SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2026

The Indian EXPRESS

NEW DELHI, LATE CITY, 28 PAGES

JOURNALISM of COURAGE

₹7.00 (₹8 RAIPUR, ₹15 SRINAGAR) • www.indianexpress.com

DAILY FROM: AHMEDABAD, CHANDIGARH, DELHI, JAIPUR, KOLKATA, LUCKNOW, MUMBAI, NAGPUR, PATNA, PUNE, VADODARA

Ministry of Home Affairs
Government of India

Iron-Man Sardar Patel's resolve is our inspiration

Salute the Bravehearts who keep the nation united



Shri Narendra Modi
Hon'ble Prime Minister

Rashtriya Ekta Diwas
31st OCTOBER, 2026

COME TO EKTA NAGAR, GUJARAT

Join the grand parade alongside the Prime Minister Narendra Modi to honour the valour, courage and supreme sacrifice of the Central Armed Police Forces and State Police Forces who have made India Naxal-free.

Key Highlights of the Parade

- Parade by the Central Armed Police Forces and State Police Forces engaged in anti-Naxal operations
- Parade by the Anti-Naxal Canine Squad
- Vibrant Tableaux - concept designs by people
- A theatrical performance by tribal artists on the theme of a Naxal-free India
- A cultural programme presented by 5,000 artists
- A band performance by students
- A national motorcycle rally spreading the message of fight against drugs
- A grand fireworks display

Floral tribute to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel by Hon'ble Prime Minister at 9:00 AM, followed by the telecast of the parade on DD News from 5:30 PM

Rashtriya Ekta Diwas
31st OCTOBER, 2026
Statue of Unity, Ekta Nagar, Gujarat

For information and to book accommodation scan, or visit
rashtriyaektadiwas.com

CBC 19101/13/0029/2627

US scraps G20 group photo after Europeans object to being pictured with Lavrov

Associated Press
Atlanta, October 30

THE US scrapped plans for a photo of top diplomats of the Group of 20 largest world economies on the opening day of talks Friday as several Europeans objected to being photographed with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and threatened to walk out of the photo session.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio decided to cancel the photo after determining that the controversy would be a distraction, according to two US officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the matter.

The meeting in Atlanta, which will otherwise go ahead as planned, is meant to set the stage for a G20 leaders' summit hosted by President Donald Trump at his Miami golf club in December.

Before the photo disagreement, some G20 countries had already expressed concern that the US invited Russia during its heightened attacks on Ukraine.

That is especially after Trump pushed ties with Ukraine to new lows by waiving fresh sanctions on Moscow and temporarily limiting logistical and intelligence assistance.

PRESIDENT RESTORES PREVIOUSLY CANCELLED IOWA, KANSAS RALLIES, ADDS 20 VIRTUAL APPEARANCES

Ahead of midterms, Trump steps up legal action against key states

Justice Dept - files election lawsuit, subpoenas officials over 'illegal' voting

Reuters
Washington, October 30

US PRESIDENT Donald Trump stepped up legal efforts that could help his fellow Republicans challenge results in next week's midterm congressional election, and scrambled his schedule for the campaign's final days on Friday, restoring planned rallies he had scrapped a day earlier.

Early voting outpaced 2022 totals for the November 3 contest in which nonpartisan analysts believe Trump's Republicans are likely to lose their current majority in the US House of Representatives, with control of the Senate expected to be hard fought.

The Trump administration pushed forward in legal cases in Alaska, home to a Senate contest that may play a pivotal role in determining the majority, and California, which historically takes more time than most other states in counting ballots.



President Donald Trump at a campaign rally at the Shoemaker Center in Ohio University Chillicothe on Thursday. REUTERS

The Justice Department filed an amended lawsuit in Alaska on Thursday seeking to block the certification of results in the event of a narrow Republican loss, citing a *New York Times* report that Democratic operatives recruited a spoiler candidate with a nearly identical name to the Republican incumbent.

In California, meanwhile, the Justice Department is escalating its pressure campaign against state election officials, issuing subpoenas as part of a criminal probe into alleged voting by non-citizens, according to copies of documents seen by *Reuters*.

Taken together, the moves are an extraordinary federal intervention in state-run elections, which are administered locally under the US Constitution. Election officials around the country have told Reuters they are bracing for further legal challenges from Washington.

The dispute in Alaska, home to one of about 10 highly competitive Senate races, could leave control of the chamber unclear for weeks. Democrats need a net gain of four seats to win back the majority from Republicans.

If Democrats take one or both chambers of Congress, they could launch investigations into Trump's administration and increase pressure on the president to end the war against Iran.

On Friday, Trump will campaign in Florida, hoping to galvanize his supporters in a state he won handily in 2024 but where early voting has tilted toward Democrats. It will be his latest stop in a state Republicans usually expect to win, following campaign events earlier this week in Mississippi and South Carolina.

Less than 24 hours after cancelling, the president plans to hold weekend rallies in Kansas and Iowa after all, with "nearly 20" virtual campaign appearances before Tuesday, according to a White House official.

Former Vice President Kamala Harris, whom Trump defeated in the 2024 election, will rally for Democrats in Atlanta on Friday. "The last year and a half, it's been difficult," she told the crowd on Thursday at an event in Macon, Georgia.

Pope Leo makes history as first pontiff to vote in US election

Vatican City: Pope Leo XIV has become the first pope to vote in a US general election, casting a mail-in ballot in a contest that will decide America's future as the Trump era slowly comes to an end.

The Vatican confirmed Friday the Chicago-born pontiff had submitted a mail-in ballot in Chicago ahead of the Nov. 3 midterm elections, citing his long-standing belief in civic participation.

Leo, formerly Robert Prevost, "has exercised his right to vote as a United States citizen" and has done so "whenever he was eligible to do so," the Holy See press office said.

The statement said he had also voted while living in Peru whenever he was eligible. Leo lived in Peru as a missionary priest and bishop for over 20 years. "The Holy Father expresses his belief in the right and the duty of citizens to participate in democratic processes," it added. **AP**

BRIEFLY

UNITED STATES

'I still live in pain': Christa Pike speaks out a month after botched execution



Christa Pike at the Tennessee prison. FILE

CHRISTA PIKE said Friday that she remains in constant pain and struggles to speak a month after surviving a lethal injection in Tennessee, a failure she blames on "incompetence." In her first public statement since the execution, Pike said she never contemplated a life beyond her execution date and was prepared to die in peace, but woke up alone and confused in a hospital bed. "There hasn't been a moment since that night when I haven't been in pain. I still struggle to speak. And the pain isn't just physical. There is pain in my mind and in my soul," she said. Pike, 50, survived two doses of pentobarbital as the state tried to execute her for the 1995 stabbing death of classmate Colleen Slemmer. **AP**

GREECE

3 held over blast that killed six people in Athens

GREECE HAS arrested two Greek men and an Albanian national suspected of stealing copper gas pipes from a building, causing a leak that led to a explosion in central Athens last month, authorities said. Six people were killed during the September 25 blast in the tourist district of Plaka, four Americans among them. The suspects are expected to appear before a prosecutor on Friday. **REUTERS**

UNITED KINGDOM

Police investigates Andrew, Epstein's visit to king's estate

POLICE IN Scotland are conducting inquiries into the time former Prince Andrew spent at the king's private estate at Balmoral with the late sex offender Jeffrey Epstein and his associate, Ghislaine Maxwell, authorities said Friday. Police said the inquiries were at a "very early stage. "We would never confirm details of ongoing inquiries, and it would be inappropriate to comment further, it said. **AP**

Israel election unlikely to change its policies, global isolation

Steven Erlanger
Tel Aviv, October 30

TO ISRAELIS, the two leading contenders after the election, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Gadi Eisenkot, a former chief of staff, offer sharply different personalities, styles and even paths to the future.

But to the rest of the world, they don't seem substantially different in their approach to Israel's security or in their opposition to a Palestinian state.

If neither can form a government, Netanyahu could remain as a caretaker prime minister for weeks or months to come. In this period of instability, there is concern, analysts say, settler violence in Israeli-occupied West Bank will increase and that Netanyahu will push President Trump to start bombing Iran again.

If Eisenkot manages to emerge as prime minister, Israel's overall foreign policy is not expected to shift much. The tone may be more accommodating on the margins, but few expect Israel to embrace a two-state solution to establish an independent Palestine or abandon its active conflicts with Hamas in Gaza, Hezbollah in Lebanon and the Islamic Republic in Iran.





Neither PM Benjamin Netanyahu's Likud party nor Gadi Eiskenkot's Yashar party won a majority of seats in parliament. REUTERS

All that means Israel will still find itself increasingly isolated internationally.

The vote sends a message to the world that the current government's approach to the region, which has prompted an international backlash, "is not just a Bibi problem," said Gina Abercrombie-Winstanley, a former American diplomat now at the Atlantic Council, referring to Netanyahu. "It represents today's Israel writ large."

Israel's reputation in the world has suffered over the past few years. Sympathy and support after the Hamas-led attack on October 7, 2023, have been gradually undermined by the extensive Israeli bombing campaign in southern Lebanon and especially Gaza, as well as the rising settler violence in West Bank.

The war against Iran, which Israel encouraged President Trump to join, has been deeply unpopular in much of the world, including the US, driving up energy prices and inflation.

In the US, Israel faces an erosion of trust. Support for Israel has been waning among Democrats, who appear to be in a strong position to at least take the House of Representatives in elections next week.

Changing that relationship "will be even more difficult if Bibi Netanyahu is still in charge of Israel and there is absolutely no hope of Israeli politics or policies changing," said Rachel Brandenburg, Washington director of the Israel Policy Forum, a research institution that supports a two-state solution. **NYT**



Nurses and a Red Cross volunteer help men in wheelchairs into an ambulance during an evacuation under a local ceasefire in Oleshky, Ukraine's Kherson region, on Friday. AP

Russia-Ukraine truce holds as evacuations begin in Oleshky city

Kremlin plays down implications for wider peace deal

Reuters
Kyiv, October 30

STARVING RESIDENTS of a Russian-held town in southern Ukraine began evacuating on Friday as part of a joint relief operation by the opposing sides, the first of its kind in four years and eight months of war.

Under a local ceasefire brokered by US first lady Melania Trump, an aid convoy arrived in the town of Oleshky and people were given the opportunity to leave.

Although it was a striking example of cooperation between the warring sides, the Kremlin described it as a special case that was "difficult to extrapolate" to the wider search for a peace settlement.

Attacks continued elsewhere, with Russian strikes overnight targeting seven regions of Ukraine as well as the capital Kyiv and the southeastern city of Dnipro, officials said.

Russia said it had shot down 1,043 Ukrainian drones over its regions overnight. On Thursday, a Russian drone killed at least 15 people on a rail platform in the Ukrainian city of Dnipro.

In Oleshky, Russian human rights commissioner Yana Lantratova said groups of people were boarding evacuation buses - some wishing to go to Russia and others to Ukraine. It was not clear how many people were in each group, and how many residents, if any, had decided to stay.

Addressing Ukraine's parliament on Friday, Prime Minister Sergiy Koretskyi said residents headed for Ukraine would travel through Russia to Belarus before entering the Kyiv and Chernihiv regions.

Lantratova, appearing side by side with her Ukrainian counterpart Dmytro Lubinets, said food, hygiene products, medical supplies and fuel were being delivered to the town.

Canada, EU seek closer ties beyond US as leaders push for associate membership

Associated Press
Montreal, October 30

> **"We're in the process of forging a new alliance for the future, with Canada as an associate member"**
> **MARK CARNEY,** CANADIAN PRIME MINISTER

CANADIAN PRIME Minister Mark Carney and European Union leaders are set to conclude a two-day summit Friday as the EU's top official presses to make Canada the bloc's first "associate member" and both sides seek to reduce their dependence on the United States.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and European Council President Antonio Costa joined Carney in Montreal to pursue an unprecedented alliance that could bring Canada closer to the EU than any previous arrangement with a country outside the bloc. But some European governments have resisted proposed membership designation.

Carney said Thursday that the proposed alliance would help Canada withstand economic shocks and prevent foreign governments and technology companies from dictating its choices. He later explicitly used the term "associate member".

"We're in the process of forging a new alliance for the future, with Canada as an associate member," Carney said.

Von der Leyen also championed associate membership but said the proposed "Alliance for the Future" would be a broader partnership open to other countries, with Canada and the EU at its core.

Saudi says it intercepted drone near Mecca, Houthis deny attack

Associated Press
October 30

THE SAUDI-led coalition said Friday it intercepted and destroyed a drone launched by Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels. A coalition spokesperson, Major General Turki al-Malki, said the drone was intercepted in the region surrounding Mecca, Islam's holiest city and a destination for millions of Muslim pilgrims each year.

Houthi military spokesperson Yahya Saree denied carrying out any operations targeting Mecca, saying in a statement that the group's military operations are aimed at Saudi oil facilities and military bases.

Saudi Arabia has previously reported intercepting missiles and drones headed toward Mecca and Medina. The Houthis have repeatedly denied targeting either city.

Meanwhile, Iran state media said Friday that Qatari mediators have returned to Iran for talks with officials, in the latest diplomatic push to try to broker an end to the war with the United States and Israel.



Houthi supporters hold a rally in Sanaa, Yemen. FILE

The *IRNA* state news agency said the Qatari delegation was headed by the country's foreign minister and senior adviser to the prime minister. *IRNA* said they were meeting with senior Iranian officials but did not specify who.

The visit follows outreach from US Vice President JD Vance, who sent a letter in recent days to Maj. Gen. Mohsen Rezaei, the secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council. Tehran Thursday acknowledged receipt of the letter but said it had not responded and did not detail its contents.

US President Donald Trump suggested the letter was not about peace negotiations but instead about possibly allowing humanitarian aid.

Diplomats say US officials have told countries in West Asia and regional allies to be prepared for potential renewed military action against Iran after next week's midterm elections in the United States.

Iran's Revolutionary Guard said it has stopped two oil tankers attempting to use unauthorized routes through the Strait of Hormuz, the state-run IRNA media reported on Friday.

'We have been killed': Russia's *Novaya Gazeta* to shut down

Moscow: The Russian independent newspaper *Novaya Gazeta* said Friday it was winding up its operations after a campaign of state pressure in which a senior editor has been prosecuted and its financial support and premises have been taken away.

"We have been killed," the publication, set up with money from the Nobel Peace Prize of the last Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, said in a statement.

The paper halted its print edition inside Russia in 2022, but had continued to produce online content and operate from its office in central Moscow.

"On November 9, we will turn off the lights in the home where we have lived for 30 years, shut down our servers, and leave. The newspaper no longer exists. The Russian authorities and the Russian security services have forced our editorial team to cease its operations." **REUTERS**

• ACTING BECAME A 'SAFE SPACE' FOR STEWART AFTER A TEACHER INTRODUCED HIM TO SHAKESPEARE AT 12; HE WAS KNIGHTED BY THE QUEEN AT BUCKINGHAM PALACE IN 2010

Patrick Stewart, Shakespearean actor turned *Star Trek* and *X-Men* star, dies at 86

Reuters
October 30

PATRICK STEWART, who rose from poverty in England to become an accomplished Shakespearean stage actor and then achieved global stardom as the erudite Captain Jean-Luc Picard in TV's *Star Trek: The Next Generation* and the telepathic Professor Charles Xavier in *X-Men* movies, has died at the age of 86.

Stewart, knighted in 2010 by Queen Elizabeth II for his contributions to drama, died at his home in Los Angeles, according to a statement on his X account.

"We announce with great sorrow the passing of Sir Patrick Stewart yesterday at his home in Los Angeles, in the loving care of his beloved wife Sunny, following a brief and poignant journey with Alzheimer's Disease and Lewy Body Dementia," it said.

Stewart became an actor at age 18 and gained acclaim on the stage as a member of the Royal Shakespeare Company beginning in the 1960s. But it was not until after he was hired at age 47 for *Star Trek: The Next Generation* — a TV series that ran from 1987 to 1994 as a sequel to the original 1960s *Star Trek* — that he gained mainstream fame, acting into his 80s.

"Make it so," his character Picard often said, instructing a subordinate to carry out a command, or sometimes deploying similar catchphrase, "Engage."

It was a role he had debated even taking after his longtime friend and fellow Shakespearean Ian McKellen advised him to spurn *Star Trek* and remain in theater. Stewart did take the role and became both a fan favorite and an indispensable part of a lucrative sci-fi franchise, playing Picard not only in 176 episodes over seven seasons of that series but also in several *Star Trek* films and in the later streaming series *Star Trek: Picard* that began airing in 2020 when he was 79.

