Red Fort attack would be a source of deep discomfort — notwithstanding the NDA’s great victory in the Bihar elections. Signals would have been sent to Modi’s supporters to dial down their vitriol, but for how long can this be so? Sooner or later, the PM would have to show his supporters and the country that terrorist groups which sponsored or incited this attack have been punished.Meanwhile, the attack’s Kashmir link might further reduce the possibility of restoring statehood to J&K. While continuing with its UT status may be necessary for security reasons, it would continue to be a very sore point for the people of J&K. It’s also vital for the national leadership to assert that all residents of the Kashmir valley are not terrorists or their sympathisers — on the whole, they are normal citizens of our great and plural country.

NEWS BOX

Odisha school head suspended after Class VII girl dies, locals protest alleged negligence

UMERKOTE . (Agency)

The Nabarangpur district administration suspended the headmistress of Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya at Burja village under Umerkote block on Tuesday following the death of a Class VII student allegedly due to negligence of the school authorities. Umerkote block education officer (BEO) Iswar Majhi suspended headmistress Mamata Swain after 12-year-old Bhavani Harijan, a Class VII student of the residential school, died under mysterious circumstances on Monday evening with her family members holding the hostel authorities responsible for the death.

Sources said on the day, Bhavani's father Kartik Harijan filed an FIR in Umerkote police station alleging that though his daughter was unwell for the past three days, the hostel authorities did not provide her any medical care. Besides, they also did not inform the student's family members about her condition.

Kartik further claimed that his daughter was taken to Umerkote sub-divisional hospital (SDH) after she died in the hostel. Bhavani died due to the negligence of headmistress Swain and the hostel peon, Kartik alleged.

After the news of Bhavani's death spread, locals including BJD and Congress workers staged dharna outside the SDH from 8 am demanding strict action against the school authorities and 10 lakh compensation for the deceased student's family members. They also did not allow the student's body to be taken for postmortem.

On being informed, district education officer Chhatrapati Sahu, additional SP Aditya Sen, SDPO Suwendu Sabar, other officials and former MP Pradeep Majhi reached the hospital and held discussions with the agitators. Subsequently, the protest was called off at 7 pm. The student's body was handed over to her family members after autopsy.

NIA chargesheets 10 for trafficking minor Bangladeshi girl into Odisha

BHUBANESWAR. (Agency)

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has chargesheet-ed 10 people in connection with the trafficking of a minor Bangladeshi girl from across the east-ern border into Odisha.

In its charge sheet filed be-fore the Special Court in Bhu-baneswar, the agency has charged the accused of luring the girl on promise of employment and then pushing her into immoral trafficking to make money. Officials said the accused had taken advantage of the poor fi nancial condition of the girl's family to execute the trafficking operation. However, the NIA in-vestigation exposed a major human trafficking network in the case.

The Odisha police had initial ly filed two charge sheets in the Pcoso court against six accused in the case. After taking over the probe, the agency conducted searches in multiple locations in West Bengal and arrested two more persons. Examination of their social media accounts and financial transactions led the agency to arrest two more of their associates.

Accordingly, the agency filed a charge sheet against all the 10 accused under various sections of BNS 2023, the Pcoso Act 2012 and the Immoral Traffic (Pre-vention) Act 1956. Further investigation into the case is in progress, officials said. On November 9 last year, Cut-tack police had rescued the 17-year-old victim from Link Road in the city after she fled the rented accommodation of a couple.

Karnataka Zoo Authority confirms HS outbreak behind death of 31 blackbucks

BELAGAVI. (Agency)

A major wildlife health crisis has struck Belagavi, with the Karnataka Zoo Authority confirming that the mass death of 31 blackbucks at the Kittur Rani Chennamma Mini Zoo was caused by Hemorrhagic Septicemia (HS), a highly fatal bacterial infection known to kill herbivores within hours. A high-level expert committee led by Authority Member Secretary Sunil Panwal and senior wildlife veterinarian Dr Prayag inspected the facility on Tuesday and issued a preliminary confirmation of the outbreak after reviewing enclosure conditions, death patterns, and lab indicators. The team has directed zoo authorities to impose strict biosecurity controls, sanitation drives, and continuous surveillance of remaining herbivore populations. Carnivores, officials clarified, are not at risk from the disease.

District In-charge and Public Works Minister Satish Jarkiholi visited the zoo on Tuesday to review the emergency response and meet veterinarians, staff, and senior forest officials.

Calling the mass deaths "deeply alarming and unacceptable", the minister directed the zoo administration to tighten disease-prevention mechanisms and ensure round-the-clock veterinary monitoring for all animals — particularly endangered and high-stress species.

Expletives on hall-tickets: Mumbai college alleges 'external tampering,' files plaint with cyber cops

Mumbai . (Agency)

A day after the controversy over expletives in course registration forms and hall-tickets of students from Bandra's Government Polytechnic College came to light, an internal inquiry committee report found that the documents were "externally tampered with" and not from within the college. Higher and technical education minister Chandrakant Patil, taking cognizance of the matter, ordered an inquiry into the incident and also directed the principal of the college to file a complaint with the cyber crime cell based on the committee's report. The principal, along with officials from the joint director, technical education, regional office, filed the complaint on Tuesday.

The controversy began with the circulation of screenshots, allegedly showing an official course registration form for students with obscene content printed in place of their names. The minister had directed an urgent inquiry into the incident at the autonomous polytechnic institute.

The investigation centered on a student, whose name was linked to one of the screenshots. The committee's cross-verification of the screenshot with the student's genuine form,

ensures secure access via a one-time password and direct email delivery. The committee, after examining the students' hall tickets, course registration, and exam registration forms downloaded directly from the official system, found no objectionable content.

The said student provided a written statement to the committee confirming that he did not find any objectionable content on his personal printouts. Based on the evidence, the inquiry committee concluded that the course registration form "had been maliciously tampered with after it was officially generated".

On Monday, some of the students alleged they were not allowed to appear for the exam as their hall-tickets were not generated. This, they claimed, was due to the input provided in the system, that had replaced their names with expletives and obscene language. The institute, however, in the report, claimed that no students were deprived of taking the exams on Nov 17, and that the exams for the said course were scheduled to commence from Nov 18. The students had approached former MLA Naseem Khan with their complaint.



generated from the institution's secure management information system (MIS), revealed significant discrepancies. The report highlighted differences in the name of the institution, the student's name, and the 'register for' column, strongly suggesting forgery. The report also mentioned that the MIS system

Ahmedabad flyover tragedy: Court frames charges against Tathya Patel, his father

Ahmedabad. (Agency)

It took 28 months and a Supreme Court order for a trial court to frame charges against 21-year-old Tathya Patel and his father, Pragnesh Patel, on Tuesday in connection with the Iskcon flyover accident on July 20 2023, in which nine people lost their lives.

Police filed a 1,684-page chargesheet in a week after the then state home minister, Harsh Sanghavi, promised quick justice in the accident case. The car, allegedly being driven at high speed by Tathya, rammed into a crowd of people who had gathered on the flyover, where an accident had already taken place.

Principal district judge K M Sojitra read out the charges before Tathya and his father. Tathya was charged under Section 308 (attempt to commit culpable homicide), 304 (culpable homicide not amounting to murder), 337



(endangering other person's life), 279 (rash driving), besides provisions of the Motor Vehicles Act. His father was charged under 506 (2) (criminal intimidation) and 504 (insult to provoke breach of peace), said district govt pleader Pravin Trivedi.

After the chargesheet was filed, Tathya and his father had sought discharge. Tathya did not seek discharge from all the allegations but sought to alter the charge from Section 304 of

the IPC to Section 304A (criminal negligence causing death), which has a provision of two years of imprisonment, and deletion of Section 308 of the IPC. A trial court turned down their discharge pleas, and they moved the Gujarat high court, where their discharge pleas have been pending for nearly two years. Due to the pendency of the discharge pleas, the trial court did not move ahead with the criminal case. Tathya sought regular bail, but the trial court, as well as the high court, denied it. He then moved the apex court for bail and argued that the trial had not commenced even after over two years of the incident. On Nov 3, SC directed the trial court to complete the charge framing procedure within three weeks and proceed with the examination of witnesses, regardless of the pending discharge applications in the high court, which was hearing.

Survey says 90 per cent of adults in Tamil Nadu personally experienced effects of global warming

CHENNAI. (Agency)

A striking 90% of adults in Tamil Nadu say they have personally experienced the effects of global warming, the highest in the country, according to the newly released Climate Opinion Maps for India by the Yale Program on Climate Change Communication.