As the seven seasons of TNG *The Next Generation* went by, the distinction between Jean-Luc Picard and Patrick Stewart became thinner and thinner, until it was impossible for me to know where he left off and I began. So much of what I believed and felt went into that show," Stewart told the Guardian newspaper in 2022.



Patrick Stewart at the premiere of the third and final season of *Star Trek: Picard* series in Los Angeles. AP

Stewart also initially balked at being cast as the wheelchair-using mutant Professor X in the *X-Men* movies, based on the popular Marvel comic book character. "I said, 'Look, I know this isn't science fiction, but it's fantasy, and I've done that.' But they persuaded me it wouldn't be like *Star Trek*, so I did it. And yet again I was proved wrong," Stewart told the Guardian.

He became a critical part of another big-money franchise, starting with the first entry *X-Men* in 2000 and followed by several more, including the 2002 Marvel movie *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness*. He appeared alongside McKellen, who played the villain Magneto, in some of the *X-Men* films.

Stewart, playing Charles Xavier, took part in the filming of the highly anticipated *Avengers: Doomsday* and will appear in the Marvel film due to hit theaters in December. Marvel Studios paid tribute to Stewart on Thursday in a statement, calling him "a singular talent, a generous collaborator and a true gentleman."

Stewart was born on July 13, 1940, in the English town of Mirfield in Yorkshire. He was raised in poverty, with a father who he said returned from WWII an alcoholic who suffered from post-traumatic stress syndrome and physically abused Stewart's mother. Stewart recalled putting his body between his father and mother to try to protect her.

As a child, Stewart said, acting became a "safe space" after a schoolteacher introduced him to Shakespeare — specifically *The Merchant of Venice* — during a class when he was 12. He started losing his hair at age 17 and was bald by 19. He was embarrassed at the time, but eventually embraced it.

He became Sir Patrick Stewart when he was knighted by the queen at Buckingham Palace in 2010. He told reporters that his heroes were British actors Laurence Olivier, John Gielgud and Alec Guinness, who also had been knighted, adding that being "in that company is the grandest thing that has professionally happened to me."

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2026

The Indian EXPRESS

NEW DELHI, LATE CITY, 28 PAGES

JOURNALISM of COURAGE

₹7.00 (₹8 RAIPUR, ₹15 SRINAGAR) • www.indianexpress.com

DAILY FROM: AHMEDABAD, CHANDIGARH, DELHI, JAIPUR, KOLKATA, LUCKNOW, MUMBAI, NAGPUR, PATNA, PUNE, VADODARA

Extreme poverty in India halved to 2.6% in 2023 from year ago: World Bank data

Siddharth Upasani
New Delhi, October 30

EXTREME POVERTY in India, measured by those who live on less than $3 per day in 2021 Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) terms, fell to 2.6% in 2023, according to the World Bank. However, wage disparity remains "pronounced", it said, noting that median earnings for the top 10% of workers were about 13 times greater than for the bottom 10%.

It also cautioned that poverty is becoming "increasingly concentrated geographically" — about 57% of India's poor live in a belt that stretches from Uttar Pradesh to West Bengal.

At 2.6%, the extreme poverty rate in India in 2023 is more than 10 times lower than the 27.1% in 2011. In 2022-23, the extreme poverty rate was 5.3%, indicating a halving of extreme poverty.

"Over the past decade, India

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

e EXPLAINED

For further dip

Poverty in India continues to decline. And with 57% of the poor now concentrated in a belt stretching from Uttar Pradesh to West Bengal, further reduction in poverty is now increasingly dependent on creation of productive employment in these states.

'MODI KAHIN NAHI JAYEGA' SLOGANS, PLACARDS IN GUJARAT

PM slams Opp: Some out to create chaos, defame me

Shah dares Rahul: Let's convene special Parliament session, discuss EC

Parimal A Dabhi & Lalmani Verma
Ahmedabad, Lucknow, October 30

AS THE Opposition stepped up its attack on his government and the Election Commission ahead of the INDIA bloc rally in New Delhi Sunday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi hit back



PM Narendra Modi in Gujarat's Banaskantha, Friday. PTI

Friday, saying "some people" were out to "create chaos across

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Huge anger, emotional pain, says Rahul, targets PM, Shah, CEC, 'his crew'

Asad Rehman
New Delhi, October 30

TARGETING THE BJP-led government and the Election Commission (EC), Leader of Opposition (LoP) Rahul Gandhi said Friday that the INDIA bloc's protest programmes over the weekend were against the "demolition of Indian democracy by Mr Narendra Modi, by Mr Amit Shah and by Mr Gyanesh Kumar and his crew in the Election Commission".

Gandhi said there was "huge anger, huge emotional pain" among people and accused Union Home Minister Amit Shah of attempting to stop people from attending the

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

CHOPPER CRASHES IN UTTARAKHAND, 6 ON BOARD KILLED P9

Construction ban in NCR from Nov 5, WFH for 50% in Noida, Gurugram, too

CAQM cites peak pollution levels in Nov; industries, essential services exempted

Nikhil Ghanekar
New Delhi, October 30

CITING HISTORICALLY observed peak pollution levels in November, the Commission for Air Quality in National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas (CAQM) on Friday ordered a 15-day ban on dust-generating demolition and outdoor construction activities across the region from November 5 as a precautionary measure.

It also directed government and private offices in Delhi and the five NCR districts of Gurugram, Faridabad, Sonipat, Ghaziabad and Gautam Buddha Nagar to allow up to 50% of their staff to work from home during this period. Industrial establishments and essential services have been exempted from the directive in the five

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Manisha strikes world wrestling gold

Manisha Bhanwala after winning the final of the world wrestling championships in the 59 kg category in Astana, Kazakhstan, Friday. She is the first Indian woman to win a world gold in wrestling. UWW PAGE 25

EXPRESS special

After dropping plan for highway, Bihar pushes for tourism project in sanctuary

Head of eco tourism society under forest dept says can start work in area where nod not needed, wait where permissions required

Jay Mazoomdaar
New Delhi, October 30

JUST ABOUT a month ago, the Bihar Forest Department had proposed an MoU to facilitate forest clearance for highway widening. Now, it has floated a tender for constructing sprawling tourism facilities on 12.9 acres inside Bihar's Bhimbandh Wildlife Sanctuary despite statutory restrictions and a Supreme Court order restraining construction in protected areas.

According to the tender document issued by the Bihar Forest Department on October 16, the plan includes building a



The plan includes a helipad, 104 cottages, 12 tree-houses and an auditorium. PROJECT PLAN

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Happening today

- **THE PIPRAHWA RELICS** linked to Lord Buddha are set to be brought to Arunachal Pradesh for a three-week exposition in the northeast state starting with Tawang.

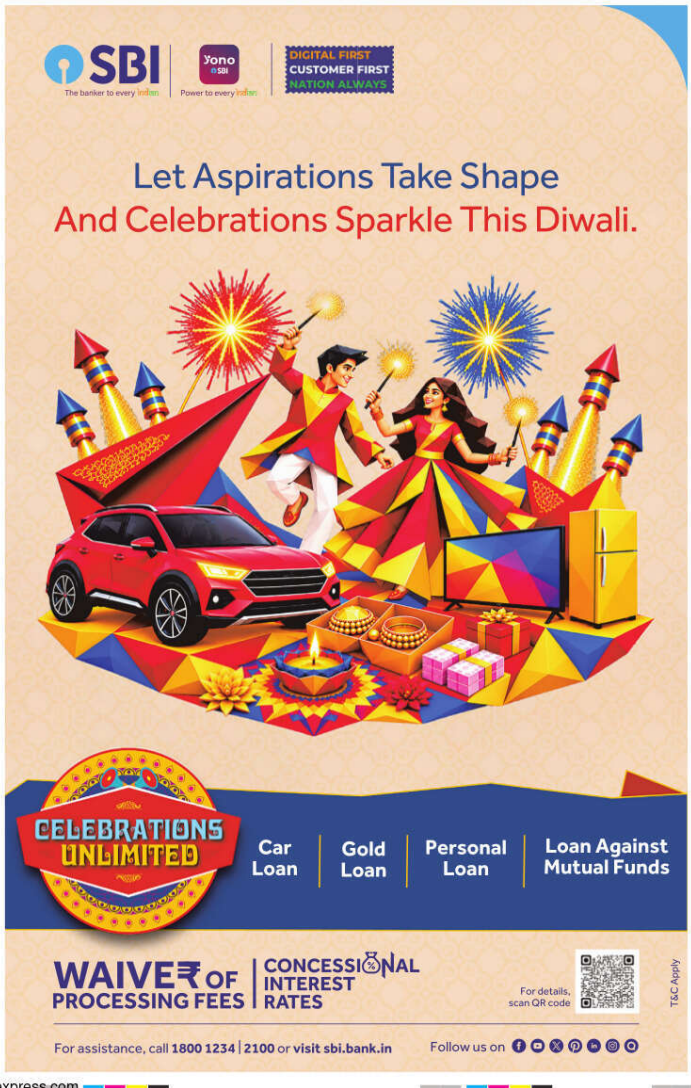
TRACK THIS AND MORE ON WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

Business as Usual

By EP UNNY







NCR plan

districts, which are known for a high density of vehicles.

Among the projects exempted from the construction restrictions are Railways, Metro services, airports, inter-state bus terminals, hospitals, water supply and sanitation projects, and activities related to national security and defence. Highways, roads, flyovers, overbridges, power transmission lines, pipelines and telecommunication projects will not be exempted.

The order came hours after Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav announced the measures during a visit to the CAQM office, where he reviewed a newly-developed Integrated Command and Control Centre.

The November 5-20 restrictions will be in addition to the Delhi government's 10-point Winter Action Plan, which will be in force from November 1 to February 28. Under the plan, dust-generating demolition and outdoor civil construction activities will be banned, while a wider ban on all types of construction and demolition activities will be imposed from December 10 to January 20, 2027.

The Delhi Winter Action plan also mandated that all private offices allow minimum 50% of their staff to work from home. Other measures include denying fuel to vehicles without valid 'pollution under control' certificates and those that have exceeded their prescribed life-span. Petrol and diesel vehicles registered outside Delhi that do not meet BS-VI emission standards will also be barred from entering the Capital.

CAQM said that the proposed measures announced Friday were limited to a specified period and geographical area, and have been formulated keeping in view the "seasonal vulnerability" of the region to air pollution. It added that an examination of November Air Quality Index (AQI) data from 2018 to 2025 showed a "recurring pattern of high pollution in Delhi-NCR, particularly during early to mid-November, with the AQI reaching the 'Severe' and 'Severe +' categories on certain days".

Dust is a major source of particulate matter (PM) 10 and PM2.5. These fine particles can cause respiratory problems, with PM2.5 being particularly harmful as it can penetrate deep into the lungs and enter the bloodstream. It also binds with other gases and pollutants to form secondary pollutants.

The seasonal agricultural residue and biomass burning also add to the pollution load, CAQM said. "...adverse meteorological conditions, including low wind speeds, a shallow atmospheric boundary layer and reduced vertical mixing, further limit pollutant dispersion."

The CAQM said these conditions called for "anticipatory intervention" to reduce emissions at source and prevent pollutants from accumulating. It said the period of historically high pollution coincides with the paddy harvesting season in Punjab and Haryana, when stubble burning typically increases during the Kharif harvest season. Other major sources of pollution include vehicular emissions, road and construction dust, open burning, industrial pollution, and unfavourable weather conditions.

[FROM PAGE 1 | FULL REPORTS ON WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM]

PM slams Opp

the country, so that Modi can be defamed".

Speaking at Bhildi village in Banaskantha in Gujarat after inaugurating and unveiling a slew of projects, the Prime Minister also said he will serve the country "until the very last moment of my life" – a remark seen as a response to Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge's "Modi ka baap bhi jayega" outburst in Patna last Sunday.

In Lucknow, Union Home Minister Amit Shah challenged the Opposition to discuss their allegations about the Election Commission at a special session of Parliament.

Addressing a meeting of the UP BJP state executive committee, Shah likened the Opposition, including the Congress and SP, to a team which loses a match and then hurls allegations against the umpire instead of practising for the next match.

"Rahul baba, BJP is fully ready for a discussion on SIR in Parliament. Come, let's convene a special session of Parliament. But Rahul baba has to spread lies and does not want to let Parliament run. The Opposition does not want to speak inside Parliament, does not allow the Parliament to function, so it harms the dignity of Parliament by staging a mock Parliament outside," Shah said.

Modi, in his address in Gujarat, said, "Today, every farmer, every youth, and every woman and daughter in the country is moving forward with the resolve to build a developed India. But unfortunately, some people do not like this. These are individuals who wish to see the country in difficulty. They derive pleasure when the nation suffers, they find joy when the country faces a crisis."

Referring to the crisis in West Asia, he said, "When India is working to confront this situation, these individuals are busy spreading rumours... Farmers were told they would not get any fertilisers and forced into artificial queues. The atmosphere was vitiated. Women were made to feel scared, told that cooking gas would no longer be available. They were told, 'How will you cook your meals? How will your children go to school?' Their plan was to create chaos across the country, so that Modi can be defamed."

He said he stood by his promise to the people. "You can see that the war is still ongoing, yet Modi has ensured that there is no shortage of fertilisers for farmers. Because of this war, fertiliser prices have risen a lot around the world... The government has ensured that the burden is not on the farmers," he said.

"The country is providing this support so that our farmers may become empowered and their lives may improve. In a world filled with uncertainty, India's rapid growth offers a new ray of hope to the entire world... Until the very last moment of my life, I shall remain engaged in your service," he said.

Earlier, as the Prime Minister held a roadshow on his way to the venue, people flanked the route, carrying placards which said 'Modi kahin nahin jayega' (Modi is not going anywhere').

In Lucknow, Shah said the BJP will roll out the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) in Uttar Pradesh once it is returned to power in the Assembly elections next year.

"This time, when the government comes to power, UCC will be implemented in Uttar Pradesh. UCC has already been implemented in many states. If you form the BJP government in Uttar Pradesh for a third term, we will implement UCC in Uttar Pradesh," he said.

Extreme poverty

has made remarkable progress in reducing poverty across both monetary and non-monetary dimensions, recording one of the fastest poverty declines in the world," the World Bank said Friday in its 'Poverty & Equity Brief' note.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, in a post on X, said that the government's "sustained policy efforts are yielding tangible results, strengthening the foundations for inclusive growth and greater economic opportunity".

Along with poverty, consumption inequality has also declined. The Gini index — it ranges from 0 to 100, with a higher number indicative of greater inequality — in 2023 was 23.0, down from 28.8 in 2011-12 and 25.5 in 2022-23.

However, the World Bank said the estimates, based on the government's three most recent household consumption expenditure surveys, conducted in 2011-12, 2022-23 and 2023-24, "may also not fully capture the consumption of wealthier households and are likely to understate inequality".

Purchasing Power Parity, or PPP, measures the quantity of goods and services that can be bought in one country in terms of another country's currency. It is widely used to convert the cost of a basket of items into a common currency while also removing the distortions caused by different levels of prices across countries.

Consider the above example, where $3 per day is the threshold for extreme poverty. In the US, $3 would buy a certain quantity of goods and services. At the current rupee-dollar market exchange rate of about 95-per-dollar, this is equal to Rs 285.

However, things are generally cheaper in India compared to the US. For instance, a short Caffè Latte from Starbucks in the US costs $5.85 (equivalent to Rs 555), but Rs 336 in India. As such, the PPP conversion rate of India to the US in this example is 336 divided by 5.85, or 57.4, which means $1 buys in the US what Rs 57.4 buys in India, to put it simply. This is, of course, only for Starbucks coffee.

According to the World Bank's International Comparison Program — a partnership of official statistical agencies from across the world — the PPP conversion rate for India was 20.09 in 2025.

While there has been a big drop in extreme poverty, the proportion of the population living below the Lower Middle-Income Country poverty line of $4.2 per day has also declined significantly.

In 2023, this proportion was 16.1%, down from 57.7% in 2011, "lifting an estimated 496 million people out of poverty", the World Bank said. In 2022-23, the figure was 23.9%.

Below the headline number, the urban poverty rate is estimated at 8.6% and rural 19.3%. For males and females, the figures are broadly similar at 15.7% and 16.6%, respectively.

The World Bank noted that employment increased by 13.4 crore between 2017 and 2023 – nearly twice the increase seen in the working-age population. This employment rise was driven by rural women entering paid work, it said. And while labour market conditions are seen as "broadly resilient", youth unemployment has risen from 14.6% in the first quarter of 2025-26 to 15.9% in the same three-month period this fiscal.

"Moreover, real earnings remained broadly unchanged with employment growth concentrated in relatively low-productivity activities."

The multilateral organisation expects poverty in India to keep falling, although at a more gradual pace: In 2026, the poverty rate as per the $4.2-per-day line is seen at 14.2% before declining further to 12.1% by 2028.

The Bank will update these projections as labour market and macroeconomic data are revised or new data becomes available.

In fact, new survey data from India has been responsible in the past for significant revisions to numbers at a global level. Last year, when the World Bank updated its poverty lines, changed the base year from 2017 to 2021, and incorporated new survey data, it led to a downward revision of the population in Lower Middle-Income Country poverty by 180 million people for 2022. This was primarily due to new survey data for India for 2022-23, the World Bank had said in June last year, referring to the Household Consumption Expenditure Survey for 2022-23.

The World Bank has a third poverty line of $8.3 per day, although that is for Upper Middle Income countries. Since India is not an upper middle-income country, it is natural that a larger percentage of the population is below this line. In 2023, this fraction was 80%, down from over 90% in 2011.

The government is aiming to become a developed nation by 2047. The absolute number of people below each of the aforementioned poverty lines is as follows: 7.5 crore below $3-per-day, 34 crore below $4.2-per-day, and 115 crore below $8.3-per-day.

Rajan acquitted in murder bid case

Mumbai: Gangster Chhota Rajan was acquitted by a special court on Friday in a murder bid case dating back to 2009 filed in Pune. The special court also cleared four others of the charges. Rajan, who is serving life imprisonment for the murder of journalist JDey, will continue to remain in jail.

The matter pertains to an incident from 2009 where a dispute had arisen between brothers of a business family in Pune. One of them, S K Agarwal, an accused in the case, sought the help of a henchman of Rajan's to persuade the other brothers to resolve the dispute.

The police had named Rajan, claiming he was part of the conspiracy as well. The CBI, which took over all the cases pending against Rajan after his extradition from Indonesia in 2015, continued with the prosecution, charging Rajan for the murder bid. ENS

Bihar

helipad, 104 cottages, 12 treehouses, a restaurant and cafe, a spa, viewing decks, shops, banquet facilities and an auditorium for weddings, functions and conferences. Buildings may rise to two or three storeys.

On September 26, as reported by *The Indian Express*, the Bihar Forest Department had inked an MoU with the state Road Construction Department, committing to facilitate forest clearance for a highway widening project. Flagged for conflict of interest, the MoU was cancelled earlier this month.

Now the tourism tender comes from the Bihar Eco Tourism Development Society (BETDS), which falls under the state Forest Department. It proposes approximately Rs 62.87 crore in investment and a 60-year concession for developing and operating the Bhimbandh–Belatand–Chormara–Bhatta Kol cluster inside the sanctuary. Bids close on November 30.

Under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, works necessary for sanctuary purposes are allowed inside a wildlife sanctuary, but construction of tourist lodges—including government lodges—for commercial purposes, hotels or safari parks requires prior approval from the National Board for Wildlife.

In February 2023, the Supreme Court also restrained authorities from undertaking construction within tiger reserves, national parks and wildlife sanctuaries until further orders. The court subsequently permitted certain maintenance works sought by Uttarakhand but warned against unnecessary construction under that permission.

Asked about the restrictions, BETDS project director and chief conservator of forests (CCF) Nesamani K said: "The project is on 6.3 acres of tourism department land and 6.6 acres of other government land. We can start construction in areas that may not require clearances. Where we need permissions, we will wait until papers are processed."

Land ownership, however, does not exempt a site within notified sanctuary boundaries from restrictions under the Act. Existing rights may continue within a sanctuary, but do not confer unrestricted construction rights.

In fact, the tender contains conflicting provisions on responsibility for statutory green clearances. While Article 4.1.2(b) of the tender places responsibility on BETDS to obtain permits relating to environmental protection and conservation, its Schedule E requires the private developer to obtain applicable environmental, forest and wildlife clearances at its own cost.

On this, Nesamani said: "We may hand over some land along with necessary permissions. The developer will have to get the clearances for the rest of the project area."

Of the four sites proposed for developing tourism facilities inside the sanctuary, the tender assigns Bhimbandh to stay, hospitality and a helipad; Belatand to adventure and nature activities, Chormara to Yog Gram, wellness, farming and artisan experiences, and Bhatta Kol to safari, waterfalls and nature trails.

While proposing landscaped open areas within the tourism facilities, the tender allows the developer to propose additional commercial components, including accommodation, glamping, entertainment and convention spaces, subject to approvals.

Extending across Munger, Jamui and Lakhisarai districts, Bhimbandh Wildlife Sanctuary spans roughly 682 sq km in Bihar's Kharagpur Hills. Known for its natural hot springs, the sanctuary is home to diverse fauna, including leopard, sloth bear, hyena, wolf, large Indian civet and barking deer.

Rahul targets PM, Shah

Opposition's Ramlila Maidan rally on Sunday. The BJP dismissed the allegation and asked the LoP to show proof.

The Opposition parties will organise a "public impeachment" of Kumar, the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC), on Saturday afternoon. It was initially supposed to be held on Friday, but was postponed because of rains in the national Capital, Gandhi said. On Sunday afternoon, Opposition leaders will march from the Minto-Road Connaught Place to Ramlila Maidan.

Addressing reporters at Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge's 10, Rajaji Marg residence, the LoP accused Shah of attempting to stop people from attending the rally. The Congress and other Opposition parties are mobilising workers from as far away as Bihar and Telangana for the event.

"Of course, the Home Minister is trying his best to stop people from coming into Delhi; trying to ensure that our party members, thousands of people, common people who want to come from UP, from Bihar, from Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Haryana ... all these states, Telangana, Punjab are being stopped. And they are trying their best," Gandhi said.

Gandhi told the government to "watch what happens at Ramlila ground" and said whoever wants to protest was welcome to join the march and rally on Sunday.

"You watch how many people come, and watch how many people they manage to stop, and you will understand what is going on in this country. Huge anger, huge emotional pain, because millions of people are being disenfranchised, their vote is being stolen from them to help Mr Adani (industrialist Gautam Adani), Mr Ambani (industrialist Mukesh Ambani), Mr Modi, Mr Shah, and Mr Bhagwat (RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat)," said the LoP.

"There are no multiple protests; this is one protest; the entire Opposition is standing here. Anybody who wants to protest, any person is welcome to come here. We are all standing together because we are defending the Constitution, we are defending the idea of India; we are defending the vote, which is the expression of all Indians," he said.

For the past few days, senior Congress leaders, including Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and K C Venugopal, have been meeting state leaders to ensure maximum mobilisation of Congress workers for the rally. MPs and leaders from states near Delhi have been handed big targets. "There is healthy competition among the Congress units in states neighbouring Delhi, like Haryana and Uttar Pradesh," said an MP.

Dismissing the LoP's allegations, the BJP asked him to furnish proof. "Who has been stopped? Who stopped whom and where? Show proof," said BJP spokesperson Sambit Patra.

Apart from Gandhi, Kharge, and other senior Congress leaders, Opposition MPs from different INDIA bloc parties were present at the press briefing. Among them were All India Trinamool Congress's Derek O'Brien, Samajwadi Party leader Dharmendra Yadav, John Brittas of the CPI(M), CPI's P Sandosh Kumar, Shiv Sena (UBT)'s Arvind Sawant, Sanjay Yadav of the Rashtriya Janata Dal, and Revolutionary Socialist Party leader N K Premachandran.

"From EVMs to voter lists, everything is manipulated. Through the results of the UP MLC elections, teachers and graduates have made it clear how far behind the BJP is in UP," Yadav said.

"Civil society, students, youth, workers, housewives, we are all in this together," said O'Brien.

'Public impeachment' of CEC

Gandhi, meanwhile, said the Opposition had, by consensus, decided to push back the CEC's "public impeachment" to Saturday afternoon.

"By consensus, we have decided to postpone today's programme to tomorrow at the same time because of rain. We felt that it would be uncomfortable for seniors to sit in the rain, and we will do this same programme tomorrow."

Congress sources said elaborate arrangements had been made at Kharge's residence for the programme. There are provisions for a multi-camera shoot and a press gallery has been set up.

Former Speaker Meira Kumar will preside over the session, while Kharge will introduce the motion. All INDIA bloc parties have been allocated speakers as per their parliamentary strength. The speakers have been advised to make their speeches "political" and not make too many legal points. In the end, Gandhi will sum up the motion.

GURU GHASIDAS VISHWAVIDYALAYA
(A Central University established under the Central Universities Act, 2009, No. 25 of 2009)
KONI, BILASPUR-495 009 (C.G.) INDIA, Tel. +91-7752-260342

Ref. No. 938/Vis/Academic/26 ADMISSION NOTICE (2026-27) Bilaspur, Date-27.10.2026

Applications are invited in the prescribed form for admission to the Post-Doctoral Fellow (PDF) program under the Visvesvaraya PhD Scheme for Electronics and IT: Phase-II-2026-27 in the Department of Computer Science & Engineering, School of Studies of Engineering and Technology, GGV, Bilaspur.

Department	Number of Seat Allotted	Seat Reservation	Category of Seat
CSE	01	UR	Full-Time

Eligible candidates can apply for admission to Post-Doctoral Fellow (PDF) Programme under Visvesvaraya PhD Scheme with Scholarship in department of CSE, details are available with the advertisement published on the University website: https://www.ggu.ac.in/.The filled in application form along with the receipt of online payment (link available on website (https://www.ggu.ac.in/) towards the application fee (Rs. 2500/- for Gen/EWS/OBC Category, Rs. 1500/- for SC/ST/PWD category applicants) is to be submitted through speed post/courier to the office of the **Dean, School of Studies of Engineering and Technology, GGV, Koni, Bilaspur, C.G., 495009**, and soft copy also be emailed to the Visvesvaraya PhD Scheme Nodal Officer at **alokkumarsingh.jk@gmail.com.** (as mentioned in Notification) on or before **12-November-2026.** Candidates should visit the university website for further details and updates from time to time.

Dean (E&T)

TRAFFIC ADVISORY
LAW & ORDER ARRANGEMENT
Plan Your Journey. Follow Traffic Advisories
Traffic arrangements and road diversions due to Law & Order arrangements on 01.11.2026

In view of the proposed rally at Ramleela Ground, New Delhi, on **01.11.2026**, a large gathering is expected at the venue. Traffic movement on adjoining roads and surrounding areas may be affected. Traffic regulation and diversions will be implemented as required.

Diversion points
Depending on traffic conditions, vehicles may be diverted from the following points from 10:00 AM to 05:00 PM -
1. Netaji Subhash Marg T-Point.
2. Raj Ghat.
3. Delhi Gate.
4. ITO A-Point.
5. Ajmeri Gate Red Light.
6. Ranjeet Singh Flyover at Barakhamba Road.
7. Bhavbhuti Marg–DDU Marg Red Light.
8. R/A Jhandewalan.
9. Turkman Gate.
10. Mirdard Chowk.

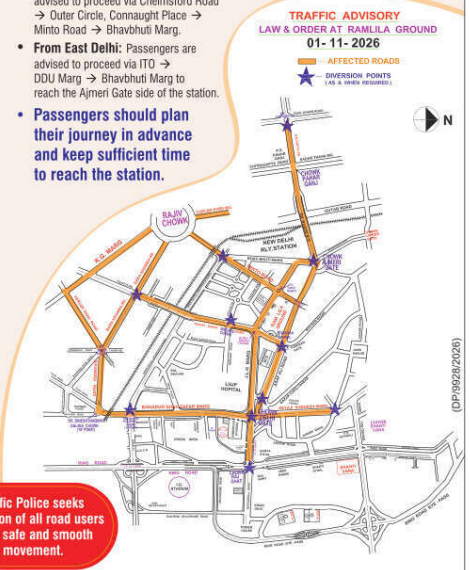
Roads likely to be affected
Traffic movement may be affected on the following stretches and in surrounding areas:
1. BSZ Marg, from ITO to Delhi Gate.
2. JLN Marg (Raj Ghat to Delhi Gate to Guru Nanak Chowk to Ajmeri Gate)
3. Aruna Asaf Ali Road (Ajmeri Gate to Hamdard Chowk to Turkman Gate to Delhi Gate)
4. Minto Road–R/A Kamla Market–Hamdard Chowk.
5. Ranjeet Singh Flyover to Turkman Gate.
6. DBG Road (Roundabout Jhandewalan towards Ajmeri Gate Chowk)
7. W-Point (BSZ Marg)
8. Barakhamba Road Towards R/A Mandi House To Sikandra Road
9. KG.Marg- Firozshah Road
10. Chelmsford Road
11. Minto Road

Regulated Traffic Movement
Vehicular movement on the following stretches shall remain under regulation and shall be permitted as per the prevailing traffic situation and operational requirements:
1. Guru Nanak Chowk to Kamla Market.
2. R/A Kamla Market to Hamdard Chowk.
3. Hamdard Chowk to Turkman Gate.
4. Turkman Gate to Guru Nanak Chowk.

Restrictions on DTC buses
Movement of DTC buses on the following roads/stretches shall be regulated and permitted depending upon the prevailing traffic situation:
1. BSZ Marg.
2. Raj Ghat to JLN Marg-the entire stretch.
3. DBG Road.
4. Minto Road.

Advice for passengers travelling to New Delhi Railway Station
- **From DBG Road side:** Passengers are advised to proceed via Chelmsford Road → Outer Circle, Connaught Place → Minto Road → Bhavbhuti Marg.
- **From East Delhi:** Passengers are advised to proceed via ITO → DDU Marg → Bhavbhuti Marg to reach the Ajmeri Gate side of the station.
- **Passengers should plan their journey in advance and keep sufficient time to reach the station.**

Appeal to the public
Commuters are requested to:
- Use public transport, preferably the **Metro**, wherever possible.
- Park vehicles only at designated parking places.
- Avoid roadside parking and keep the carriageway clear for traffic and emergency vehicles.
- Follow the instructions of traffic police personnel deployed on the ground.
- Report any suspicious person or unattended object to the police.



Delhi Traffic Police seeks the cooperation of all road users in ensuring safe and smooth traffic movement.

https://facebook.com/dtptraffic https://twitter.com/dtptraffic https://instagram.com/dtptraffic 8750871493 Website: traffic.delhipolice.gov.in

24 HOURS TRAFFIC HELPLINE 011-25844444/1095 FOR IMMEDIATE POLICE HELP CALL 112
TO SHARE ANTI TERRORIST ACTIVITIES, CALL 14547 Be a Traffic Prahari Download App Google Play or Download on the App Store

The Indian Express Classifieds
EXPRESS EDUCATION
PHYSICS
OPTIONAL
by Renowned
DP Vajpayee Sir
NEW BATCH From 2nd/15th Nov. 2026
Best optional in CSE for
Science/ Engg background candidates
DIAS DELHI INSTITUTE FOR ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES
India's Leading Institute for Civil Services Examination
18, PUSA ROAD, KAROL BAGH, NEW DELHI - 110005
www.diasindia.com diasindia0702@gmail.com
Ph: 011-40079000, 35002599, 9350934622
Contact for Advt. Booking: M/s Friends Publicity Service
(M): 9212665841, 9212008155

OFFLINE CLASSES SET TO RESUME ON NOVEMBER 10, SAYS VARSITY

How 7 hours of negotiations broke the deadlock, ended 18-day protest at Jamia

Tabshir Shams
New Delhi, October 30



A victory march by protesting students at Jamia Millia Islamia in New Delhi on Friday. ABHINAV SAHA

THE BREAKTHROUGH in the 18-day protest at Jamia Millia Islamia came after more than seven hours of talks on Thursday night, with the university administration agreeing to a fixed timeline for holding student union elections – the main point of contention between the two sides.

The protest, demanding the restoration of the students' union that has remained dissolved since 2006, ended after the administration issued an order stating that elections would be held "approximately within 6 weeks of 16 July, 2027".

On Monday, the administration had agreed to hold elections to the union. But the protest continued as the order did not specify when the elections would take place. It said they would be held "after 15 days from the date of approval of the constitution of the students' union", without giving a timeline for the constitution's approval.

IUML Rajya Sabha MP Haris Beeran, who had earlier approached Jamia Vice-Chancellor Mazhar Ali seeking to mediate between the students and the administration, said he was called to the campus at 4 pm on Thursday.