The findings align with what the state's own Economic Survey has repeatedly said, Tamil Nadu is on the frontline of rising temperatures, altered rainfall patterns and an escalating burden of extreme weather.

The survey also shows that 66% of adults in Tamil Nadu report knowing "a lot" or "something" about global warming, again among the top in India. Experts say this heightened awareness may be linked to the state's high urbanisation, concentrated industries, and recurring climate-linked disruptions, from heat stress in cities to erratic monsoon spells affecting reservoirs and agriculture. For comparison, awareness levels are significantly lower in states such as Uttar Pradesh (52%) and Bihar (48%), while higher levels are seen in Kerala (62%) and Delhi (70%). In recent years, the state government has established the Tamil Nadu Governing Council on Climate Change and updated its State Action Plan on Climate Change, signalling an institutional effort to respond to rising

risks. Still, the new district-level data reveal a deeper perception gap. While 74% of adults in Tamil Nadu believe global warming is influencing severe storms, only 21% say they have personally experienced such storms in the past year.

By contrast, Odisha reports 64% of adults experiencing cyclones, and Rajasthan reports 28% of adults experiencing severe floods in the same period. The survey, conducted between 2022-25, covered 9,644 respondents from 575 of 634 districts in India, spanning across all states and union territories except Lakshadweep and Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

Across India as well, the survey revealed that the majority of people think global warming is affecting heat waves (78%), droughts (77%), cyclones (73%) and floods (70%), even in states where recent exposure has been low. In Haryana and Rajasthan, for instance, 80% of adults report experiencing severe heat waves, compared to just 55% in Kerala and 52% in Tamil Nadu.

Jagadish Thaker, senior lecturer, University of Queensland, said, "As India rapidly develops while facing intensifying extreme weather, understanding how people across states and districts perceive and experience climate change is essential.

Flaw in hiring consultant short-circuits streetlight overhaul plan

Ahmedabad. (Agency)

The civic body's ambitious Rs 500-crore streetlight automation plan — put in place after authorities took five to six hours to turn off all the lights during Operation Sindoore in May — has hit an unexpected roadblock. The AMC cancelled the tender after learning that the consultant who drafted it had been appointed without following the required bidding process. The revelation emerged just as the tender was nearing finalisation. The corporation is now examining how the lapse occurred and is preparing to restart the process with proper procedures.

According to sources, the AMC commissioner was informed that the consultant involved in drafting and finalising the Rs 500-crore tender for the supply, installation, testing, and commissioning (SITC), maintenance, operation, and automation of all streetlight poles in the city, was not empanelled with the corporation. Further, the consultancy assignment itself had been given without inviting bids, raising concerns about violations of procurement norms. Officials said the discovery left AMC with no option but to halt the tender and reassess the process. The situation has unfolded at a time when the

city's streetlight maintenance system is already strained. On Jan 10, 2020, AMC had awarded a five-year contract for comprehensive streetlight maintenance to Citadelum India



Pvt. Ltd. At the time, the city operated 1.69 lakh streetlight poles; that number has since increased to 2.1 lakh. The contract formally expired on Jan 10, 2025, but the contractor declined to continue services further, despite repeated requests from the corporation. Meetings between AMC officials and the contractor continue, though the agreement has officially ended.

HC cancels closure of concrete unit at minister Sarnaik's behest

Mumbai. (Agency)

Bombay high court has set aside Maharashtra Pollution Control Board's directions for closure of a ready mix concrete plant in Ghodbunder village, Mira Bhayandar, observing it was at the behest of transport minister Pratap Sarnaik. "Quite clearly the communication dated Oct 8 containing the closure directions has been issued by the regional officer, MPCB at the instance of the letter dated Sept 9 (by Sarnaik)," said chief justice Shree Chandrashekhar and justice Gautam Ankhad.

Raj Transit Infra Pvt Ltd challenged the Oct 8 order by MPCB's Thane office to immediately close down its plant and disconnect electricity and water supply. It said it had obtained licenses and approvals including from Mira Bhayandar Municipal Corporation and MPCB which had

recorded that the plant satisfied all environmental parameters.

On July 2, the company was issued a closure notice for not furnishing a bank guarantee and for its ambient air quality monitoring data not being linked to MPCB's server. It replied saying it had complied with both conditions. On Oct 7, it placed relevant documents before MPCB member-secretary. The next day directions were issued to close operations. On Oct 22, the HC vacation bench restrained disconnection of water supply and electricity until Nov 10.

MPCB's advocate Jaya Bagwe said facts can be ascertained after the physical verification of the plant. But the judges, after examining the material on record and in particular Sarnaik's Sept 9 letter, said there was no need to call for response



affidavits. "The reason is that the entire proceedings initiated against the petitioner-company stems from the Sept 9 complaint written by the transport minister," they added. Sarnaik had complained about air pollution due to RMC plants in Ghodbunder village.

The judges noted that closure proceedings

were initiated on July 2 by the regional officer who signed the Oct 8 communication. They said the "entire exercise undertaken by the MPCB is vitiated in view of the complaint made by the minister..." They referred to the argument of senior advocate Ashish Kamat with advocate Apurva Gupte, for the company, that the July 2 show-cause notice did not refer to Sarnaik's complaint. A reference of his Sept 9 complaint letter was made "for the first time" on Oct 8. The judges said the closure "thus suffers from the vice of bias and has been issued against the rules of natural justice."

They granted MPCB liberty to inspect the plant "and if any deficiency is detected, it may issue a show-cause notice after affording...opportunity to the...company to rectify those deficiencies."

AAP, BJP trade charges over stubble burning as Delhi's AQI crosses 400

As Delhi's air turns 'severe', AAP blames BJP-run agencies for most of the pollution and cites a sharp fall in Punjab stubble fires, while the BJP accuses AAP of shifting its stand.

New Delhi.(Agency)

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and the BJP traded sharp accusations on Tuesday over responsibility for Delhi's crippling air pollution crisis, which continues to drive the city's Air Quality Index (AQI) past the 400-mark. Blaming the BJP-led Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) and other agencies for the city's toxic smog, AAP Delhi State President Saurabh Bharadwaj said, "Today I read in a newspaper that the contribution from stubble burning for city's pollution is only 8% percent. This means 92% of this pollution is the responsibility of the Delhi government, MCD and all the agencies here which are all BJP controlled." Bharadwaj cited statements from two central government institutions—the Secretary of the Department of Agricultural Research and Education, and the Director General of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research—to highlight a 95% reduction in stubble burning incidents in Punjab under the AAP

government.

He presented satellite data showing a decline in total stubble burning incidents across the region: from 1,07,000 in 2020 (with 83,000 in Punjab) to an estimated 3,500 to 4,000 this year. "This means a near 95 percent decline from 83,000," he claimed, adding that central departments had congratulated the Punjab Government and Punjab's farmers for this achievement. Bharadwaj then targeted the BJP-led government for alleged pollution mismanagement, accusing officials of data manipulation by shutting down and hosing down AQI monitoring stations to falsify readings. He also claimed that officials responsible for enforcing the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) had turned fines for construction activity into a "money making business," indicating rampant corruption. considered vulnerable to radicalisation. In a swift rebuttal, Delhi BJP president



Virendra Sachdeva condemned the AAP's statements and reaffirmed that while stubble burning may not be the primary cause, it is "certainly a major factor." Sachdeva highlighted past actions by the AAP government, noting that then-chief minister Arvind Kejriwal had written multiple letters to both the Punjab and Central governments between 2015 and 2021 demanding a ban on

stubble burning in Punjab. Furthermore, Sachdeva questioned the consistency of AAP's messaging. He referenced previous statements by former AAP Environment Minister Gopal Rai from 2022 to 2024, in which Rai annually acknowledged only a 25 to 30 percent decrease in stubble burning since the AAP came to power in Punjab.

"The people of Delhi want to know from Bhagwant Mann whether Arvind Kejriwal and Gopal Rai also falsely accused Punjab of increasing Delhi's pollution," Sachdeva said. He also claimed that the central government had provided numerous resources to the Punjab government for stubble pollution control, which had not been properly distributed to farmers.

At present, Stage-III of the extant GRAP is in force across the entire NCR. Stage-III of GRAP imposes stringent measures when the Air Quality Index (AQI) reaches the "severe" category.

Supreme Court asks to move children's sports activities to pollution-safe months



New Delhi.(Agency)

In the wake of the worsening air pollution in Delhi, the Supreme Court on Wednesday asked the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) to issue directions advising that sports activities in schools should be shifted to pollution-safe months. The court observed that allowing such activities during November and December, when the pollution levels are at their peak, "amounts to putting school children in a gas chamber". The Chief Justice of India-led bench's direction came after the amicus informed the court that the Delhi government has scheduled inter-zonal sports competitions for under-16 and under-14 students during the two months when the air quality is at its worst.

Delhi HC flags six-year delay in pleas linked to 2020 riot cases, seeks status report from police

New Delhi.(Agency)

Highlighting years of stagnation in a clutch of petitions linked to the 2020 northeast Delhi riots, the Delhi High Court on Tuesday asked the city police to place on record the latest status of the investigation. The direction came as the bench noted that several pleas — including those seeking criminal action against political leaders for alleged hate speech — have remained pending since 2020



without the petitioners invoking alternative statutory remedies available to them. A division bench of Justices Vivek Chaudhary and Manoj Jain, while hearing multiple matters arising from the February 2020 communal violence, flagged the prolonged pendency. The judges orally observed that although an alternate remedy existed, "the petitioners have not availed it," adding that the cases had remained before the court for six years. During the hearing, counsel for one of the petitioners referred to the casualties in the riots. The bench responded that FIRs had already been registered and that the probe lay with the police, leaving little for the HC to adjudicate in the present writ petitions. When the lawyer argued that the police were not conducting a fair investigation and urged the court to order an independent probe, the bench reiterated the proper legal course, "You challenge it before the magistrate. The magistrate will supervise. These are questions of fact. We cannot entertain questions of fact in writ petitions. You can give that evidence to the magistrate, who will look into it and pass orders. The HC cannot do this."

Students, activists seek action against Delhi's toxic air

New Delhi.(Agency)

Nearly a hundred citizens, including students, activists, parents, and senior citizens, gathered at Jantar Mantar on Tuesday to protest the worsening air pollution crisis in the capital. This marks the second significant demonstration in the city aimed at raising an urgent voice against the escalating pollution threat, which poses a severe health risk across all age groups. The protest drew notable participation from senior citizens and young children, the two groups most vulnerable to toxic air. Manisha, a 62-year-old South Delhi resident, highlighted the dire situation, stating, "The issue of air pollution is so serious that it has compelled us to raise our voices. I normally don't come for protests... but the air

pollution has moved me." She expressed deep concern for her grandchildren's "smoggy future." The demonstration took place as the Central Pollution Control Board



(CPCB) continued to report "severe" pollution levels, with the city's Air Quality Index (AQI) touching 344 on Tuesday morning. Forecasts indicate the air quality is likely to remain in the "very poor" category over the coming days. Spearheaded largely by

the youth, the rally saw a poignant moment when a seven-year-old child, clad in his school uniform, attended with his visibly concerned parents. Namrata Yadav, the boy's mother, said, "It's not that only people with asthma will face issues, everyone's having a problem. It has permeated into our lives and you never know who will get it." Protesters held placards with slogans like, "If air is free, why is breathing a privilege?" and "Crores for campaign, zero for clean air. Is this governance?" Some of them were also seen wearing industrial-grade respiratory masks as symbolic props at the protest. Environmental activist Vimlendu Jha was also present, emphasising that he was demonstrating not only as an activist but as a father.

Fraud, Forgery, And More: How Al Falah University Duped Students Of Crores

New Delhi.(Agency)

Widespread irregularities have emerged at the Faridabad-based Al Falah Charitable Trust and its affiliated institutions that have been under the scanner amid a probe into the November 10 Delhi blast. The institutions have been accused of making huge profits by showing false accreditation, with the Enforcement Directorate (ED) claiming before the court that it had earned about Rs 415 crore through false claims. Jawad Ahmed Siddiqui, founder and chairman of the Al Falah, was arrested by the ED in the terror financing-linked money laundering



investigation. A court has remanded him to ED custody for 13 days—till December 1. The probe into the alleged violations under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) has revealed that the bank accounts and income tax returns

(ITRs) of the institutions were under a single Permanent Account Number (PAN), indicating that financial control had been vested in a single trust. An examination of the ITRs since 2014-15 showed shocking figures. The ITRs revealed that during 2014-15 and 2015-16, Rs 30.89 crore and Rs 29.48 crore were shown as donations. From 2016-17 onwards, the university began showing its income as academic income. A sharp rise in income was noted since 2018-19. The income went up from Rs 24.21 crore in 2018-19 to Rs 80.01 crore in 2024-25. This totalled Rs 415 crore during these seven years.

Promised electric heaters for Delhi's Resident Welfare Associations yet to arrive as winter sets

RWAs say not a single heater or guideline has reached them even as temperatures drop, forcing guards to light fires and raising questions over the practicality and implementation of the government's plan.

New Delhi.(Agency)

Three months after the Delhi government announced that it would distribute electric heaters to Resident Welfare Associations (RWAs) to discourage open burning during winter, none of the units have reached the ground, residents' groups across the city said. The assurance was made in September by

Environment Minister Majinder Singh Sirsa, who had said that 3,000 heaters would be provided through the Delhi State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation (DSIIDC) as part of a push to reduce winter air pollution. With temperatures dipping to 8.7°C in recent days, RWAs say they are struggling to prevent security guards and domestic workers from lighting small fires to stay warm.

Many stress that they have not received heaters or even official communication on how the distribution would take place. "None of the RWAs in Rajinder Nagar has received any heaters so far," said Arvind Mehta, President of the Joint Forum of Residents, Rajinder Nagar. He said residents had constructed small

wooden cabins for security guards to shield them from the cold, but many continue to light fires on roadsides. Mehta also alleged that other pollution-



control measures were missing. "No dust control measures, no smog guns are frequent here. As a result, despite being surrounded by the ridge on three sides, pollution levels are still very high

in Rajinder Nagar." The idea itself may be unworkable, RWA representatives said. Saurabh Gandhi, general secretary of United Residents of Delhi (URD), said

none of the RWAs in their network had received heaters nor any official intimation regarding distribution. "I don't think the idea is practical. It would work only in places where the RWA has a guard room. You need an enclosed space with an electricity connection. Guard rooms are uncommon. Only some posh colonies in South Delhi would have these," he said. Even in cases where guard rooms existed, many lacked electrical connections, he added.

"Also, there are 25 guards in my RWA. How will one heater suffice?" DSIIDC officials declined to comment on the status of allocation or distribution.

NEWS BOX

England's Bazball was designed only for Ashes in Australia: Ponting's stunning claim

New Delhi. (Agency)
Former Australia captain Ricky Ponting has claimed that England's Bazball philosophy was crafted with a single purpose: to win the Ashes in Australia, while also accusing the team of being dishonest in the way they publicly speak about their style and their results.Ponting told 7NEWS that England's aggressive approach under Brendon McCullum and Ben Stokes has always been aimed at conquering Australian conditions, even if the team has packaged it as a long-term revolution.They're a side that have been together for two years (since the 2023 Ashes) building up to this," Ponting said. "Bazball, as far as I'm concerned, and I know Brendon reasonably well, was only designed for this one series.Forget about everything that's happened over the past two years, it was all about having a group together and a style of play that can stand up and win Test matches in Australia."They've only done it four times in the past 25 years, and they are going to need



to do it at least three times this summer, so I can't wait to see how they play." TACTICS SLOWLY EVOLVING When McCullum first took charge in 2022, England embraced an ultra-aggressive method of play, scoring at high rates and attempting unconventional shots in unusual parts of the ground. It gave them brief periods of dominance but produced inconsistent results.Ponting believes England have tempered their approach since failing to win the 2023 Ashes at home. "I think it has slightly changed," he said. "In its inception, it was a lot more reckless than it is now. I think now they are identifying moments better."I do not think Joe Root is taking it on as much as he did. I do not think Ben Stokes is taking the whole Bazball thing as much as he probably once did at the start of it, but their openers do. And Ollie Pope tries to as well. That is why I think their openers are so important."

Curacao becomes the smallest-ever nation to qualify for FIFA World Cup

New Delhi. (Agency)
"Curacao have completed one of football's most extraordinary fairytales, becoming the smallest country ever to qualify for a FIFA World Cup finals after grinding out a tense 0-0 draw against Jamaica on the final night of the Concacaf qualifying campaign. The tiny Caribbean nation, with a population of just 156,000, sealed their place at the 2026 tournament alongside Haiti and Panama after a dramatic conclusion across the region.The Blue Wave arrived in Kingston knowing that avoiding defeat would secure their passage to next year's expanded 48-team World Cup in the United States, Canada and Mexico. What followed was a nerve-shredding, backs-against-the-wall display as they clung on under waves of Jamaican pressure to claim the point that rewrote football history. Curacao, covering a land mass of just 444 square kilometres, have now eclipsed Iceland's record as the smallest nation to reach a World Cup finals. Iceland, who stunned the world with their Euro 2016 run and qualified for the 2018 World Cup, had a population of roughly 350,000 at the time, which is more than double



Curacao's.Remarkably, Curacao navigated the entire qualifying campaign unbeaten. Their journey featured a resounding 7-0 demolition of Bermuda and consistent performances across all six matches to finish top of Group B with 12 points, one ahead of Jamaica. The achievement came despite the absence of veteran Dutch coach Dick Advocaat, who missed the decisive match for family reasons in the Netherlands.For a nation that only became a FIFA member in 2010 following the dissolution of the Netherlands Antilles, the qualification marks an unprecedented moment in its sporting history. Curacao will discover their group-stage opponents when the World Cup draw is held on 5 December at the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C.