It was the 18th day of the protest and Jamia's 106th Foundation Day. The administration had earlier announced that classes and examinations for the remainder of the semester would be held online, with the university reopening only in January for the new semester.

"Both sides wanted an exit route. Both were under pressure. And neither wanted to meet in the middle," said Beeran.

He and Jihad, a PhD student in Cultural Studies chosen by consensus as a student representative, met members of the administration led by the VC. The discussions, they said, continued for nearly seven hours.

The election timeline was the first point of discussion.

"The VC said that the last properly held election was almost 25 years ago. After 1999, a union's term usually collapsed within two or three months, undone by regional politics and internal fighting. This led to violence and disruption of campus life. In 2006, for these reasons and due to a clash between teachers and students, the union elections stopped being held," Jihad said.

Because of these concerns, he added, the administration wanted the constitution to be drafted carefully, in accordance with the Lyngdoh Committee recommendations.

When Beeran conveyed this to the protesting students — who included five on hunger strike — around 6 pm, they insisted on a fixed timeline.

Beeran said when he returned to the administration with this, he was shown the academic calendar. The winter semester was nearing its end, while the summer semester was scheduled to begin in mid-January. If the constitution were approved by February and elections held in March, the elected union would have a tenure of only two months before the academic session ended in May. Fresh elections would then be required for the next batch.

The administration also pointed out that, as Jamia is a Central university, the constitution would require the President's approval.

Beeran said he suggested that the constitution be approved by the end of May and elections held within six weeks of the next academic session – scheduled to begin in mid-July. "They were first taken aback by the exact dates but later agreed," he added.

While they agreed to put this down in writing, Jihad said the administration gave verbal assurances that five students would be included in the body drafting the constitution, allowing them to offer suggestions before it was approved and made public.

By 11 pm, the Registrar had issued the order setting out the election timeline, bringing the protest to an end. Students celebrated through the night.

On Friday the Jamia administration issued another order announcing that offline classes and academic activities would resume on campus from November 10.

'True democracy needs us...': Meet women behind protest

Tabshir Shams
New Delhi, October 30







(Clockwise from top) Rida Naushad Khan; Haneena Bint Omar with a photo of Jamia founder Hakim Ajmal Khan; Nausheen Farooq

AT 4 pm on October 27, near the central canteen, Nausheen Farooq went over her notes before addressing the media. Dressed in a yellow kurti, pyjamas and a head scarf, she muttered each point under her breath.

A few steps away, Haneena Bint Omar was walking from the Geography Department to the Political Science building, carrying a water gallon in each hand. Other students walked alongside, carrying more water and packets of food to be passed over the spiked boundary wall. For 18 days, as over a hundred students demanded the restoration of the Jamia Millia Islamia's long-defunct students' union amid a campus shutdown and prohibitory orders, Nausheen and Haneena were among those who helped organise and sustain the agitation. Another woman, Rida Naushad Khan, was among the seven students who went on hunger strike, and fasted for eight days.

On Thursday, the students secured a breakthrough, with the university setting a timeline for elections by July 2027. In a late-night order, the Registrar's office set May 15, 2027, as the deadline for approving and implementing the Jamia Millia Islamia Students' Union (JMISU) constitution. The order directed that elections be held within six weeks of the start of the academic session, in accordance with the Lyngdoh Committee guidelines. The next academic session is expected to begin on July 15, 2027.

Euphoric over their victory, the women said they had not planned to lead a protest. "It was a sudden call," Nausheen said. "We did not have much leadership then. Gradually, it became an organic protest."

Nausheen, from Port Blair in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, is a second-year MA student in Disaster Management. She has a BSc from Madras University and chose Jamia because it is a central university. Then she noticed the problems students were facing — "poor hygiene, rooms and washrooms in bad shape, and the quality of food".

Nausheen also pointed out how women had a 10 pm entry deadline. "When we had approached the administration, they gave a very casual, lackadaisical reply," she claimed. "If there was a union, there would be a representative from our side and we wouldn't be facing problems."

Haneena, a third-year law student from Thrissur in Kerala, said alleged malpractice in admissions was among the issues that pushed her into the protest. "When you see something wrong happening, you have to raise your voice," she said. She named Ambedkar, Savitribai Phule and Fatima Sheikh as her inspirations. "But for me, Deen comes first."

Haneena and Nausheen were part of the Cockroach Janta Party's October 10 protest against irregularities in the Special Intensive Revision and were detained in Shalimar Bagh.

Rida, a final-year MA student in Public Administration from Lucknow, was the only woman among the seven students who fasted for the restoration of the students' union. She broke her eight-day fast to return to Lucknow after her mother fell ill.

Sitting on a hunger strike was not a choice born of impulse but of necessity," she said.

A union, Rida said, is a bridge. "It gives voice to marginalised," On participation of women in protests, she was emphatic: "A struggle without women is half-baked freedom," added Rida. "True democracy needs us at the centre."

CBI in SC on plea seeking transfer of Twisha death case to Delhi: Accused can influence trial

Express News Service
New Delhi, October 30



Twisha Sharma

THE CBI has responded to a plea in the Supreme Court in former actor-model Twisha Sharma's death case by her father, seeking the transfer of the trial from Madhya Pradesh to Delhi. The central investigation agency has told the top court that her husband, Samarth Singh, and mother-in-law Giribala Singh, a former district judge, are influential persons and there is likelihood of them influencing trial proceedings in the case.

In a counter affidavit filed in the top court on Thursday, the CBI stated that "the gravity and seriousness of the present case is reflected from the allegations that after the incident of death of the deceased...Giribala Singh has tried to manage the crime scene and also tried to tamper with the evidence. The accused...has misused her position and there are a series of incidents which clearly reflect her unwarranted interference in the investigation conducted by the State Police."

It added, "... During the investigation, it has been established that...Giribala Singh called the technician and took the copies of CCTV footage of the relevant period."

The agency added that it had also "been established that on 13.05.2026...Giribala Singh called the owner of Xpression Beauty Parlour and asked her about the visit of the deceased on 12.05.2026 and collected the relevant CCTV footage by sending some persons to the beauty parlour."

"In view of the aforesaid facts and circumstances of the case, it is respectfully prayed that the respondent No.2 and 3 in this case are influential persons of District Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, and there is every likelihood that they will influence the trial proceedings and intimidate the witnesses of the case," the affidavit read.

It urged the court to pass appropriate orders as deemed fit in the interest of justice. The case is currently pending before the court of Xth District and Sessions Judge in Bhopal.

Twisha Sharma was found hanging in her matrimonial house in Bhopal on the night of May 12.

The accused took her to AIIMS Bhopal, where doctors declared her dead, according to police.

The CBI, which took over the probe, registered a case under relevant provisions of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 (BNS) and Dowry Prohibition Act against Samarth Singh, who is an advocate and his mother Giribala Singh.

Twisha Sharma married Samarth Singh on December 9, 2025.

After she became pregnant in April this year, differences allegedly emerged between her and the accused.

She then went back to her parent's house.

She allegedly had an abortion after which she returned to her matrimonial home where the fights continued and ultimately ended in her death.



DELHI AQI IMPROVES TO 60; IMD HAS FORECAST A PARTLY CLOUDY SKY FOR TODAY

At 20.7°C, coldest Oct day in Delhi since 1951

Sophiya Mathew
New Delhi, October 30

DELHI ON Friday recorded its coldest October day since the India Meteorological Department (IMD) began recording weather-related data in 1951, with the maximum temperature plunging to 20.7 degrees Celsius.

The previous October low was recorded at 21.5 degrees Celsius in 1975, followed by 21.9 degrees Celsius in 1961 and 22.1 degrees Celsius in 1971, according to IMD.

The dip was mainly driven by rainfall, as Friday also saw the highest single-day October rainfall in four years. The Safdarjung observatory received 61.4 mm of rain in 24 hours ending 8.30 am. According to IMD officials, it was also the sixth highest daily rainfall recorded since 1951, with the highest being recorded at 172.7 mm on October 1, 1954.

In Palam, the visibility dropped from 2,500 m to 1,500 m by 7.30 pm on Friday.

The widespread showers brought a sharp improvement in air quality. Delhi's average Air Quality Index (AQI) improved to 60 (Satisfactory) on Friday, from 222 (Poor) at 4 pm on Thursday, according to the Central Pollution Control Board.

This was the cleanest October air in four years, driven by meteorological events. At AQI of 44 (Good), October 10, 2022 was the time a cleaner AQI for the month was recorded. This year, the pollution levels were lower, as AQI of 56 (Satisfactory) was reported in Delhi on September 28. While Gurugram saw an AQI of 69, it was 58 Noida for Noida, both in the 'Satisfactory' category.

Nearly half of October's total rainfall in Delhi was recorded in the 24 hours ending Friday morning.

Several weather stations recorded more than 40 mm of rain. IMD data showed Lodhi Road received 63.4 mm, followed by Ayanagar (55.4 mm), Chhatarpur (53.5 mm), Ridge (50.3 mm) and Palam (43.1 mm). Jharoda Kalan recorded the highest rainfall among the stations, at 89 mm. The last time Delhi recorded higher single-day rainfall in October was on October 9, 2022, when Safdarjung received 74 mm.

The minimum temperature, however, did not see a similar dip. It stood at 17.2°C on Friday, 1.1 degrees above normal. Cloud cover and high humidity can restrict the loss of heat from the surface, limiting the fall in night-time temperatures.

The IMD has forecast a partly cloudy sky on Saturday, followed by mainly clear sky from Sunday.

According to IMD officials, October rainfall this year has been the fourth wettest on record for up to October 30, since 1951. The highest monthly rainfall was logged in 1954 at 238.3 mm, followed by 236.2 mm in 1956 and 128.6 mm in 2022.

An active Western Disturbance was the primary weather system responsible for the rainfall over Delhi and other parts of Northwest India, IMD officials said. The system triggered widespread rainfall over parts of Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and adjoining areas.

The IMD's national bulletin also referred to the remnant depression of Very Severe Cyclonic Storm Arnab, which was located over Chhattisgarh and adjoining Odisha on Thursday and was expected to weaken into a well-marked low-pressure area.



Rain lashes Kartavya Path in New Delhi on Friday. PRAVEEN KHANNA

GROUND report

Labourers stare at months without wages, builders race to finish work

Sophiya Mathew
New Delhi, October 30

TEN DAYS. 40 acres. Hundreds of workers.

At The Amaryllis luxury housing project in Karol Bagh, the clock was ticking. With the ban on construction work beginning November 1, labourers hurried through exterior work on the complex's towers, trying to finish as much as possible before the deadline.

Outside, while a water sprinkler truck made its rounds, dust hung over the neighbourhood.

For workers, however, the bigger worry was what would happen after November 1.

On Tolstoy Marg, Rohit (29), a construction worker from Bikaner, was already preparing for the months without work.

"For two or three months, work stops," he said. "The contractor asks us to return to our villages. Once work resumes, they will call us back."

When Rohit gets work regularly, he earns around Rs 18,000 a month, sends Rs 10,000 home and uses the rest for rent and daily expenses in Delhi. "I do not have any savings. I have to find some work in the village," he said.

For thousands of migrant workers like Rohit, the approaching winter means months without a steady income, followed by the uncertainty of returning to Delhi when construction resumes.

The slowdown was visible at Amba Deep building on K G Marg. The construction site stood silent, with green nets and steel frames lining the building where office renovation and repair work had been under way. The 15 to 20 workers usually deployed there had left for their villages for the festive season.

An official at the site said many would not return for weeks. Nearly four years into the project, and with around 90% of the work complete, the official estimated another two years could be needed to finish the work. The upcoming restrictions have forced builders to rethink schedules, bringing forward work that can be completed before November and postponing other activities.

At The Amaryllis, Kunal Behrani, Chief Commercial Officer of Unity Group, said they have rearranged priorities to complete civil works first. "I am finishing civil works first, then will do electrical and plumbing works... planning was done to rework the priorities," he added.

But once the total mid-winter freeze kicks in, Behrani warned, projects will hit a dead end. "From December 10, when the complete ban kicks in, I would be in serious trouble because I wouldn't have anything left to do. There is no clarity on what kind of work can be done and what cannot be done. You are completely stuck," he said.

From December 10 to January 20, a complete shutdown of construction and demolition activity is mandated under Delhi's Winter Action Plan.

The Plan marks a shift from the earlier system, under which construction activity was curtailed largely in response to air quality levels under the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP). While GRAP Stages 3 and 4 halted heavy dust-generating activities like excavation, demolition, and external facade plastering, they allowed non-dust interior works such as plumbing, electrical wiring, carpentry, and elevator or DG set installations to proceed.

However, under the Winter Action Plan, dust-generating demolition and outdoor civil construction will be prohibited from November 1 to January 31, followed by a complete halt to all construction and demolition activity from December 10 to January 20. Behrani said builders were now dealing with two sets of restrictions. "We get the worst of the two worlds, as CAQM imposes GRAP on me, and then the government gives a separate notice," he added.

Pointing to a "labor retention crisis", he said when construction halts for weeks, workers migrate home and refuse to return until full-scale operations restart, delaying project delivery.

A Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) member also said that workers were unlikely to return immediately after restrictions were lifted. "If you tell me that I won't do any work for 40 days, the labourer will go home... Most labourers are migrants...," the member said. "It takes no time for them to leave, but bringing them back is tough. Even if you tell them that work can start from January 31, they will wait for the work to commence completely before coming back."

DELHI'S WINTER ACTION PLAN

Dos

Nov 1, 2026 - Jan 31, 2027
- Finishing, plumbing, electrical and other works permitted within the construction site with strict compliance to C&D (construction and demolition) Waste Management Rules and dust prevention and control norms.
- CNG, EV vehicles and emergency, sovereign duty vehicles, including ambulances, fire tenders, and police vehicles are exempted
- Essential public infrastructure projects permitted
- Government and private offices to reduce 50% work strength. Essential and emergency public services won't be impacted. Mandatory minimum 50% work from home for all private offices within Delhi

Nov 1, 2026 - Feb 28, 2027
- Parking charges at spaces owned and managed by DMRC in Delhi to remain same

Don'ts

Nov 1, 2026 - Jan 31, 2027
- Ban on dust generating demolition activity and outdoor civil construction activity
- Storage, dumping of construction and demolition material outside the site to be strictly prohibited with penalty on violation.
- All motor vehicles registered outside Delhi and below BS-VI cannot ply

Nov 1, 2026 - Feb 28, 2027
- Parking spaces other than owned and managed by DMRC in Delhi to double charges

Dec 10, 2026 - Jan 20, 2027
- No vehicle carrying construction materials, including but not limited to sand, aggregates, stone, bricks, cement, ready-mix concrete, debris, or any similar material, shall be permitted to enter into Delhi
- Complete ban on construction and demolition activities, except for "urgent government projects of importance affecting public convenience and in emergency conditions"

SOPHIYA MATHEW





The Amaryllis (left) and Amba Deep building. EXPRESS

Environment Minister reviews CAQM's new command centre to track air pollution



Union Minister Bhupender Yadav at CAQM's new PAVAN-I3C in Delhi. X/@BYADAVBJP

Express News Service
New Delhi, October 30

IN A bid to leverage data, real-time tracking and monitoring of air pollution compliance in the Delhi-NCR and to coordinate enforcement, the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) has developed a new Integrated Command and Control Centre (I3C) named PAVAN (Platform for Air Quality Vigilance and Analytics for NCR) in New Delhi.

Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Bhupender Yadav reviewed the platform's technological framework, operational readiness on Friday and was given a live demonstration of its functioning by CAQM officials.

This is the second such I3C based in New Delhi, after the one operationalised by the Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC).

PAVAN-I3C integrates over 30 application programming interfaces and data streams, which allows smooth exchange of data. This includes data on air quality, emissions, meteorological, satellite, camera, mobility, complaint and compliance data from multiple agencies, according to a note on the platform issued by CAQM. It has also integrated data from 111 continuous ambient air quality monitoring stations, 2,300 industries, 3,200 active construction sites and traffic hotspot data.

"...The I3C is a major step... specifically in terms of detecting problems, analyzing them, and prompting action," Yadav told mediapersons.

Plucking flowers, man, son fall to death from 23rd floor of Greater Noida West home

Drishti Jain
Noida, October 30

A MAN and his 11-year-old son died after falling from the balcony of their 23rd-floor flat in a Greater Noida West high-rise early Friday morning.

Police said the two allegedly lost their balance while using a ladder to pluck flowers for prayers and fell onto the rooftop of the society's clubhouse, which is at the level of the second floor.