Indian football team suffers embarrassing 0-1 loss to Bangladesh in Asian Cup qualifiers

India's last defeat against Bangladesh was during the 2003 SAFF Gold Cup, where the latter had prevailed 2-1 at the same venue in Dhaka.

TBILISI. (Agency)
DHAKA: India suffered their first defeat against Bangladesh in 22 years, going down 0-1 to the home side in an inconsequential Group C match of the Asian Cup qualifying round match here on Tuesday.Sheikh Morsalin scored the all-important goal for Bangladesh in the 11th minute to the wild cheer of the capacity crowd at the National Stadium here.The match, though, had been rendered inconsequential as both the sides were out of contention of the 2027 continental showpiece.India got a golden scoring chance in the 31st minute but Lallianzuala Chhangte's right-footed shot from the top of the box after Bangladesh goalkeeper Mitul Marma was completely out of position was headed away by Hamza

Choudhury.There was an instance of pushing and shoving among some players of the two teams near the touch line in the first half but the referee brought it under control.India's last defeat against Bangladesh was during the 2003 SAFF Gold Cup, where the latter had prevailed 2-1 at the same venue in Dhaka. Since then, the two sides had faced each other in nine matches before Tuesday, and India had won three times while six were drawn affairs.India's campaign for the 2027 Asian Cup had effectively ended on October 14, when they squandered a 1-0 lead to lose 1-2 to Singapore in Margao, Goa.By virtue of the defeat, a winless India remained rooted at the bottom of the four-team table with just two points from five matches. This was their third loss in the third round of the qualifiers. The other two matches were drawn affairs. After the win, Bangladesh, who notched their first win in five matches, remained on third with five points. The first leg match between the two sides had ended in a goal-less draw on March 25 in Shillong.Singapore, who defeated Hong Kong 2-1 earlier in the day in Hong Kong, sealed the top spot in Group C with 11 points and qualified for the 2027

Asian Cup. Hong Kong are in second place with eight points.India are currently ranked 136th in the FIFA chart while Bangladesh are at 183rd.India play their last match of the



2027 Asian Cup qualifiers against Hong Kong at home on March 31, 2026.Lallianzuala Chhangte played his 50th international match on Tuesday, while India head coach Khalid Jamil handed debuts to Mohammed Sanan and Lalremtlunga Fanai, bringing the two on from the bench.

After conceding the goal in the first half, the Blue Tigers mounted a barrage of attacks on Bangladesh in the second half. They came out with more intent in the second session, as Jamil introduced Mahesh Singh Naorem in place of Nikhil Prabhu.The substitution brought immediate impact, with Mahesh using his creativity to trouble the Bangladesh defence.Suresh whipped a free-kick from the left into the box, which was headed goalwards by Rahul Bheke, with Rahim Ali waiting at the goalmouth to turn it in. However, Bangladesh's defenders managed to clear the danger.The introduction of Sanan created further opportunities for India, as the winger used his trickery and awareness on the left flank.Receiving a pass from Rahim in the 66th minute, Sanan dummed his marker to cut inside and shoot, but his effort was saved. A minute later, the winger hung a beautiful cross from the left towards an unmarked Brison Fernandes, who headed wide.Amid the Indian attacks, Bangladesh looked to create a few counters of their own and came close to doubling their lead in the 79th minute when Topu Barman's strike from outside the box was collected by a diving Gurpreet Singh Sandhu.

BCCI curators took over: Sourav Ganguly distances himself from Eden pitch saga

New Delhi. (Agency)
Former India captain and current Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB) president Sourav Ganguly has distanced himself from the Eden Gardens pitch saga, clarifying that BCCI-appointed curators took charge of the surface four days before the India-South Africa Test.The Kolkata Test ended in two and a half days, with world Test champions South Africa defeating India to take a 1-0 lead in the two-match Test series. India failed to chase 124 and collapsed for just 93, marking the first time they had been bowled out for fewer than 100 runs in the fourth innings of a Test.Although the Eden Gardens surface behaved erratically from the first over, offering turn and uneven bounce, head coach Gautam Gambhir insisted there were no demons on the pitch. He put the blame squarely on the batters and said he expected far better from them.Ganguly, a former BCCI president, made it clear that the CAB had no direct involvement in preparing the



final Test surface once the board's team arrived."No, no, I don't get involved at all," Ganguly told India Today when asked whether the Indian team management sought his expertise before finalising the pitch."Curators from the BCCI come and take over the wickets four days before the Test match. We have our own curator (Sujan Mukherjee) as well, who's done exceptionally well for a long time. The requests are made, and you keep the requests. That's what it is."GANGULY ADMITS PITCH POOR Sourav Ganguly did not shy away from

acknowledging that the surface at Eden Gardens was below standard and did little to support India's batting effort. "It was not the greatest, I'll have to completely admit, and I think the top-order batting, the middle-order batting, you know, deserves a better cricketing surface. It was a full house at Eden Gardens for those three days, and I completely believe that Gautam Gambhir and his team in India must play on much better wickets than what they played at Eden Gardens," he said.Eden Gardens curator Sujan Mukherjee echoed Ganguly's remarks, saying he simply executed the directives given by the Gautam Gambhir-led Indian team management.Sometimes it is beyond our control, and we try to keep the request of the team and the coach, and the captain. And that is what we do, so that's what it is. And you've heard Gautam Gambhir say after the game that he wanted that sort of a pitch and was given that sort of a pitch. So you keep the captain and the coach's request," he said.

Ashes: Lightning halts Australia's training session ahead of 1st Test in Perth



New Delhi. (Agency)
Australia's final preparations for the opening Ashes Test were disrupted on Wednesday when their main training session at Perth Stadium was abruptly halted after lightning was detected near the venue. The suspension came despite bright, sunny conditions, leaving players and staff briefly puzzled as they were ushered off the field. The squad had completed around 40 minutes

of fielding drills and were moving into their net session when officials intervened. Bowlers had only just begun warming up when all players, coaches and media were directed indoors at approximately 10:30am local time - a significant interruption on the team's last major training day before facing England. Event officials stressed that the stoppage was in line with established safety rules, noting

that "if lightning is 5kms or less away from the ground, then outside activity needs to stop." These protocols are standard across major sporting venues in Western Australia and have caused similar delays in AFL and other events in recent years.The timing of the halt was far from ideal for Australia, who were looking to fine-tune their match plans and adapt to conditions ahead of the series opener. With no rain in sight, the players were left in limbo inside the dressing rooms, uncertain whether they would be cleared to resume training later in the day. While the weather remained clear above the stadium, the continued presence of lightning within the restricted radius meant the session risked being scrapped altogether if conditions failed to shift. Such safety-first interruptions, though common in the region, added an unwelcome layer of unpredictability to Australia's build-up.England are scheduled to use the stadium later in the afternoon, with their preparation block expected to begin around 2pm local time.



in Asia? From Sikandar's point of view, is Zimbabwe playing the second-best or the third-best Asian teams in this tri-series?"Since I am in a national jersey, all I will tell you is that Zimbabwe are the second-best team in Africa. I don't care who the first or second-best team in Asia is. I'll address that when I am not in national colours. Right now, my focus is on my team. This is a press conference for a Zimbabwe captain, so I should answer questions about Zimbabwe. I personally don't care who the first, second, third or fourth-best team in Asia is. We're the second-best team in Africa and we're looking to build on that. We're trying to challenge the best team in Africa."Raza was also visibly unimpressed when asked whether Zimbabwe reaching the final of the tri-series involving Pakistan and Sri Lanka would be considered an upset."It might be an upset for you. I can read the room. Maybe you people are not giving us too much of a chance," he said.

Shane Warne's magic lives on: England fans to make emotional tribute on Boxing Day

England's Barmy Army is preparing a fitting tribute to honour the late Shane Warne during the Boxing Day Test at the MCG, marking the first Ashes clash at the venue since his passing and uniting fans beyond traditional rivalry.

New Delhi. (Agency)
The popular English supporters' club, the Barmy Army, is reportedly preparing a special tribute to the late Shane Warne during the Boxing Day Test of the upcoming Ashes series in Australia. Known for their loud chants, humour, and ability to bring

colour to any cricket ground, the Barmy Army now appears ready to honour one of the sport's greatest icons in a heartfelt gesture.According to a report by news.com.au, the supporters' group has personally promised Warne's son, Jackson Warne, that they will organise a meaningful homage to the legendary leg-spinner during the marquee fixture at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG). The Boxing Day Test is traditionally one of cricket's biggest annual events, but this edition holds added emotional significance. It will be the first Ashes Test at the MCG since Warne's passing in March 2022, marking a poignant moment for fans on both sides of the rivalry. Jackson Warne revealed that the Barmy Army had reached out to him, indicating that something special is in the works. "I am not sure what that is yet, but they've said, 'Jacko, stay tuned,'" he said on Tuesday,



November 18. While touched by the gesture, he added humorously, "I am grateful they've taken the time to come all the way across the other side of the world - but hopefully they're not as loud as the Aussies."Shane Warne's impact on cricket is immeasurable. Since making his international debut in 1992, he has evolved into one of the sport's biggest superstars and one of its most recognisable figures. His mastery of leg-spin revived a dying art, and

his presence on the field was as charismatic as it was intimidating. Warne finished his Test career with 708 wickets, of which a remarkable 195 came against England—one of his favourite opponents and the nation he tormented most consistently. WARNE: BEYOND THE RIVALRY Despite the fierce on-field rivalry between Australia and England, Warne commanded immense respect across the cricketing world. English fans in particular grew increasingly fond of him after his retirement, when he transitioned seamlessly into commentary. His insight, humour, and ability to read the game further endeared him to audiences globally.Although the specifics of the planned tribute remain under wraps, one thing is certain: the Barmy Army intends to honour Warne in a manner befitting a modern-day great.

Groww shares crash 10% to hit lower circuit. Why are investors booking profits

New Delhi.(Agency)

Groww’s parent company, Billionbrains Garage Ventures, saw its first big stumble on Wednesday after registering a stellar post-listing rally.

The share price of Groww fell 10% in early trade and slipped straight to the lower circuit, a sharp contrast to the over 90% rally investors had witnessed over the past few days.The fall looks like a classic case of profit-booking after an overextended run. Groww listed at Rs 100 on November 12 and had almost doubled in just four sessions, touching Rs 194.Moves like these are usually followed by a cooling-off period as early investors and traders lock in gains while sentiment is still strong.THE SHORT SQUEEZE

A big part of today’s slide also comes from what unfolded on Tuesday. More than 30 lakh shares were pushed into the auction window at the NSE after many traders short-sold the stock expecting a dip.

Instead, Groww kept rising, leaving them unable to deliver shares on the settlement date.

That squeeze had signalled how overheated the counter had become, and once the pressure eased, the stock was bound to correct.

UPCOMING Q2 RESULTS

Another reason for the pause is the lack of financial clarity. The company has not yet declared quarterly results and will announce numbers on November 21.Without earnings in hand, a significant part of the rally was driven by sentiment and enthusiasm around a popular fintech brand. Some investors now prefer to wait for actual financial data before chasing the stock further.Groww has still delivered one of the strongest post-listing performances of the year, and Wednesday’s correction looks more like a reality check than a trend reversal.

Volatility may continue until the earnings announcement, but the broader picture will depend on whether the company’s numbers can justify the steep early valuation.

Silver Prices To Rebound To \$52 In Near Term, ETFs Outperform Physical Metal

New Delhi.(Agency)

Silver prices will rebound to \$52–\$53 an ounce and then potentially advance to \$58 and \$62, with strong near-term support at \$47.60, a report said on Tuesday, giving investors price target levels for the next 12 months.

Silver exchange-traded funds (ETFs) and silver fund-of-funds (FoF) outperformed physical silver over the past 3 years due to robust fund management, efficient tracking, and growing investor confidence, the report from Emkay Wealth Management said.The wealth management firm expects further strong support levels for silver at \$45.60 and \$42.00, in that order.The report cited one-year gains of over 50 per cent by leading silver ETFs versus about 49 per cent for physical silver. Over three- and six-month periods, returns ranged between 34-56 per cent, underscoring the strength of the rally, it added.

Emkay Wealth Management said that despite short-term volatility, the fundamentals of the silver market remain strong. Rising industrial demand from sectors such as renewable energy and electronics, coupled with constrained supply, continues to support long-term price stability.Silver fund of funds also mirrored this trend, delivering one-year returns of around 49 per cent to 50 per cent. The minor difference in performance versus ETFs stems from fund-level expenses.After a brief correction, silver prices are hovering around \$48.80 an ounce amid profit booking and easing US-China trade restrictions on critical mineralsGlobal mining output has grown only modestly and is expected to peak by 2026, even as industrial and investment demand climbs, driven by solar photovoltaics, electric vehicles, electronics, 5G infrastructure, and semiconductors.

RP-Sanjiv Goenka Group enters luxury fashion space with 40% stake in FSP Design

CHENNA .(Agency)

RPSG Ventures has moved into the luxury fashion space with a significant investment in FSP Design, the company behind the Falguni Shane Peacock label. The venture arm of the RP-Sanjiv Goenka Group is buying 40 percent of the company at a valuation of a little over Rs 455 crore, with the entire payment made in cash. It also has the option to pick up an additional 10 percent stake within the next two years, signalling that this may be the start of a deeper partnership.FSP Design, which generated about Rs 92 crore in revenue in FY25, operates across exclusive brand outlets, multi-brand luxury stores and international online platforms.For RPSG Ventures, the move marks a deliberate shift into a premium consumer category it has not previously tapped. The group’s portfolio traditionally spans IT, business services, FMCG, sports, and real estate, making high-end couture an unconventional—but potentially high-margin—addition.

The investment gives RPSG a foothold in a segment driven by strong branding, global reach and aspirational spending, areas that are expanding rapidly as India’s luxury market grows. For FSP Design, the deal provides capital and scale advantages that could support wider retail expansion, brand-building, and a push into more global markets.

The partnership also carries a degree of risk. Luxury fashion is highly dependent on brand perception, celebrity-driven visibility and unpredictable consumer trends. If FSP Design does not sustain its momentum, the valuation could come under pressure.But if the brand continues to strengthen its domestic and international presence, the investment could deliver attractive returns, says an industry analyst. For now, the acquisition positions RPSG Ventures as a more diversified consumer-facing player and gives FSP Design a stronger platform to accelerate its next phase of growth, he added.

NCR office rents are rising: What's driving commercial real estate prices up

Expressway expansions, metro lines, and upcoming airports are easing mobility while opening new economic opportunities in the NCR.

New Delhi.(Agency)

Connectivity has been the prime driver for NCR to emerge as one of India’s most vibrant real estate markets. Expressway expansions, metro lines, and upcoming airports are easing mobility while opening new economic opportunities in the NCR.

This infrastructure evolution is reshaping how people live, work, and invest, from commercial corridors and logistics hubs to mixed-use developments.This trend of urbanisation has continued in the region, with the development pattern already

shifting from the core of Delhi into upcoming sub-markets such as Noida, Greater Noida, Gurugram, Ghaziabad, and Faridabad.All of the above is further supported by well-planned connectivity initiatives that have considerably improved access and economic integration across these cities.

Establishment of new commercial and logistics centres

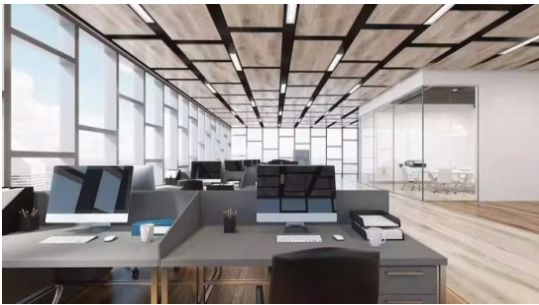
With the fast development of expressways and freight corridors, NCR has emerged as a busy logistics and warehousing hub.

Certainly, businesses that set up large facilities along these corridors promise smooth linkages in supply chains, with a minimum amount of transit time. This has led to the fact that these areas, previously not utilised, have become active commercial zones and are now attracting manufacturing, retail, and e-commerce players.Transportation infrastructure is now at the centre of every industrial corridor being developed to generate employment, increase regional GDP, and create a strong base for long-

term economic growth.

Increased demand for office and retail spaces

Improved connectivity has reshaped the



geography of work in NCR, with Metro extensions and RRTS expanding the radius of commercial business districts.