Ranadip Patra, 40, and his son Aarav lived in Mahagun Mywoods Society in Gaur City 2, under the jurisdiction of the Bisrakh police station.

According to Deputy Commissioner of Police Dr Pravin Ranjan Singh, police received a call around 4 am, informing them that two people had died after falling from a height. "Ranadip's wife told us that the family was going to Khatu Shyam for a property registry," he said.

They wanted to do the puja before leaving.

A police officer said the family usually plucked aparajita flowers for rituals. Ranadip would typically do so every morning, while Aarav would help on school holidays.



Ranadip and his son Aarav, the deceased. EXPRESS

"The aparajita, a climber, was growing near a corner of the balcony, on the wall above it. On Friday, Aarav took a ladder to pluck the flowers but lost his balance. Ranadip, who was standing nearby, tried to catch him, but both fell," the officer said.

Both Ranadip and his wife are central government employees. The family is originally from Kolkata. "No complaint has been given to the police so far," the officer said.

Police said they were completing the inquest proceedings and had sent the bodies for a post-mortem examination.

3 of family killed in eway crash: Two kids rescued from mangled car after over an hour

Abhimanyu Hazarika
Gurugram, October 30

FOR NEARLY an hour, rescue workers kept talking to an eight-year-old boy trapped inside the mangled remains of a car in the early hours of Thursday, trying to keep him conscious as they worked to pull him and his one-year-old sister out of the wreckage. The two children had survived a crash on the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway in Gurugram that killed their parents and other sister, aged 7, after their car rammed into a stationary bus, police said.

The bus driver was arrested Friday. The family, hailing from Bihar, lived in Southwest Delhi's Rajokri. Police said Bum Prasad, 38, his wife Roopa, 35, and their children were returning home after visiting a Balaji temple in Rajasthan's Dausa when their Maruti Swift rear-ended a private bus between 3 am and 3.30 am near Dhunela in Sohna.

The bus had broken down earlier and its driver had abandoned it along the elevated corridor, just before the junction with the Sohna elevated road. The impact pushed the car underneath the bus, crushing the front and passenger cabin.

"My brother went to the temple also to seek blessings for the bright future of the children," Prasad's younger brother Balmiki told *The Indian Express* on Friday, recalling that he received a phone call on Thursday around 4 am.

He drove immediately to the Bhondsi stretch of the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway, and stood by the mangled car and called his relatives in Bihar. He soon realised the family could not cover the sudden financial burden of the tragedy.



The mangled car. EXPRESS

"We could not afford an ambulance to Bihar. So we cremated them near their home here. Our mother was not able to attend their last rites as she is bedridden", he said. Balmiki said that while his niece and nephew are out of harm's way, they would now be raised back in their home state once formalities are done.

"I lost my brother. I had come to Delhi to drive a taxi like him. My brother had worked hard so his son could go to a private school. There was nothing he did not do to raise his children well," said Balmiki, adding, "My brother was perhaps driving at a high speed. But still, how can the driver carelessly leave the bus like that on such a major road?" he asked. When the accident happened, passersby alerted the PCR, said officers.

"During the operation, rescue workers discovered Prasad's eight-year-old son and one-year-old daughter had survived inside the mangled frame... Both children were brought out of the car safely and taken to a nearby hospital, where doctors said that they were out of danger," a senior officer said.

• ACCESS TO HISTORICAL SITES, SAFETY AMONG CHALLENGES CURATORS FACE WHILE ORGANISING THE WALKS

'Haunted walks' to movies: Delhi's interest in 'paranormal' goes beyond Halloween

Jaspreet Singh
New Delhi, October 30

DELHI'S INTEREST in horror has evolved beyond the stories centered around supernatural experiences told at casual gatherings. A new age of enthusiasts are seeking thrill this Halloween on Saturday with unique experiences by exploring 'haunted heritage walks' and attending movie screenings.

For author and curator Anoushka Jain, it is often her 'haunted walks' that draw a bigger participation than the weekly heritage walks. The usual venues are Jamali-Kamali at Mehrauli Archaeological Park and Feroz Shah Kotla Fort — two sites said to be "haunted by Djinns". Legend has it that these "invisible shape-shifters can manifest themselves as humans or animals".

At one such recent walk, Jain claims, the guests had "supernatural sightings". "Many participants messaged us that they felt an eerie presence... Some of them said they saw a Djinn in the form of a Nilgai looking at them..." she says.

While other guided walks organised by her heritage and education organisation, En-route Indian History (EIH), are mostly academic, the 'haunted' ones involve engaging with people sharing their own experiences. "We assumed participants would be mostly youngsters, but many 40-50-year-olds join us too. Thrill-seekers have no age." For Halloween, EIH is holding 'haunted walks' on Saturday and Sunday.

Author Eric Chopra recalls hosting his first-ever 'haunted walk' at the launch of his book, 'Ghosted: Delhi's Haunted Monuments', last Halloween. On Saturday, Chopra's platform, Itihasology, is hosting a free 'haunted walk' in Mehrauli, marking his book's first anniversary. But he says, "I don't like to call it a haunted walk. I try to give abundant space to both horror and history."

He adds, "Most of the abandoned monuments in Delhi carry a sense of trauma from the past, including recent events like Partition and Emergency. So I focus on the non-fictional understanding."





(From left) At a Khatarnaak Films screening; walk by Unzip Delhi.

Anthropologist Mohammad Anas, another curactor, is slowly moving towards making such experiences more immersive by hiring on-site actors and projectors. His platform, Unzip Delhi, is also hosting a walk at Mehrauli on Saturday.

For Jain and Chopra, intertwining history with horror has been a priority. On the other hand, curator Shah Umair — commonly known as 'Sikkawala' as he is also a numismatist — says too much "focus on myth dilutes the historical significance of these monuments". Sikkawala too is organising a Mehrauli heritage walk on Sunday.

Away from Mehrauli, at a cafe in Jangpura, S Tara and Karmaditya Bagga — filmmakers and co-founders of 'Khatarnaak Films' — host weekly horror movie screenings. Probably the only such movie club of its kind in Delhi, Khatarnaak Films has organised 23 screenings so far this year. On average, each event sees 20-30 participants, and up to 40 on good days. "We keep the tickets affordable. The idea is to inculcate a culture of appreciating movies from across the world," Tara says.

For Halloween, 'Khatarnaak Films' is organising an overnight camp on Saturday. Curating such events, however, comes with challenges such as access to sites and safety. "I fear for the safety of my women team members, especially at night," Jain underlines.

THE EVENTFUL city

DELHI CONFIDENTIAL



Capital Connect

MOST LOK Sabha MPs spend their time between Parliament sessions in their respective constituencies, focusing on development of the region. But members of the TDP have been instructed by the party leadership to spend at least three days a week in the Capital, tracking and following up on the Central schemes meant for Andhra Pradesh. TDP supremo and Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu wants the party MPs to take up the state's requirements and demands with the ministers or the officials concerned. Now, with the government engaged in Union Budget 2027-28 preparations, the TDP MPs have another responsibility — they have been asked to visit different ministries/departments, inquire about any unutilised funds for the state, avail them and utilise them on the ground.

On The Spot

THE PRESS conference of the INDIA bloc to announce the postponement of the "public impeachment" of CEC Gyanesh Kumar was discussed among Opposition members long after the briefing was over. The non-Congress allies, especially the SP and the TMC, were pleased with Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi's gesture to hand over the mic to SP MP Dharmendra Yadav and TMC member Derek O'Brien to address the media. Sources said Yadav decided on the spot to mention the recent MLC election results in Varanasi while targeting BJP. His spontaneity was well received by the leaders present there. Yadav was even complimented for it by some of the senior leaders after the briefing.

Pat on the Back

OFFICIALS AT the Commission for Air Quality Management for NCR and Adjoining Areas received repeated praise from Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav Friday during the latter's visit to the Commission's office for reviewing a new integrated command centre to manage air pollution. Yadav said for the past few weeks the Commission's senior leadership was largely out in the field, working with the states to curb stubble burning. As a senior official gave a demo on the command centre, the minister probed further, seeking information on certain open burning violations that were visible on live camera feeds.

BJP seeks action from Shinde over Mahayuti's loss in MLC elections

Mumbai: The BJP Friday demanded that Deputy CM Eknath Shinde take action against Shiv Sena leaders accused of working against alliance candidates in MLC elections. BJP has blamed the Sena for its defeat in Pune Graduates' constituency.

NCP (SP) also wrested the Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar Graduates' constituency from the NCP faction, led by Deputy CM Sunetra Pawar. Both seats were held by undivided NCP before the party split. "In Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar Graduates' constituency, Shiv Sena former minister Abdul Sattar worked against NCP candidate Satish Chavan, who lost. In Pune Graduates' seat, Shiv Sena Pune city chief Ravindra Dhangekar worked against BJP's Smita Jadhav, who lost," BJP spokesperson Navnath Ban said Friday. ENS

FIRST PLENARY SESSION OF G20 FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING IN ATLANTA

Tactical calculations should not overlook dangers of terror: EAM

Shubhajit Roy
New Delhi, October 30



Global South disproportionately bearing consequences of attacks on civilian shipping and seafarers: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar. @DRSJAISHANKAR/X

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS Minister S Jaishankar said Friday that "tactical calculations should not lead to overlooking the dangers of terrorism", as "it is a high-risk activity which has come back to bite even the practitioners".

Jaishankar's remarks at the first plenary session of the G20 Foreign Ministers' meeting Friday in Atlanta were a thinly veiled reference to US's close ties with Pakistan in the past year-and-half during which US President Donald Trump has engaged with Pakistan's Army Chief General Asim Munir.

India has accused Pakistan of sponsoring terrorism against Indians, including targeting civilians at the Pahalgam terror attack in April 2025.

In a post on X, Jaishankar said: "Pleased to participate in the 1st Plenary of @g20org Foreign Ministers' Meeting #Atlanta today. Tactical calculations should not lead to overlooking the dangers of terrorism. It is a high-risk activity which has come back to bite even the practitioners."

In an oblique reference to the wars in Ukraine and West Asia, he said, "Emphasised that in the face of global challenges, military solutions will not work and diplomacy must be given a chance."

Flagging the attacks on seafarers, he highlighted that "Global South is disproportionately bearing the consequences of attacks on civilian shipping and seafarers, jeopardising the availability and cost of fuel, food and fertilizers." Since the war began in West Asia in February this year, at least 22 Indians, including 14 seafarers, have lost their lives in West Asia.

The minister flagged the "urgent need to preserve the freedom of navigation and ensure cessation of attacks within the framework of international law, especially UNCLOS." India and Liberia have launched a joint initiative to safeguard seafarers.

Targeting China's export control restrictions, Jaishankar said, "Right to industrialize is being denied through the flooding of markets, weaponizing supply chains, constricting market access and encouraging market distortions. This must cease."

In this context, he said, "Importance of building resilient and alternate connectivity, as the world de-risks and diversifies." This has been part of Delhi's strategy at a time when both US and China have sought to weaponise their economic strengths.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, who hosted the meeting, said, "At today's G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting, I made clear that maritime and food security drive economic security."

"Through our America First agenda, the United States is encouraging partners to protect shipping routes, strengthen food security, and reduce the economic consequences of geopolitical crises," he said on X.

Jaishankar's participation at the G20 Foreign Ministers' meeting comes days after Rubio visited India on October 20-22. Jaishankar will also attend the Quad Foreign Ministers' meeting in Atlanta. His visit is being seen as laying the groundwork for PM Narendra Modi's possible visit to the US for the G20 Leaders' Summit in mid-December.

Polls ahead, Shah to UP BJP workers: 'Throw your resentment in Gomti river'

Lalmani Verma
Lucknow, October 30



Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath in Lucknow, Friday. EXPRESS

UNION HOME Minister Amit Shah Friday asked party workers in UP to set aside their differences, saying they should "throw away" their "disappointment and resentment in the Gomti river" and work till the votes are counted in next year's elections to ensure the party returns to power for the third straight term.

"Aap logon ke mann main jo bhi nirasha, narazgi hai, use yahan se jaate samay Gomti *mein daal kar jaiye. Ekjut rehna hai. Kai baar mann mein jo socha jaata hai wah haasil nahi hota hai* (Whatever disappointment or resentment you have in your hearts, throw them away in the Gomti when you leave. We must remain united. Often, things we wish for do not turn out the way we had hoped)," Shah said at the party's state executive meeting.

While many in the party might not have received any posts or reward for their work, BJP had carried out the "maximum adjustment" in UP to ensure they were accommodated in government bodies and organisations, Shah added.

At a meeting chaired by BJP chief Nitin Nabin in Varanasi earlier this month, a party leader said allotting tickets and ministerial berths to "outsiders" might be "acceptable", but accommodating them in senior organisational posts "makes it difficult for dedicated workers to work with them". Following the disappointing results in Legislative Council elections, in which the SP won five of the 11 seats at stake, sections in the BJP flagged workers' disappointment.

CM Yogi Adityanath invoked former Deputy PM L K Advani: "Advani ji often said political priorities can change, but the party's values, ideals, and ideology can never change. BJP workers follow the same ideology and work with complete dedication without concern for personal honour or insult."

State BJP chief Pankaj Chaudhary urged party workers to introspect on four points. "Are we active at every booth; are our booth committees functioning regularly; are our office-bearers executing their responsibilities; and are our mandal, regional, and district-level office bearers among people?"

Members of EAC-PM meet House panel, flag costs of staggered polls

Express News Service
New Delhi, October 30

ECONOMISTS FROM the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM) Friday are learnt to have told the Joint Parliamentary Committee, examining the simultaneous elections Bills, that the cost of having staggered elections, as is the case now, went beyond the actual cost of conducting polls, with frequent polls affecting private investment.

The committee, chaired by BJP MP P P Chaudhary, met EAC-PM chairman Prof S Mahendra Dev, EAC-PM member Dr Shamika Ravi and EAC-PM part-time member Prof Pami Dua. The committee also met Vivekananda International Foundation chairman S Gurumurthy.

The EAC-PM members are learnt to have informed the committee that staggered elections end up discouraging private investment.

Mahendra Dev is learnt to have told the committee that uncertainty surrounding general elections has been found to lead to contraction in corporate capital expenditure. Ravi is learnt to have flagged the impact of staggered elections on low-income families. She is also learnt to have raised the issue of Centre-State coordination, saying that frequent polls disrupt the same, impacting long-term capital formation. The economic cost of separate elections was more than the actual accounting costs, she is learnt to have said.

Dua is learnt to have flagged the disruptions caused by the Model Code of Conduct, increase in government revenue expenditure and deployment of personnel.

Centre clears project worth Rs 40,000 cr for 8 next-gen stealth warships

Amrita Nayak Dutta
New Delhi, October 30

THE CABINET Committee on Security (CCS) has approved a project worth over Rs 40,000 crore to build eight next-generation corvettes (NGC) for the Indian Navy, marking a significant addition to its surface combatant fleet.

The project would give the Navy a new generation of compact, fast, multirole stealth warships capable of operating across the Indian Ocean Region.

The government expects to sign a contract soon with Kolkata-based Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers and Goa Shipyard Limited for their construction.

The delivery of the corvettes are expected to begin by 2030.

A corvette is a relatively small surface combatant, typically smaller than a frigate or destroyer.

The NGC programme is intended to create a versatile combat platform that can perform a variety of roles, including anti-submarine warfare, maritime surveillance and reconnaissance, search-and-attack missions, coastal and littoral defence, aside from other deterrence and maritime security operations.

Population Census from Jan 25-Feb 28, revisional round from March 1

Express News Service
New Delhi, October 30

POPULATION CENSUS will be conducted from January 25 to February 28, followed by a revisional round from March 1 to 5, the RGI and Census Commissioner of India, Mrityunjay Kumar Narayan, said in a gazette notification Friday.

In all states and UTs, except Manipur (till further declaration), Goa, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Uttarakhand, Ladakh and the snow-bound non-synchronous areas of Himachal Pradesh and J&K, census shall be undertaken, the notification said.

The reference date for the census will be 00:00 hours of March 1, 2027, it said. "There will be an option for self-enumeration from January 10, 2027, to January 24, 2027, just before the start of house-to-house population enumeration," it said.

Elections are due in UP, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Goa and Manipur early next year.

In June last year, the government had announced the Census reference date for the country, except for Ladakh and snow-bound non-synchronous areas of the UT of J&K and the snow-bound non-synchronous areas of the states of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, to be 00.00 hours of March 1, 2027.