It enables growth in new urban centers along these corridors, areas quite a distance away from traditional commercial business districts like Connaught Place or Cyber City.These emerging corridors are

seeing increased demand for modern offices, coworking spaces, and retail outlets driven by startups and corporates who are looking for ease of access and affordability.Self-sustainable micro-

markets have thus been created that blend the convenience of doing business with residential livability.

Value Appreciation in New Corridors

The development of infrastructure has now become a direct driver of appreciation in the price of properties. Areas near new expressways, metro lines, and upcoming international airports have witnessed a steady appreciation in land and property values.Better connectivity and infrastructure have also encouraged both end-users and investors to shift focus to these areas.The integrated development of commercial and residential projects, therefore, improves demand, with many corridors recording double-digit price appreciation in the last few years, a reassuring indication of long-term stability in real estate.

Govt removes quality control requirement for Viscose Staple Fibre

New Delhi.(Agency)

To address raw material accessibility and foster growth in the textile industry, the government has removed the Quality Control Order (QCO) requirement for Viscose Staple Fibre (VSF) with immediate effect. The step was taken after due consultation with the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) and key industry stakeholders, said the Textile Ministry in a statement on Tuesday. Earlier last week, the government also rescinded QCO on polyester yarn and fibers.

“This decision directly responds to persistent industry concerns about supply constraints and higher costs, and demonstrates the government’s commitment to improving ease of business for textile manufacturers, exporters, and MSMEs,” says the ministry.

Quality Control Order is a government mandate that requires specific products to meet certain Indian standards and obtain a Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) licence for manufacturing, sale, or import.Removal of the QCO on VSF is expected to ensure seamless access to quality raw material, enhance global competitiveness, and drive industry-led growth to support these national objectives. The ministry said that the policy move comes at a crucial time as India’s textile sector pursues the ambitious Vision 2030—aiming to boost domestic consumption and meet the target of \$100 billion in exports while growing the total textiles and apparel market to \$350 billion.Meanwhile, the ministry has approved 17 new applicants under the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme for textiles in round three of selection, it said in a press release on Tuesday.According to the ministry, the newly approved applicants have committed a total investment of ₹2,374 crore. The proposed projects are expected to achieve projected sales of over ₹12,893 crore and generate employment for about 22,646 persons in the coming years.The PLI Scheme for textiles was notified on September 24, 2021, with an approved outlay of ₹10,683 crore to promote the production of MMF apparel and fabrics, and products of Technical Textiles. The scheme aims to enable the textile industry to achieve the necessary size and scale, become globally competitive, and create substantial employment opportunities. Under the first two rounds of selections, a total of 74 applications have been approved under the scheme.Recently, the Ministry has notified major amendments to the scheme to further enhance industry participation. The online application portal has been reopened for acceptance of new applications till December 31, 2025. According to the Ministry, as many as 74 applicants’ requests for PLI have been approved by the government.

Excelsoft Technologies IPO open for bidding: Should you subscribe Check GMP

New Delhi.(Agency)

The initial public offering (IPO) of Excelsoft Technologies opened for bidding on Wednesday, giving investors a chance to evaluate whether the company’s business, valuation and growth plans justify the offer price.

Excelsoft Technologies IPO comes at a time when interest in technology-focused listings remains strong, but investors are also becoming more cautious about high valuations in the digital and SaaS space.Excelsoft Technologies aims to raise Rs 500 crore through the IPO, which includes a fresh issue of 1.50 crore shares worth Rs 180 crore and an offer for sale (OFS) of 2.67 crore shares worth Rs 320 crore. The subscription window is open from November 19 to November 21, and allotment is expected on November 24. The shares are likely to list on the BSE and NSE on November 26.The price band has been set at Rs 114–120 per share. A retail investor



needs to apply for at least one lot of 125 shares, which requires an investment of Rs 15,000 at the upper price band. Small non-institutional investors (sNII) need to apply for 14 lots, while big non-institutional investors (bNII) must apply for 67 lots. Anand Rath Advisors is the lead manager, and MUFG Intime India is the registrar.The company plans to use the fresh issue money for a new Mysore facility, land purchase, electrical system upgrades, and improvement of software, hardware and network systems. A part

of the funds will also go towards general corporate purposes. SHOULD YOU SUBSCRIBE? Pre-listing trends show mild optimism in the grey market. The last traded GMP for Excelsoft Technologies IPO is Rs 12, updated at 11:57 AM on November 19, 2025. Based on the upper price band of Rs 120, the IPO is expected to list at around Rs 132, indicating an estimated 10% listing gain per share.Excelsoft operates in the high-growth vertical SaaS segment, mainly in the global EdTech learning and assessment market. It currently serves 76 clients across 19 countries, including major publisher Pearson Group, and earns steady revenue through long-term contracts. The company also reported strong financial growth, with profit after tax rising nearly 172% in FY25.

The \$30-billion bet: Why Anthropic’s pact with Microsoft and Nvidia sends shockwaves through the AI race

New Delhi.(Agency)

The US artificial intelligence (AI) startup Anthropic’s Tuesday announcement of a sweeping partnership with Microsoft and Nvidia, marked one of the largest AI-infrastructure commitments announced this year. Under the arrangement, Anthropic will spend about \$30 billion on Microsoft Azure’s computing capacity and may scale this further to nearly one gigawatt of contracted compute power. Microsoft, in turn, will invest up to \$5 billion in Anthropic, while Nvidia plans to put in as much as \$10 billion.Alongside these financial commitments,Anthropic and Nvidia will also work closely on engineering, tuning Claude models -- the range of generative artificial intelligence (AI) models and a chatbot developed by the company-- for Nvidia’s advanced Grace Blackwell and Vera Rubin systems and feeding performance data directly into Nvidia’s future chip designs.

Microsoft will also bring several Claude models into its Azure AI Foundry services and integrate them across tools such as GitHub Copilot, Microsoft 365 Copilot, and Copilot Studio.The combined arrangement, which has sent shockwaves through the AI industry, gives each company a clear win. Anthropic secures the massive and predictable computing power it needs to scale Claude, while gaining access to Nvidia’s latest hardware and engineering know-how. For Microsoft, Anthropic becomes a major, long-term customer for Azure and a second strong model partner alongside OpenAI, reducing dependence on a single provider. Nvidia benefits from guaranteed demand for its newest accelerators and gains a powerful real-world test bed for refining its chip architectures.

This deal also signals how quickly the industry is shifting into a compute-driven phase. Large AI labs now need enormous, stable infrastructure to

sustain training and inference, and partnerships are increasingly designed around co-developing hardware and models in tandem. That tight integration may give companies like Anthropic an edge in speed and efficiency, but it also raises barriers for smaller players that lack the capital or the hardware access required to keep up.

The marquee partnership is reshaping strategic positions across the AI industry. For Microsoft, supporting Anthropic alongside OpenAI broadens its model ecosystem and reduces dependence on a single partner, while giving Azure a major long-term customer. Anthropic gains the stability of guaranteed compute at scale and access to Nvidia’s most advanced hardware, a combination that can push its Claude models to higher levels of performance. The alliance signals that compute access, not just model innovation, is becoming the decisive factor in the AI race.

How every day micro-payments eat into your savings

Welcome to India's new spending reality, the age of micro-payments that silently seep into your accounts and cause invisible leaks. By the end of the month, many people find their digital wallets, likePaytm, PhonePe, Google Pay, have quietly leaked hundreds and thousands of rupees.

CHENNAI .(Agency)

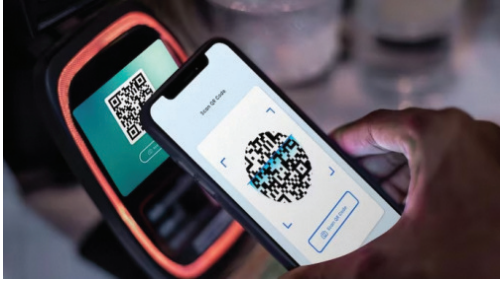
Have you ever wondered how many micropayment transactions we make each day? Micropayments through digital wallets such as Paytm, PhonePe, and Google Pay, often involving minimal amounts of money, have turned every phone into a frictionless payment device. It starts with a tap for chai, another for a quick ride, and oe more for an app subscription.By the end of the month, many Indians find their digital wallets, likePaytm, PhonePe, Google Pay, have quietly leaked hundreds and thousands of rupees. Digital wallets make paying too easy, and these tiny, forgettable spends

rarely get noticed until the bank statement is consciously examined.Further, have you ever paused to count how many digital subscriptions quietly renew on your digital payment apps each month? I reviewed my subscriptions recently, and the list surprised me: a Netflix Basic plan: Rs 199, Apple Music: Rs 119, Amazon Prime: Rs 299, Apple Cloud: Rs 75, Spotify: Rs 119, and the list goes on with many other subscriptions like Hotstar, Zomato Gold, and Swiggy One. Each seemed modest on its own, but together they added up to a pattern, a silent stream of micropayments that quietly nibble away at savings>Welcome to India’s new spending reality, the age of micro-payments that silently seep into your accounts and cause invisible leaks, reminding me that digital convenience has a quiet price tag. We are hooked with everyday leaks in the form of micropayments.These everyday micro-payments blur the boundary between optional and necessary spending. In-app nudges, cashback rewards, and “Buy Now Pay Later” options heighten the temptation, turning casual purchases into fixed habits.