SIR: Bulk Form 7s in UP not filed as per rules, not acted upon, EC tells SC

Express News Service
New Delhi, October 30

RESPONDING TO allegations that bulk Form-7 applications were filed in UP, the Election Commission Friday told the Supreme Court that none of those forms had been acted upon by Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) and Assistant EROs.

"No name is deleted without giving notice and without passing a reasoned order by the EROs/AEROs. All the complaints related to Form 7 are carefully inquired and resolved by the Election Officers as per the rules," the EC said in its counter-affidavit filed on September 16.

Form 7 is used to lodge objections against the proposed inclusion of a name, or to request the deletion of a name from the electoral rolls on specific grounds.

According to the Registration of Electors Rules (RER), 1960, EROs are required to hold hearings before passing speaking orders on each form.

The EC said "none of the Form 7s mentioned" in the plea "were received or submitted in accordance with the abovenoted procedure prescribed under the Representation of the People Act, 1950 read with RER, 1960 as well as the SIR Guidelines. As such, no deletion resulted therefrom. Therefore, the allegation of systemic misuse of Form 7 is baseless and erroneous". It pointed out that there had been a total of 4,65,520 deletions through Form 7s in UP, and that there had been 252 appeals filed by electors against the orders of EROs, including deletions.

On Friday, the petitions filed by Congress MP Tanuj Punia and SP leader Arvind Kumar Singh came up before a three-judge bench presided by CJI Surya Kant. Appearing for the EC, Senior Advocate D S Naidu told the bench, also comprising Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V Mohana: "That has been addressed. We found that bulk Form 7s had been given. Our officers went, checked and cross-checked. They were false and we have not acted".

The counsel for the applicant countered this and said that in one constituency, 32 Form 7s were submitted for one particular community, of which 2 were signed by BLOs. He contended that as no remedial measures were taken during UP SIR, similar situations emerged in states like Karnataka and Telangana.

The bench asked the counsel to provide details of its remaining concerns to EC, which it said would examine the factual aspects, take necessary corrective steps and file a compliance report.

On a plea challenging SIR in Kerala, Naidu submitted that the exercise was over and elections had also been held with revised rolls. The court declined to extend the time for SIR but said that though the EC had completed the process, inclusion of anyone left out erroneously can continue.

Banks being sold, says Rahul; IDBI forced to lend in Cong rule: FM

Express News Service
New Delhi, October 30

DAYS AFTER sparring over the Tata Group, Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi and Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman traded heated exchanges Friday over the disinvestment of the IDBI Bank — the sale of 60.72% stake in the bank, the largest-ever FDI in India's financial sector, which is expected to be completed by March next year.

Asserting that he stood with the employees of the IDBI Bank, Gandhi targeted the Centre in a post on X, saying, "During Congress's time, IDBI was established — to build the nation's industry. During Modi's time, first the bidding was seen, then the price was set. During Congress's time, banks were being created. During Modi's time, they are being sold."

He also posted a letter dated October 29, saying, "The government and LIC own ninety-five per cent of this bank. After the sale, they will own thirty-four per cent. In 2003, the government promised Parliament that it would always hold at least fifty-one per cent of IDBI."

Gandhi's attack drew a sharp counter from Sitharaman, who accused the Congress of using "banks and financial institutions as personal entities and pressured bank employees to extend loans at their whim, bypassing prudent lending norms."

She underlined that all due process has been followed in the IDBI Bank "strategic restructuring". Sitharaman alleged that IDBI Bank was handed over to us in "poor shape, as IDBI itself was forced to lend to large business groups with close connections to Congress", which turned into "bad loans, causing huge losses for IDBI Bank, which we recognised".

The NDA government, she said, revived the bank through professionalism, prudence and recapitalisation. "Congress-era banking had a phonebook for the powerful and a rulebook for the common citizens... Common people now have easy access to loans, and employees are not under pressure to extend loans over the phone calls."

Lashing out at several decisions taken by the previous Congress governments, Sitharaman said on X, "In 1976, Indira Gandhi's government removed SBI Chairman R K Talwar after he refused political pressure to relax lending conditions for a company linked to Sanjay Gandhi's circle. Sanjay Gandhi pressured the Central Bank of India over loans to Maruti."

"In 1957, Haridas Mundra got money from LIC due to influence by the Congress leaders. B Janardhana Poojary, MoS Finance under Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi — pressured bank employees to issue loans in the 1980s."

• SHARMILA SOUGHT JAGAN'S PERMISSION TO USE YELAHANKA PALACE FOR HER DAUGHTER'S RECEPTION, WEDDING; HE OBJECTED CITING CONCERNS OVER SECURITY, PRIVACY

Two weddings & a rift: Amid Jagan-Sharmila row, YSR family ties tested

Sreenivas Janyala
Hyderabad, October 30





Former CM Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy; APCC president Y S Sharmila

TWO WEDDINGS in the family of former Andhra Pradesh CM and Congress stalwart late Y S Rajasekara Reddy or YSR seem to be testing their familial ties and political loyalties.

At the centre of the row are ex-Andhra CM Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy, YSR's son and YSRCP president, and his sister Y S Sharmila, APCC president.

Both siblings have been estranged for the past several years. Sharmila had initially complained about not being given a political space in the YSRCP by Jagan. Later, she also accused her brother of allegedly denying her proper share in the YSR family's properties.

The current row began after Sharmila sought permission from Jagan to use the YSR family's sprawling Benglauru house complex, known as Yelahanka Palace, to host the reception and wedding of her daughter Anjili on November 25, who recently got engaged to an NRI S Ragurami Reddy.

Jagan wrote back to Sharmila, expressing his happiness over his niece's wedding but raising objection to her use of the Yelahanka Palace, citing security concerns and privacy issues.

The correspondence between Jagan and Sharmila was leaked to the media, causing severe strains to relationships in the YSR clan. Family sources said that amid calls for a "compromise" between the siblings initiated by their mother Y S Vijayalakshmi, both of them have dug in their heels.

The daughter of Y S Anil Reddy, a cousin of Jagan and Sharmila, is also getting married in November in Chennai. Anil Reddy is the son of Y S George Reddy, YSR's brother, and is a founding member of the YSRCP, whose family has business interests in Africa. The wedding of Anil's daughter is scheduled for November 3-6 in Chennai.

Their family members, including cousins, aunts and uncles, several of whom are NRIs, have started arriving in Hyderabad or Bengaluru and proceeding to Chennai, without meeting Sharmila, who was said to have been left out in the cold. Some of them also had a meeting at YSR family's home at Pulivendula, ahead of filing of nomination papers by the YSRCP candidates for Andhra Pradesh local body elections, before heading to Chennai.

Sharmila's initial insistence on holding her daughter's wedding at Yelahanka Palace has widened faultlines in the YSR clan, sources said.

"Jagan's wife Bharati and their daughter live at Yelahanka Palace. Their second daughter, who is completing studies abroad will soon join them. When Jagan is not there, there is no security. Jagan is worried about the security and safety of his family if the place is opened for a wedding. The larger family agrees with him," sources said.

The Chennai wedding is also likely to become a show of strength for the YSR family. CM C Joseph Vijay is likely to attend besides heads of several prominent business families who have relations with YSR family. Sharmila and her husband M Anil Kumar have started distributing invitation cards for their daughter's wedding too, although its venue may be shifted to Hyderabad if Jagan sticks to his objections. Apart from CMs Revanth Reddy, D K Shivakumar, and a host of prominent leaders, they have also invited Vijay. Some members of the YSR clan may however give it a miss. "It is becoming very awkward now," said a family member.

Pilot, five pilgrims killed as helicopter returning from Badrinath crashes

Vidheesha Kuntamalla
Dehradun, October 30

ALL SIX people on board a civilian helicopter, including the pilot, were killed after it crashed near Hathi Parvat in Uttarakhand's Chamoli district on Friday afternoon, with the state government grounding the entire fleet of the operator, Trans Bharat Aviation, as a precautionary measure.

The helicopter, carrying five passengers and a pilot, was travelling from Shri Badrinath Dham towards the Sahastradhara helipad in Dehradun when it crashed near Sthan Marwadi, close to Hathi Parvat in Joshimath tehsil, at around 2 pm.

The deceased have been identified as Arun Salunke, a police inspector with the technical cell of the Bengaluru CCB; Prathapa Bachihally Ningaraju, a businessman from Hassan with links to the Congress; advocates Sudheer K and Shankargowda VB; and H S Nataraj from Tumakuru.

Chamoli District Magistrate Gaurav Kumar confirmed the deaths.

The incident came amid adverse weather conditions in the region.

The India Meteorological Department had issued an orange alert for Chamoli on October 30, warning of thunderstorms accompanied by lightning, hail and gusty winds of 40-50 kmph in isolated areas. It had also forecast light to moderate rainfall across the district.

The precise circumstances that led to the crash are under investigation.

According to the Action Taken Report by the Chamoli district administration in Uttarakhand, the helicopter took off from the Sahastradhara helipad in Dehradun and was headed towards Badrinath Dham.

While returning, it encountered "adverse weather conditions in the Hathi Parvat area and crashed while descending towards a lower altitude".

The Army team reached the accident site and located all six bodies. However, dense forest cover and wildlife activity in the surrounding area posed challenges to the recovery operation. The search and rescue operation is scheduled to resume at 5 am on Saturday, the report said.

Secretary, Disaster Management and Rehabilitation, Vinod Kumar Suman, said the Chamoli District Disaster Management Officer first informed authorities around 2 pm that the civilian helicopter had met with an accident.

Suman said an Army Signal Centre team spotted smoke rising from the helicopter in the area and saw it rapidly descending.

Uttarakhand Civil Aviation Development Authority (UCADA) Chief Executive Officer Prateek Jain said, "The helicopter departed from Badrinath for the Sahastradhara heliport at 1:14 pm. We were unable to trace the helicopter's location since it was passing through the vicinity of the Joshimath valley. Upon receiving this information, we mobilised the Chamoli district administration, the SDRF (State Disaster Response Force), and an Army unit to the area near the incident site to prepare for a proper rescue operation. As a precautionary measure, the entire fleet of helicopters belonging to Trans Bharat Aviation has been grounded."

Friends of the five deceased told *The Indian Express* that the group shared a close bond and had planned the Char Dham pilgrimage together.

Mahesh, a cooperative society secretary in Tumakuru, said he was friends with Shankargowda and H S Nataraj and had also been invited to join the trip, but couldn't because of work.

He said the group regularly shared photographs and updates on social media during their trips.

However, this time, they had not posted any such updates. He said the families are awaiting further details.





SDRF and other security personnel conduct a search and rescue operation at the crash site on Friday. (Above) Wreckage of the helicopter in Chamoli, Uttarakhand, on Friday. PTI/ANI

Inspector, lawyers, businessmen among five passengers from Karnataka killed in air crash

Atiya Firdos
Bengaluru, October 30

FIVE FRIENDS from Karnataka, including a police inspector posted with the Central Crime Branch (CCB) in Bengaluru, were among the six people killed in the helicopter crash in Chamoli district on Friday. The sixth victim was the pilot, Capt. Himanshu, from Delhi.

The five victims from Karnataka have been identified as inspector Arun Salunke, Prathapa Bachihally Ningaraju, a businessman from Hassan with links to the Congress, Sudheer K and Shankargowda VB, advocates from Bengaluru, and H S Nataraj from Tumakuru. They were part of a group of friends who had travelled to Uttarakhand for the Char Dham pilgrimage.

According to a press release issued by the Karnataka State Disaster Management Authority, the civil helicopter operated by Trans Bharat Aviation and carrying the five passengers crashed around 2 pm in the hilly terrain of the Hathi Parvat area while flying from Badrinath to Dehradun.

Uttarakhand disaster management authorities immediately mobilised teams from the Army, State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), police, health department and district disaster management authorities to carry out search and rescue operations. "The rescue teams recovered the mortal remains of all six persons, including the pilot. The mortal remains are being brought to Joshimath for post-mortem examination," the press release said.

The Karnataka Chief Minister's Office and the Relief Commissioner are coordinating with their counterparts in Uttarakhand to facilitate the transportation of the bodies to Karnataka at the earliest.

Friends of the five victims told *The Indian Express* that the group shared a close bond and had planned the Char Dham pilgrimage together. Mahesh, a cooperative society secretary in Tumakuru, said he was friends with Shankargowda and H S Nataraj and had also been invited to join the trip. He said he declined due to work commitments. "They left three days ago. I was expecting them to return tomorrow (Saturday). I spoke to Shankargowda yesterday (Thursday). He told me he was busy with some work and that we would speak once he returned," Mahesh said.

He said the group regularly shared photographs and updates on social media during their trips. However, this time, they did not post any photographs or status updates. Mahesh said the families had been informed about the crash.



CCB Inspector Arun Salunke was among the 5 victims

Nataraj's family is based in Huliyurdurga in Tumakuru district. He was associated with a poultry-related business; his family also runs a community hall in the village. Nataraj is survived by two children.

Another friend, Manjunath, said Sudheer frequently travelled to his native place and often organised trips with his close circle of friends. The group was supposed to return to Karnataka from the pilgrimage on October 28, but bad weather disrupted their plans.

Ningaraju hailed from Bachehalli in Hassan district. After completing an ITI course, he moved to Bengaluru, where he worked with a contractor before venturing into real estate. He was also associated with the Congress in Hassan. "He was always willing to help people. He would assist families with marriage arrangements and medical needs," Manjunath said.

Prathap is survived by his wife and two children. "Prathap was keen on pursuing a political career and had plans to visit villages in connection with the upcoming local body elections after he returned from the trip...," Manjunath said.

Arun Salunke, an inspector with the CCB's technical cell in Bengaluru, is survived by his wife and two children. In August, Salunke had lost a close friend and fellow police officer, Ravi K B, an inspector with the South-East Cyber Crime police station, who died in an accident in Madhya Pradesh while on his way to arrest a cybercrime suspect. Following Ravi's death, Salunke had shared a tribute on Facebook, describing him as not just a colleague, "but my brother in uniform".

The bodies of all victims were recovered, said officials. DNA samples are being collected from the relatives of the victims for identifying the bodies.

President Murmu to attend Nashik Kumbh today

Zeeshan Shaikh
Mumbai, October 30

PRESIDENT DROUPADI Murmu will attend the Dhwajarohan (flag hoisting) ceremony at Nashik and Trimbakeshwar on Saturday, formally marking the beginning of the Simhastha Kumbh period.

The main influx of pilgrims is expected around the auspicious bathing dates, or Amrut Snans, in August and September 2027.

The Kumbh Mela is a major Hindu religious congregation traditionally held at four locations: Prayagraj, Haridwar, Ujjain and Nashik-Trimbakeshwar.

The Nashik congregation is called Simhastha.

The Nashik-Trimbakeshwar Kumbh is held once every 12 years. The previous congregation took place in 2015-16.

The religious significance of the festival is also associated with the legend of Samudra Manthan, or the churning of the ocean.

The Dhwajarohan ceremony marks the beginning of the Simhastha period associated with the Kumbh and the start of the religious and administrative activities leading up to the main congregation.

The festival is scheduled to continue until July 2028, when the flags will be lowered in ceremonies at Trimbakeshwar and Nashik. Ritual bathing is the central religious activity of the Kumbh, and the largest influx of pilgrims is expected around the designated bathing days in 2027.

The main Amrut Snans are scheduled for August 2 and August 31, 2027, at both locations. The third is scheduled for September 11, 2027, in Nashik and September 12, 2027, in Trimbakeshwar.

4 hrs after allowing plea, Somnath non-veg ban reinstated

Aditi Raja
Vadodara, October 30

THE GUJARAT High Court on Friday struck down the prohibition on the sale of non-vegetarian food in the vicinity of the Somnath Temple in Prabhas Patan, Veraval, only to reverse its order within hours and restore the ban imposed by the state government.

About four hours after a single judge of the HC had allowed petitions by six restaurant owners challenging the restrictions, a Division Bench of the court stayed the order, acting on an urgent appeal moved by the government even before the written judgment of the single judge was made available.

The owners of six restaurants, including J M Restaurant, Khwaja Hindustan Restaurant, New Gulab, Kismat Restaurant, and Taj Restaurant, had challenged the restrictions on the sale, storage, distribution, and preparation of non-veg food along designated roads leading to and within a 500-metre radius of the temple.

Around 3 pm, immediately after Justice Nisha M Thakore pronounced the order in open court allowing the petition, the state sought time to challenge it before a Division Bench.

Government Pleader G H Virk submitted that nothing had changed on the ground since the final notification was issued on August 10 and requested that the operation of the order be kept in abeyance for seven days.