SUBCONSCIOUS RISE OF THE TAP ECONOMY

India’s digital payment revolution is one of the world’s fastest. From Kirana stores to

autorickshaw drivers, a QR code is never far away. RBI reports digital payments accounted for 99.8% of all transaction volume, with UPI recording over 18 billion transactions in a single month.In



my early research on mobile payments in Bangalore (Padashetty& Kishore, Researchers World, 2013), I observed that convenience was the strongest driver of adoption. A decade later, that convenience has evolved into what I call “the tap economy”, effortless, instant, and emotionally painless. But therein lies the paradox: what makes payments seamless also makes spending subconscious.

PSYCHOLOGY OF INVISIBLE SPENDING

Traditional cash payments created a tangible sense of loss; handing over notes or coins made us feel the expense. Digital wallets remove that “pain of paying,”

Behavioural economists argue that when friction disappears, self-control weakens.

One of my recent studies (Padashetty et al., 2023) found that 68% of respondents felt they spent more frequently after shifting to digital wallets, primarily on low-value purchases such as recharges, OTT renewals, and online food orders.Digital ease has created a micro-spending habit loop; small payments trigger neural spikes through dopamine release at the reward centre (NucleusAccumbens) of the midbrain, eliciting pleasure, which in turn gets into an infinite loop of pleasure and payments. Each is harmless on its own, but collectively they create a steady “leak” from personal budgets.

SUBSCRIPTION CREEP AND AUTO-DEBIT TRAPS

A new layer of micro-leakage comes from subscription-based ecosystems. Consumers often forget about Rs 49 or Rs 99 recurring payments that continue monthly. Auto-debits from cards and wallets blur visibility, while cashback notifications create an illusion of saving.

Fintech analysts point out that the subscription economy in India has grown nearly 30% annually since 2020, driven by digital media, learning apps, and SaaS tools.



Nikki Tamboli

Reveals How A Missed DM Led To Her ‘Love Story’ With Arbaz Patel

Love can begin in the most unexpected ways, and that is exactly what happened with Nikki Tamboli and Arbaz Patel. The two recently appeared on Farah Khan’s food vlog and shared how their bond slowly turned into a relationship. They said they never imagined they would become a couple, but destiny clearly had different plans. They spoke about how their story started inside the Bigg Boss Marathi house. From a missed DM to instant chemistry on stage, everything came together at the right time for them. They also shared how they dealt with age-gap comments and what made them feel sure about each other.

ADM From Years Ago

Nikki shared that Arbaz had actually messaged her long before they met in person. “I saw his DM only after our stage interaction,” she said. “He had sent it in 2021!” She said she missed it because she was busy with work and shifting between projects. They laughed about how that one message waited for its moment.

First Impression Backstage

Nikki remembered seeing Arbaz backstage for the first time during Bigg Boss Marathi. She joked, “I heard a voice and said, ‘This voice is very weak.’” She later saw him carrying the contestant’s name plate and realised he was one of the participants. That moment became their first real introduction.

She Entered Bigg Boss To Find Love

Nikki said she had one fun demand before entering Marathi Bigg Boss. “I told the makers, I want a boyfriend. Stop online dating apps, send me to Bigg Boss!” she laughed. She gained fame from Hindi Bigg Boss, but this time, she wanted love. And that is exactly when Arbaz came into her life.

Instant Feelings On Stage

For Nikki, the connection was quick and real. “It was love at first sight,” she admitted. On stage, she even hinted, “He is my guy.” She felt everything around her pointed toward him, and the timing felt too perfect to ignore.

Their Time In The House

Inside the house, they often disagreed, but always stood by each other. “75 per cent of the time he was against me,” she joked. Yet, they never nominated each other and always defended one another when needed. Later, Nikki saw his old DM and felt destiny had been pushing them together all along.



Sussanne Khan’s Sister Simone Remembers Mom Zarine Katrak, Calls Her ‘A True Patriot’



Interior designer Sussanne Khan’s mother, Zarine Katrak, recently passed away, leaving a deep void in the hearts of her family. The wife of Sanjay Khan, Zarine, had been battling age-related health issues and breathed her last on the morning of November 7 at her Mumbai home. Her children recently shared heartfelt tributes honouring her memory. On Instagram, Simone Khan, also an interior designer by profession, shared an array of pictures with her mother, Zarine Katrak. The carousel opened with a throwback photo from her childhood diaries. Looking cute in a red frock, she was being candidly captured with Zarine and her husband, Sanjay Khan.

Simone Khan’s Loving Message To Her Late Mother

The following snaps showcased the mother-daughter duo posing for the lens in their stunning ensembles at various locations – seemingly during their trips and other moments of life. Alongside the pictures on her social media handle, she penned a long note revealing what Zarine Katrak truly meant to her. “A beautiful soul remembered. My beloved mother — a noble, kind-hearted and benevolent lady who touched every life with her warmth, compassion, and radiant smile,” she wrote.

The note continued, “A true patriot, she lived with grace, positivity, and an unshakeable spirit. Self-made and dignified, she embodied strength, forgiveness, and love in its purest form. Her presence will be deeply missed, but her light will forever shine in our hearts.”

Sussanne Khan Says Her Mom Was Their ‘Guiding Light’

On November 8, Sussanne had also dropped a video with her mother after she passed away. In the video, she was seen seated on Zarine’s lap, expressing her love for the former actress. Alongside this, she penned, “My Bestesttttt Friend, My God, My Life... Our Beautiful Mummy.. you are always going to be our Guiding Light... You taught us all to live it our own way... with the epitome of Grace and Love...”

All Eyes On Shilpa Shetty As She Gives Boss Lady Vibes At The Airport



Shilpa Shetty never fails to stun her fans with her fashion sense and style. The actor is widely recognised as a style icon in the film industry, celebrated for her elegant and diverse fashion choices. Whether she is dressed casually or going all glamorous, the actor-turned-entrepreneur nails it every single time. Today, Shilpa once again stole the spotlight with her sense of style, as she was spotted at the Mumbai airport.

Shilpa Stunned Everyone With Her Airport Look

In the video going viral online, the actor was seen arriving at the Mumbai airport earlier today, turning the terminal walkway into a mini runway with her understated yet striking look. Dressed in a sharp navy-blue blazer paired with relaxed-fit trousers, she balanced comfort and sophistication with ease.

A simple white top added a clean contrast to the ensemble, while oversized tinted sunglasses elevated the overall airport-chic vibe.

Carrying a vibrant orange handbag that added a pop of colour to her outfit, the actor exuded confidence as she made her way past waiting cameras. Her straight, shiny hair and minimal makeup created a natural, camera-ready image that complemented the polished dress flawlessly.

Social Media Reactions

Fans quickly responded with admiration as videos of her arrival surfaced online, with many praising her classic, effortless style. In the comment section, several users dropped heart and heart eyes emojis to show their love. A user wrote, “You are amazing,” while another said, “You are awesome.”

Shilpa Shetty’s Recent Projects

On the work front, the actress was last seen as a judge on Super Dancer Chapter 5. In terms of her acting career, she appeared in Rohit Shetty’s thriller series ‘Indian Police Force’. The series also starred Sidharth Malhotra, Vivek Oberoi and Isha Talwar in pivotal roles.

Next, the actor is making her return to Kannada cinema after nearly two decades with her upcoming film KD – The Devil. Helmed by Prem, the action-thriller also stars Dhruva Sarja, Nora Fatehi and Sanjay Dutt. As for its technical team, the cinematography of the film is handled by William David, while the editing work is done by Sanketh Achar.

Manushi Chhillar

Celebrates 8 Years Since Historic Miss World 2017 Win

Miss World 2017 and Bollywood actress Manushi Chhillar is ecstatic as she celebrates the 8th anniversary of her Miss World win. The actress in a collab post with Manushi, on the 18th of November shared a video of her crowning moment, 8 years ago. The pageant organisation penned an emotional note along with the post that was shared as a collab with



Manushi on their social media account. The organisation wrote, “Eight years ago, the world watched a young woman from India step onto a global stage with quiet confidence and a heart full of purpose,” and added a crown and star emoticon. The

note further read, “And in that unforgettable moment, @manushi_chhillar brought home the Miss World crown, ending a 17-year wait and filling an entire nation with pride.

Eight years later, her win still feels like a warm memory, a national heartbeat, and a reminder that dreams, when nurtured with sincerity, can change the course of history, adding an earth and blue emoticon. It further read, “Here’s to the queen who inspired millions, and to the legacy that continues to shine brighter with every passing year,” with a crown and star emoticon.

Sharing the post on her story section of social media, Manushi added multiple heart emoticons. Talking about the actress, Manushi was a medical student, pursuing her MBBS degree, before she entered the Miss World Pageant. In Bollywood, Manushi Chhillar debuted in Samrat Prithviraj alongside Akshay Kumar. In 2022, the actress was seen in ‘Operation Valentine’, featuring alongside Varun Tej.

However, the movie had failed to resonate with the audience. She

was later seen in the Vicky Kaushal starrer The Great Indian Family. The actress was last seen in the movie Bade Miyaan Chote Miyaan, starring Akshay Kumar and Tiger Shroff.



7 things to keep in mind while appointing a nanny for kids

Being a new parent is anything, but easy. From countless sleepless nights to struggling even shower once a day, and putting your baby's needs first, stepping into parenthood can be overwhelming. The challenges are even worse if you're balancing work with these new responsibilities. Having a nanny who could lend a helping hand with the baby's duties will only make your life easier. Finding someone who matches your requirements and also takes utmost care of your newborn is crucial, and here is a checklist of some of the most important points to keep in mind before hiring a nanny.

Define the job

Before hiring a nanny, prepare a detailed job description that clearly outlines the specific duties involved. This could include childcare responsibilities such as bathing, dressing, assisting with toilet routines, facilitating naps, supervising daily activities, or planning and preparing meals for the child. In case of specific requirements, such as a non-smoking nanny or one with a valid driver's license and a clean driving record, ensure to mention these. One of the crucial points to be noted is the work hours and days- whether it's for early mornings, evenings, overnights, weekends, or if you require a live-in arrangement.

Employment agreement

According to the US Department of Labour, nannies come under the category of domestic workers. When you hire a nanny, it is important to understand your legal responsibilities the rights of the employee, and practices to maintain a healthy and safe work environment. Though a nanny contract is not legally required under federal law, it is best to have a written agreement that lays out the job responsibilities, pay and benefits, scheduled work hours, confidentially, holidays, and termination clause, to avoid conflict and have a safe environment. Also, be clear about the house rules and personal boundaries. Despite the nature of the job, it is best to maintain a professional relationship.

CPR and basic first aid certification

Ensure your ideal candidate for the nanny position should have certifications in CPR and First Aid. These certifications are crucial to ensure that they can be of help in case of any emergencies that may arise with the child. Other than emergency situations, with children, incidents such as a minor scrape, a choking hazard, or some other medical situations may arise, and in such cases



having a trained nanny, who could act immediately, provide first aid, and seek professional help if need is important.

Be aware of wage laws

The nanny is a domestic worker protected by the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). The hours worked apply to Domestic Service Employment under the FLSA. The hours worked are when an employee is 'on duty'. For instance, if a live-in nanny, takes care of baby duties for three hours in the morning, and then goes to class at a university, returns home, and helps with the childcare for two hours in the evening, she has worked five hours. The minimum wage rate per hour differs from state to state. A nanny is also entitled to be paid for overtime hours. The overtime differential wages are often calculated at 1.5 times the regular hourly rate.

Run a thorough background check

A step that you mustn't skip is conducting thorough background checks. Look at the criminal records and reference verification, to ensure the nanny has a clean and trustworthy history. Also, run a background check on whether they are legally staying in the state, and if they have relevant experience in child care. Look for candidates who are interested in a long-term position and willing to make a minimum one-year commitment to our family, because this will ensure stability in your lives.

Know about your tax responsibilities

As an employer, you pay a 6.2% Social Security tax on up to \$168,600 (in 2024) of your employee's earnings and a 1.45% Medicare tax on all earnings. Employees pay the same tax rates. They also pay 0.9% more in Medicare taxes on earnings higher than \$200,000 (\$125,000 if married, filing separately, or \$250,000 if married, filing jointly). While paying your nanny legally, you may be eligible for certain tax benefits. It is crucial to learn about your tax responsibilities prior to hiring a nanny.

Installation of a nanny camera

In this day and age of technology, it is often safe to install a nanny cam, to ensure the safety of your child. Before installing a nanny cam, learn about your state and local laws regarding surveillance. Also, it is important to discuss the camera with your nanny. Having cameras in common areas, and the nursery could be helpful.

4 All-Important

Tips Every Nanny

Needs You to Know

Having a nanny can be a truly wonderful experience. After all, a nanny is not simply an employee. It is quite possible she'll become an integrated part of your child's life, and yours too. When your nanny first begins, you may realize there's much more involved than you had ever imagined. Is she self-employed, or should she be claimed as an employee? Is a nanny contract really necessary? How do I get this right? I've worked as a nanny with a variety of families. There are many things that make a world of difference in the lives of families, and the nannies they work with. Here's a list of pointers that may come in handy:

1) Don't underestimate the nanny contract

Laying out a contract for a nanny may seem unnecessary. Maybe you bonded instantly during the interview and it seems like you're on the same page for everything. Or maybe you're worried that suggesting one implies that you don't trust her. A contract ensures that you and the nanny have discussed terms, and come to an agreement on things like responsibilities, hours, pay-rate, overtime,



vacations, holidays, sick days, and the like. Put it in writing so that it can be referred back to. That way everyone's needs are explicitly stated and the chances of misinterpretation and feelings of frustration are

minimized. It's also helpful to review the contract each year together just in case updates are necessary.

Step 2: Do not let it seep into your eyes, and wash it off the following day.

Green Tea

Step 1: Add a bag of green tea to some hot water and let it seep in for 5 minutes.

Step 2: Now, strain the liquid and allow it to cool down, apply it on your eyelashes and wash it off with cold water the next day.

Aloe Vera

Step 1: Extract some natural gel from an aloe vera leaf and blend it well making the consistency thin.

Step 2: Apply this gel with your fingertips on your lashes and wash it off the next day with cold water.

A slight change can only be noticed after being committed to the process. There are also brow and lash serums available in the market but the lipids, nourishment, and oils found in these natural products remain to be unbeatable. Also, if you observe itchiness or swelling the next day, instantly stop the process and opt for any other solution.

2) Help her help you

When it comes to having someone else watch your children, the first thing on your mind is safety. That means making sure your nanny has everything she needs, not only to keep an accident from happening but to be able to handle one it does:

Keep an easy-to-access list of emergency numbers including Poison Control, the local hospital, your pediatrician, and a ranking of family members to contact.

Have a first-aid kit readily available in the home, and a small, portable kit for the nanny to toss in a bag, the stroller, or the car on outings.

As soon as your child is mobile, have safety locks and gates in place - especially gates on steps and to areas of the house that are off-limits.

Provide a secure place for the child to play while the nanny uses the bathroom, installs the car seat in her car, or cleans up a particularly fun (i.e. big) mess.

All safety straps for strollers and high chairs should be in place and fully functional, even if you choose not to use them.

If there is a dangerous new habit your child has picked up, pass

that along to the nanny.

3) Morning updates are crucial

There's no denying just how trying mornings can be. Getting out of the house on time each day may even seem like a recurring miracle. One thing you don't want to forget is to give your nanny a quick morning update. Just a few minutes spent filling her in on your ever-changing child can make a real difference in the day. For instance, has your child started potty training or teething? Are they having trouble napping, or suddenly prone to emotional outbursts? It's a small way to ensure that your nanny is going in fully armed and ready for anything the day throws at her.



4) Keep the necessities out

When your nanny begins, let her know where things like jackets, shoes, sunscreen, paper towels, and cleaning products can be found, and keep these items located in the same easy-to-find spots. Your nanny doesn't know your house like you do, and the time spent figuring out how to clean a spill or find the mittens is time your nanny isn't spending having fun with your child. Your nanny isn't expecting a sparkling house. However, keeping things functional is helpful. If the toddler has just wet themselves while potty training and the baby is having a meltdown, your nanny won't be able to respond as quickly if she then discovers that the way to the laundry room is blocked, the paper towels are gone, and the trash can is overflowing.