He subsequently pressed for five working days to enable the state to prefer an appeal. "...We are requesting exactly five working days. Seven days means five working days, so that we can prefer the LPA (Letters Patent Appeal). That's the only request," he told the court.

However, the judge declined to stay the order. The oral dictation recorded: "The request for stay is not accepted."



Somnath Temple is in Prabhas Patan, Veraval

The state then moved an urgent appeal before a Division Bench comprising Acting Chief Justice Manash Ranjan Pathak and Justice Nirzar S Desai. Virk submitted in open court: "The judgment has not been published but the pronouncement made in the court was that the petitions had been allowed."

By 6.45 pm, the Division Bench had stayed the operation of the single judge order, and kept the restrictions on non-veg food along the notified Somnath pilgrimage routes in force.

During an earlier hearing on October 21, the state had strongly defended the restrictions, submitting that the religious significance and very high footfall at the temple justified regulating the sale of non-vegetarian food along routes taken by pilgrims.

Virk had submitted before Justice Thakore that approximately 1.2 crore devotees had visited Somnath in 2026. He had cited judicial rulings and restrictions at other pilgrimage centres such as Rishikesh, Haridwar, Amritsar, and Mathura-Vrindavan, and argued that Somnath could not be treated as an ordinary commercial centre.

The state maintained that the restrictions did not amount to a town-wide prohibition, and that restaurants could continue operating and serving vegetarian food. It submitted that devotees using the designated roads for pilgrimage and padyatra should not have to encounter the sale of non-veg food along these routes.

The petitioners pointed out that their establishments had been operating for decades and served both vegetarian and non-vegetarian food. They argued that the restrictions threatened the livelihoods of the owners and the jobs of hundreds of employees, and said there was no evidence of clashes or disturbances caused by the sale of non-veg food.

The state had based its case in part on a series of notifications issued over the past two decades.

A 2006 notification had restricted the sale and storage of eggs, meat, and fish within 500 metres of the Somnath Temple and along the road connecting the temple with the bus stand. Virk had submitted that this notification had not been challenged, and remained in force.

BRIEFLY



The crane collapsed from a height of around 100 feet. PTI

MAHARASHTRA

2 dead, 2 injured as crane collapses at construction site in Nagpur

TWO WORKERS died and two others were injured after a crane collapsed from a height of around 100 feet at an under-construction Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority (MHADA) housing project near Geeta Mandir, at Cotton Market Square in Nagpur, on Friday. The incident took place under jurisdiction of Ganeshpeth police station. The crane was being used for construction work at the MHADA colony when it fell, leaving four workers seriously injured. Following the accident, injured workers were rushed to Orient Hospital in Nagpur for treatment. Two of them later succumbed to their injuries, while the other two are undergoing treatment. The construction work at the site was being undertaken by private contractor Shirke Construction. ENS

Maharashtra: 17-year-old tiger dies of illness

A 17-year-old tiger died following an illness at the Siddharth Zoo in Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar, an official said on Friday. The big cat, named Siddharth, had not been eating adequately for the past few days. He had also been suffering from digestive problems for a week, the official said. Its treatment was underway at the zoo, but it became unresponsive and died on Thursday. Autopsy was conducted on the tiger in the presence of Animal Husbandry Department staff, after which its last rites were performed, the official said. PTI

3 dead, 1 injured in car-bus collision in MP

THREE PERSONS died and an eight-year-old girl was injured in a head-on collision between a speeding bus and a car in Sidhi district of Madhya Pradesh on Friday afternoon, police said. "The car occupants, Anil Tiwari (35), his cousin Sudhir Tiwari (32), and Anil's wife Manorama Tiwari (30), died on the spot. Anil and Manorama's eight-year-old daughter, Moina Tiwari, was injured in the accident," said Additional Superintendent of Police Kamala Joshi. The girl was admitted to Rewa Medical College, before being discharged, police said. PTI

HC issues notice to CJP's Saurav Das over plea to cancel passport, Aadhaar

Arun Janardhanan
Chennai, October 30

THE MADRAS High Court on Friday issued notices to Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) spokesperson Saurav Das and several Union government authorities on a petition seeking an investigation into his background, cancellation of his passport and Aadhaar card, and blocking of his social media accounts over allegations that he made derogatory remarks against the judiciary.

A bench comprising Chief Justice Sushrut Arvind Dharmadhikari and Justice G Arul Murugan heard the public interest litigation filed by R Ganesh Kumar, a resident of Zamin Pallavaram in Chennai, who alleged that Das had repeatedly made offensive statements about the judiciary, including the Chief Justice of India and other Supreme Court judges.

The petition seeks directions to the Union Ministry of Home Affairs and other authorities to conduct what it described as a "detailed, thorough and fair probe" into the antecedents of Das and members of his family.

The petitioner specifically sought an inquiry into the background of Das's mother and his biological father, who, according to the petition, reside in Puducherry.

He also requested that the authorities take steps to cancel Das's passport and Aadhaar card if the proposed investigation establishes grounds for such action.

Additionally, the petition sought directions to the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology to block Das's accounts on X, formerly Twitter, and Instagram, and prevent him from making further statements allegedly derogatory to the judiciary.

The respondents include the Regional Passport Officer in Chennai, the Unique Identification Authority of India, the Union ministries of Home Affairs, External Affairs, Law and Justice, and Electronics and Information Technology, as well as grievance officers representing X and Instagram.

• THE TIGRESS IS PART OF BENGAL'S FIRST TIGER RELOCATION PROJECT; OFFICIALS SAID AN ALERT HAS BEEN SOUNDED AT THE RAIMONA NATIONAL PARK IN KOKRAJHAR, ASSAM

Bihar tigress moves between Assam villages, Bengal weighs tranquilising it

Ravik Bhattacharya
Kolkata, October 28

A BIHAR tigress relocated to West Bengal's Buxa Tiger Reserve as part of the state's first tiger relocation project has strayed across state lines into Assam and shown no signs of returning, prompting the forest departments of the two states to step up efforts to track it.

Over the past six days, the three-year-old tigress, T-138, has been tracked near forest villages in Assam, where it has killed three domesticated pigs and four piglets. It later crossed a river and moved towards another village.

With the animal moving closer to human settlements, the Bengal Forest Department is considering tranquilising and retrieving it as a last resort, though no final decision has been taken.

The task has been complicated by gaps in the radio-collar signal. At one point, the signal went missing for nearly 24 hours before becoming active again. "We are aware of its location. I will personally visit Assam tomorrow and hold a meeting with officials of both states. No decision has been taken yet on tranquilising it and bringing it back. But our teams are ready. We are tracking the tigress," state Forest Minister Manoj Oraon told *The Indian Express*.



The three-year-old tigress, T-138, has killed three domesticated pigs and four piglets near forest villages in Assam. FILE

The radio-tracking system stopped transmitting on Thursday, following which teams from forest departments of Bengal and Assam began scanning the area. Fresh signals were received on Friday afternoon, helping officials locate the animal.

"Sometimes this happens. When the animal is in water or in certain forest zones, the signal is not received. But we know its location," Oraon said.

According to sources in Raimona National Park, the tigress was initially located near Hatigarh forest village. "The tigress initially hunted domesticated pigs but could not eat them as villagers were alerted. We have informed local residents and are conducting awareness campaigns and public announcements. Villagers have been advised not to visit the area where the tigress is located and to stay indoors after dark," a Raimona National Park official said.

The tigress later moved from Hatigarh to Narayanpur village, around 30 km away.

"It has moved to Narayanpur village in the Gossaigaon subdivision of Kokrajhar district from Hatigarh. It crossed the Janali river in the Gurufela area and is now inside a bamboo grove near the village. Teams from both Bengal and Assam are tracking it," a senior Raimona National Park official said.

The relocation of T-138 to Buxa Tiger Reserve, a protected forest spanning around 760 sq km in Alipurduar district, was part of a larger plan to revive the tiger population in the region.

Historically an important tiger habitat in north Bengal, Buxa has seen habitat degradation, changes in land use and a decline in prey availability, affecting its ability to sustain a resident tiger population, the Union Environment Ministry had said in a statement. The tigress's release was intended to mark the beginning of a phased recovery programme.

The tigress was tranquilised and caged at the Valmiki Tiger Reserve in Bihar before being flown to Hasimara Air Force Station in Alipurduar on September 30. It was then taken to the Rajabhatkhawa forest area under Buxa Tiger Reserve.

SC: Physical intimacy can't be branded as rape merely because relationship soured

Ananthakrishnan G.
New Delhi, October 30

LETTING OFF a man accused by his partner of rape by misleading her to believe that they were in a marital relation, the Supreme Court on Friday said that it "has not been entrusted to pass moral judgement on the varying exercises of free choice, autonomy and agency by individuals in the country".

A bench of Justices B V Nagarathna and R Mahadevan said, "Adult, men and women may freely make decisions that are wise or unwise, prudent or reckless and considerate or callous. These decisions would necessarily be accompanied by consequences, perhaps in the form of undesirable outcomes or unexpected possibilities, some even deeply hurtful. None of this would, however, transform these decisions and their resulting circumstances automatically into criminal offences requiring the intervention of the State apparatus."

Writing for the bench, Justice Nagarathna said, "Criminal law cannot be used as munitions to settle personal scores, exact revenge or coerce an individual to act in any particular way."

The man, who was married and had two children, lived with the woman, a divorcee, from 1996 to 2003, allegedly after a marriage at a temple in Mysore. The woman alleged that he deceived her by claiming to be a bachelor due to which she consented to a physical relationship. Subsequently, an FIR was registered against him on charges of rape and cheating among others. Although the man approached the Kerala High Court, he failed to get relief, following which he moved the Supreme Court.

On Friday, the apex court said it could not find "ingredients" of the charges against the man. "We do not understand as to how the allegations against the appellant herein could be brought within the scope and ambit of the aforesaid provisions. Taking the allegations in the FIR and the charge-sheet as they stand, the crucial ingredients of the offences under Sections 376, 420, 493, 494 and 495 of the IPC are entirely absent. The instant case is one wherein the probability of the commission of the said offences by the appellant is entirely non-existent," it said.

It noted that the woman "does not also deny the fact that she was made aware of the pre-existing marriage of the appellant within a few months of cohabiting with him from his brother".

"Considering this, it is untenable and incredulous that she continued to believe herself to be appellant's legal wife solely on the basis of his alleged oral reassurances to the contrary. The case at hand is evidently one of consensual relationship that perhaps was camouflaged in a marriage for the sake of avoiding scrutiny or stigma, which eventually came to an end."

"The mere factum of the relationship having turned sour and acrimonious cannot on its own convert earlier incidences of consent to sexual acts into offences of rape. Such a conclusion would be putting the cart before the horse, predicating the prior act of consent on the outcome of the relationship itself into an offence," the court said.

The bench pointed to "a worrying trend in recent years wherein consensual relationships that have come to an end are retrospectively combed with a fine tooth so as to identify what can post-facto be construed as violence and sexual assault".

It said that treating such relations as non-consensual "denudes the man of any agency entirely, as the mere factum of being in a consensual relationship at one point would bind him to it entirely for fear of being accused of rape at a subsequent point of time."

"In such cases, physical intimacy that occurred during the currency of a functioning relationship cannot be retrospectively branded as acts of rape merely because the relationship soured and no longer subsists."

"Rape, being a heinous offence, must be reserved for situations where there is real sexual violence, coercion, or manipulation of consent. When every consensual relationship which sours is converted into an accusation of rape, it not only dilutes the gravity of the offence alleged or rather negates the very allegation of crime. It also subjects the accused to irreparable stigma, harassment and injustice," the bench said. "This is not merely a matter of personal dispute. The abuse of the criminal justice process in such cases is a matter of serious concern and must be condemned. Hence, courts would have to view the entire relationship holistically rather than from the perspective of its end."

EXPRESS special

From Pak's corridors of power to a Rajasthan panchayat: The Sodhas' journey home

Parul Kulshrestha
Jaipur, October 30



On October 24, 77-year-old Padam Singh was elected the first sarpanch of the newly created Chachro village in Barmer district.
MANVENDRASINGH.OFFICIAL FACEBOOK

WHEN THE Sodhas, one of Pakistan's most politically powerful Hindu families, left their ancestral homeland in Chhachro in Pakistan's Sindh province in 1972, they made a vow: to reclaim their homeland. More than five decades later, that vow has been fulfilled — at least symbolically.

On October 24, 77-year-old Padam Singh was elected the first sarpanch of the newly created Chachro village in Rajasthan's Barmer district, winning 950 votes against 612 for his nearest rival, Dhana Ram.

"He still goes by the name Padam Singh Chhachro," Pushpendra, Padam Singh's son, tells *The Indian Express*.

For Padam Singh Sodha, this is a reclamation of sorts — not only of the homeland he thought he had forever left behind, but also of a former glory. One of seven siblings, Padam Singh belonged to a politically powerful Hindu landowning family in Pakistan. According to Pushpendra, his great-grandfather, Thakur Akhiraj Singh Sodha, was a member of the Sindh Assembly in 1937, while Akhiraj Singh's son, Thakur Lal Singh, also served as a member of the Assembly.

His older brother, Laxman Singh, was the Deputy Minister of Railways in Pakistan from 1962 to 1965 under the military government of Field Marshal Ayub Khan — the only Hindu leader in the powerful cabinet. He was also said to have had a close working friendship with the influential Governor of West Pakistan, Malik Amir Mohammad Khan.

But shifting political alliances after the 1965 India-Pakistan war and growing suspicion of minority leaders strained the family's ties with the military government. In 1970, a year after the new dispensation under then-President Yahya Khan took over, Laxman Singh Sodha was arrested on charges of spying for India.

"The family was targeted by the Pakistani government because of its political influence and its position as a prominent Hindu landowning family in the region," says Pushpendra. "My uncle and the rest of the family spoke out against what they viewed as anti-Hindu policies and activities of the Pakistani government."

The Indo-Pak war – and fleeing Pakistan

Although Laxman Singh was eventually released, the family's position became increasingly precarious. The outbreak of the Indo-Pak war in 1971 brought these tensions to a head.

On December 7, 1971, when Indian Army troops entered Chhachro in Pakistan's Sindh province, Laxman Singh Sodha and his brothers helped guide the troops and provide intelligence, according to the family. The operation was led by Sawai Bhawani Singh, then the titular Maharaja of Jaipur, who commanded the 10 Para Commando Battalion.

"Thirteen members of my family were trained in Ahmedabad. A rumour went around then that Laxman Singh Sodha was coming with a large Army. We hoisted the national flag."

The village, along with substantial territory captured by India inside West Pakistan during the 1971 war, was returned to Pakistan after the Shimla Agreement of July 1972.

Over the next few months, members of the Sodha family migrated to India, leaving behind what they claimed was 1.2 lakh bighas of land. Their ancestral home was declared enemy property after the family left Pakistan.

"They travelled on camels and horses. The family first settled in Chohtan before moving to Bawdi Kala, where they initially lived in tents and camps. We had been landowners in Pakistan but had to rebuild our lives as farmers," Pushpendra says.

In India, Laxman Singh served as the pradhan of the Chohtan Panchayat Samiti. But as the family slowly rebuilt its lives, its homeland beckoned. "Zulfikar Ali Bhutto [the fourth president of Pakistan from 1971 to 1973 and founder of Pakistan Peoples Party] personally called Laxman Singh and offered to protect the family if it returned to Pakistan," Pushpendra says. "Rana Chandan Singh Sodha [a federal minister and a leader of Bhutto's PPP] and Ghulam Rasool Shah Jilani [a prominent spiritual leader also associated with the Pakistan PP] came to India with two helicopters. But Laxman Singh refused."

Return to homeland

In 2024, after years of lobbying, the Rajasthan government created a new revenue village, Chachore, out of Bawdi Kala. According to Pushpendra, most residents of the newly created village were displaced from Chhachro in Pakistan and felt a strong connection to their ancestral homeland.

In the village too, much has changed: Laxman Singh died in 2012, time has moved on, but the connection to the homeland remains unsevered.

"For us, this gave a sense of home," says Pushpendra. "Chhachro [in Pakistan] is the motherland; it's where the family lived for generations. The family also has a mansion in Barmer that's named Chhachro Haveli."

This year, Padam Singh decided to contest the panchayat elections from the village and won over 950 of the 2,084 votes cast. For him, the victory was personal — in a sense, it marked a return to his homeland. "It reminded me of home," Padam Singh tells *The Indian Express*. "I want to make Chhachro a better place."

Congress expels Kripa Alva for 6 years over 'sting operation'

Press Trust of India
Bengaluru, October 30

THE KARNATAKA Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) has expelled former party general secretary Kripa Alva for six years with immediate effect over allegations of her involvement in an alleged sting operation targeting Congress leaders in the state.

The expulsion order issued by KPCC Vice-President M Narayanaswamy, said the controversy had caused embarrassment to the party due to negative publicity and reactions in the media. "As your name has figured in this sting operation case and your conduct in the matter amounts to anti-party activities, on the instructions of the Hon'ble KPCC President, you are hereby expelled from the party for a period of six years with immediate effect," the order stated.

It said a show-cause notice had been issued to Alva seeking an explanation over allegations of her involvement in incident, but she had not submitted any response or explanation so far.

Former chief minister Siddaramaiah had named her behind the 'defamatory video'. He has also obtained a court injunction against airing and publishing the video by the media houses.

Bengaluru police, which investigated the alleged sting operation containing defamatory content against Siddaramaiah, on Thursday said the allegation of sexual abuse is part of a "fabricated and deliberately constructed narrative."

Siddaramaiah 'sting' video: 3 JDS workers get bail

Bengaluru: Three people linked to the Janata Dal (Secular)'s social media operations appeared before Bengaluru police on Thursday in connection with a fake sting video targeting former Karnataka chief minister Siddaramaiah, even as a local court granted them anticipatory bail.

The three persons - Prajwal Prasad, a media consultant associated with the JDS in New Delhi, Chandan H S and Mohan Gowda K who are key JDS social media functionaries, were granted anticipatory bail on Thursday by a Bengaluru special court. ENS

GSLV rocket carrying navigation satellite lifts off

Press Trust of India
Sriharikota, October 30

ISRO'S GSLV rocket carrying the next-generation navigation satellite NVS-03 lifted off from this spaceport late on Friday.

NVS-03 is the third satellite in next generation navigation satellite system envisaged for providing continuity of navigation services for IRNSS series

At the end of the 24-hour countdown, the 50-metre-tall GSLV-F18 lifted off majestically at a prefixed time of 11.51 pm and soared into dark skies from the second launch pad at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre here.

The three-stage rocket, with a lift-off mass of 420 tonne, is on a mission to deploy the NVS-03 satellite, weighing around 2,232 kg, into a Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit (GTO).

According to ISRO, NVS-03 is the third satellite in next generation navigation satellite system envisaged for providing continuity of navigation services for IRNSS series.

"The satellite carries indigenous Atomic clock, along with the procured Atomic clocks. It also includes L1 signal in addition to existing L5/S signals with coverage over India land mass and a region extending 1500 km around Indian geopolitical boundary," it said.

NORTHERN RAILWAY
(E-Auction Notice)

Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager/PS, Northern Railway Delhi Division invites bids through e-Auction through IREPS (http://ireps.gov.in) for the allotment of Deluxe Pay & Use Toilet Contracts on MOT Basis, at following Railway stations/locations:

E-Catalogue No	Date & Time of bidding	Railway Stations/Locations/Lots
PaynUse-12-2026	16.11.2026 को 12.00 बजे	Hazrat Nizamuddin (NZM) 02 Sites, Modinagar (MDNR) 01 Site, Narwana (NRW) 01 Site, Delhi Sarai Rohilla (DEE) 01 site, Subzi Mandi (SZM) 01 Site & Panipat (PNP) 01 Site Total 07 Sites.
Website particulars where complete details of E-Auction can be seen		https://ireps.gov.in/

All contractors who intend to participate in the e-auctions conducted through E-Auction Leasing module of IREPS should fulfil following mandatory requirements before they can submit their bids:

- Registration on IREPS for E-Auction Leasing Module -Active IREPS User Account for E-Auction Leasing Module

-Payment of One Time Registration Fee; Current Account in State Bank of India; Integration of SBI Bank Account with IREPS Account; Lien Marking of Funds; Updation of Turnover Details A New mechanism namely Virtual Account Number (VAN) has been introduced now for E-Auction Leasing module which can be used by the bidders as an alternative to Lien Marking Mechanism. The bidders are free to switch between Lien Marking Mechanism (if activated) and VAN mechanism at any point of time, before entering the bidding room. VAN mechanism does not require the bidder to have a current account in state bank of india. The users are free to transfer money from any of their existing bank accounts in any bank to their VAN account which enables them to participate in IREPS E-auctions.

- Contractors who do not have IREPS account for any module of IREPS can submit their online request for registration by clicking on New Vendors/Contractors (E-Tender/E-Auction Leasing) link on IREPS Home page.

Railway Authority to contact, in case of any query	Divisional Railway Manager's Office, Commercial Branch, State Entry Road, New Delhi 110055. Email:sanitationcell@gmail.com Tel: 011-23743084

No. 7PUB/TN/Pay&Use Toilets/Auction/2022 Dated: 30.10.2026 3817/2026
Serving Customers With A Smile

GOVERNMENT OF NCT OF DELHI
LABOUR DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE LABOUR COMMISSIONER
5, SHAM NATH MARG, CIVIL LINES DELHI-110054

PUBLIC NOTICE

Mandatory Registration & Licensing of Private Placement Agencies providing Domestic Workers

The Labour Department, GNCTD has notified the Delhi Private Placement Agencies (Regulation) Order, 2014 on dated 25.09.2014 in the Delhi Gazette in compliance to the orders of Hon'ble High Court of Delhi in the WP (Crl.) - 82/2009 titled Bachpan Bachao Andolan Vs Union of India & Ors. The Hon'ble Delhi High Court in the case W.P. (CRL) 1318/2020 titled Singhasan Sona Vs GNCT of Delhi & Ors. on 22.03.2021 has approved the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) and directed that these SOPs shall come into effect along with the Delhi Private Placement Agencies (Regulation) Executive Order, 2014 and shall be enforced by the concerned Departments/Agencies.

The following is brought to the attention of all Private Placement Agencies and General Public:

For all Private Placement Agencies :

Every Private Placement Agency providing domestic workers MUST Register on the e-District portal (edistrict.delhigovt.nic.in) of GNCTD and obtain a Licence from the concerned Joint/Deputy Labour Commissioner within 15 days. Police/Character Verification of the 'Domestic Worker' and 'Employer' is mandatory for filing application for Registration/ License. Non-compliance of the provisions of Executive Order dated 25.09.2014 shall attracts penalty of Rs. 50,000/- (recoverable as arrears of land revenue), cancellation of Registration/License and prosecution.

All Private Placement Agencies are directed to obtain Registration and License from Labour Department, GNCTD immediately and do not operate without Registration/ License and further comply with the requirements of SOPs failing which penal action shall follow.

For Employers/General Public:

DO NOT engage any Domestic Help through a Private Placement Agency that is not Registered on the e-District portal and not Licensed through the Labour Department, GNCTD. Verify the Private Placement Agency's Registration/License and insist on Police Verification of the Worker/s before engaging such. Report Unregistered/ Unlicensed Private Placement Agencies immediately to the concerned District Labour Office and inform the incidence of any exploitation/harassment case instantly to the Delhi Police.

(Utpal Kr. Sinha)
Additional Labour Commissioner

DIP/Shabdarth/Classified/0266/26-27

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON
(See Section 82 Cr.PC/84 Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita)

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused **Sanjeev Jaiswal, S/o Sh. Kanhaiya Lal R/o H.No.41, Gali No.1, Hari Nagar, Ph-2, Badarpur, South-East, Delhi** has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case **FIR No.302/2023 u/s 356/379/34 IPC, P.S. Sarojini Nagar, New Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused **Sanjeev Jaiswal** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused **Sanjeev Jaiswal** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused **Sanjeev Jaiswal** of **FIR No.302/2023 u/s 356/379/34 IPC, P.S. Sarojini Nagar, New Delhi** is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before **30.11.2026.**

By Order,
Ms. Vijayshree Rathore
Judicial Magistrate First Class-05, Court No.13, First Floor, Main Building, Patiala House Court, New Delhi

DP/15676/SW/2026

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON
(See Section 82 Cr.PC/84 Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita)

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused **Yash, S/o Sunil R/o R-2/3, Lal Quarter Vijay Vihar, Rohini, Delhi** has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case **FIR No.406/2024 Case Reg. No.394/2025 u/s 309(6)/317(2)/3(5) Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, P.S. Budh Vihar, Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused **Yash** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused **Yash** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused **Yash** of **FIR No.406/2024 Case Reg. No.394/2025 u/s 309(6)/317(2)/3(5) Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, P.S. Budh Vihar, Delhi** is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before **19.12.2026.**

By Order,
Sanyam Jain
Judicial Magistrate First Class-04 (North-West) Room No.112, Rohini Court, Delhi

DP/15612/RD/2026

JAIPUR DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Indira Circle, Jawahar Lal Nehru Marg, Jaipur-302004

No.: JDA/EE & TA to Dir. Engg.-I/2026-27/D- Date : 30.10.2026

NOTICE INVITING BID

NIB No. : EE & TA to Dir. Engg.-I/25/2026-27

Bids are invited from interested bidders for following works :-

S. No.	UBN No.	Cost of Work (Lacs)	Nature of Work	Last Date
1	JDA2627WSOB00396	246.01	Sports Complex on BOM Basis	16.11.2026
2	JDA2627WSOB00398	247.71	Sports Complex on BOM Basis	30.11.2026
3	JDA2627WLOB00399	5608.93	Drain Work	30.11.2026
4	JDA2627WLOB00400	1730.14	Road Work	20.11.2026
5	JDA2627WLOB00401	1794.28	Electric Work	18.11.2026
6	JDA2627WLRC00402	566.44	Electric Work	18.11.2026

Other particulars of the respective bid may be visited on Procurement Portal website www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in, www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in and www.jda.rajasthan.gov.in

Executive Engineer & TA to Dir. Engg-I

Raj.Samwad/C/26/12705

Ensure court videos not used without nod, SC tells MeitY

Ananthakrishnan G
New Delhi, October 30

Order is not to be construed as imposing a blanket prohibition on reporting of proceedings by recognised news outlets, said the SC

THE SUPREME Court has directed Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) to ensure compliance with its order prohibiting the unauthorised recording, uploading and circulation of audio-video recordings of court proceedings.

A three-judge bench headed by Chief Justice Surya Kant on Friday said the government's proposed policy must include measures to act against those violating the directions.

"Necessary measures for taking action against those who fail to comply with the directions will also be incorporated in the policy decision," the bench, also comprising Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V Mohana, ordered after Solicitor General Tushar Mehta said he had submitted suggestions received from various High Courts and others on dealing with the issue to the ministry and a formula will be prepared for the court's consideration.

The court said it will "examine whether there is unfettered right of use of court proceedings without court's supervision."

The court had earlier asked HCs and other stakeholders to give suggestions so that the government can prepare a proposal to prevent commercial exploitation, misrepresentation, misquoting and dissemination of misleading content relating to court proceedings and their live streaming and place the same before it.

The Solicitor General said he "received suggestions ... I have given it to MeitY. Within a week, will prepare kind of a formula for Your Lordship's consideration".

He added "there were breaches" of the court's earlier orders and added, "I don't want to escalate." He urged the bench to direct MeitY "to take it down if there is a breach of the order.

"...Authorities under the concerned intermediary rules shall immediately act and implement this order," said Justice Bagchi. In its order, the court said, "MeitY is directed to ensure compliance with the interim directions contained in para 9 of the July 24 order and as explained via subsequent order of October 9, 2026.

Paragraph 11 of the July 24 order directed that, as an interim measure, "there shall be no extraction, dissemination, monetisation, posting, re-posting, uploading, transmitting, modification, storing, or hosting of the audio-video recording(s) of the judicial proceedings on social media or any other digital platforms without prior permission of the Secretary General of the Supreme Court of India or the Registrar Generals of the jurisdictional High Courts."

Subsequently, the SC clarified that "the said paragraph makes it clear that the order is not to be construed as imposing a blanket prohibition on the reporting of court proceedings by recognised news outlets. Such outlets may, therefore, continue to report on the proceedings and inform the general public of legal developments and judicial pronouncements, save that audio or video clips of the court proceedings shall not be utilised in the course of such reportage."

Advocate Prashant Bhushan, appearing for an intervenor, said on Friday "with digital watermarking and cryptographic signing, every official clip released should be embedded with a verifiable digital signature watermark, enabling public and platforms to authenticate genuine court footage against manipulated versions." He added "So, all the proceedings of the court should be actually placed on a website, which is the court's website, which is fully watermarked and authenticated, so that anybody should be able to extract."

The CJI said, "that we are doing separately on administrative side."

Justice Bagchi added, "We are also contemplating and, in fact, have placed some HCs in order where you cannot make an extraction from the feed on the channel set up in YouTube for the court concerned. The difficulty is a person can easily make a duplication of that and then make an extraction. This proceeding would be uploaded in the official channel. You cannot extract from it. But you can contemporaneously make a photograph of the entire proceeding and then extract ...".

The judge said that though the court had passed orders barring the recording and circulation of courtroom proceedings without permission, the "difficulty is implementation, which we are requesting the MeitY and concerned intermediary under the Intermediary Rules."

Bhushan suggested, "...this is very easily solved by having an official website of the court where all the proceedings are stored, and that should be authenticated by digital watermarking and cryptographic signing..."

300 VILLAGES STILL MAROONED IN GANJAM DISTRICT

Cyclone aftermath: 3 of family, including infant, die in Odisha landslide

Sujit Bisoyi
Bhubaneswar, October 30



An aerial view of a flood-hit area in Odisha's Ganjam on Friday. PTI

AT LEAST three members of a family, including a nine-month-old baby, died in Odisha's Kandhamal district on Friday following a landslide triggered by torrential rain under the influence of cyclone Arnab, which has caused havoc in the southern districts of the state, officials said.

The incident occurred at Dangesi village under Raikia block in Kandhamal district on Friday morning when a portion of a hill near the victims' house gave way. Two others were rescued from the site.

Residents said some people from the village have gone missing after the incident. However, the government was yet to confirm this. "The debris from the hill buried their house, leading to the death of the three members of a family. Such an unfortunate incident has happened despite the state government taking all measures," said Odisha's Panchayati Raj Minister Rabi Narayan Naik, who oversees the relief and rescue operations in the district.

The deceased were identified as Achyuta Pradhan (30), his wife Anisha Pradhan (25), and their nine-month-old baby boy, the minister said. Two others — Sumitra Pradhan (60) and Dutta Pradhan (35) – were rescued by the fire brigade and Odisha Disaster Rapid Action Force (ODRAF) team.

Local officials said the people of Dangesi village, located near a hill, were sleeping in their houses when the landslide took place.

A local official said it could not be immediately determined if people had gone missing as many residents had shifted to the relief centre before the calamity hit the district.

The minister said around 450 people from the area were evacuated from their village and housed in the relief camp. The district administration is monitoring the situation, and disaster response personnel were deployed to clear the debris and locate missing villagers.

Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi expressed grief over the incident and announced an ex gratia of Rs 4 lakh to the next of kin of the deceased.

The incessant rainfall triggered landslides at several locations in Odisha's Ganjam, Gajapati and Kandhamal districts. Road connectivity between Berhampur, Mohana and Rayagada has been severely disrupted in the cyclone's aftermath. At least 13 people from a village along the Ganjam-Kandhamal border have gone missing following a landslide triggered by torrential rain over the past three days. Officials said a search and rescue operation has been launched to trace the missing villagers.

Meanwhile, the flood situation continues to be grim in Ganjam where 300 villages are still marooned even as the administration has intensified the relief and rescue operations. CM Majhi on Friday conducted aerial survey of Ganjam and Gajapati districts.

"The entire administration is working round-the-clock to ensure that food, drinking water, and emergency healthcare reach those affected without any hindrance. Instructions have been given to further expedite relief and rescue operations. In addition, directives have been issued to the administration to remain fully alert for the restoration of damaged roads and bridges, normalizing electricity supply, and controlling post-flood health issues," Majhi posted on X.

More than 30 senior Odisha Administrative Services (OAS) officers have been deputed in flood-ravaged Ganjam to assist the local administration in relief and restoration measures.

BHUTAN GLACIAL LAKE OUTBURST

Assam, north Bengal districts on high alert; 12,000 evacuated from areas along Sankosh

Sweety Kumari & Shinjini Ghosh
Kolkata, Guwahati, Oct 30

SEVERAL DISTRICTS in West Bengal and Assam remain on high alert following a glacial lake outburst flood in Bhutan, as district administration officials in both the states said that chances of flooding along Sankosh River appeared to be reducing.

Dhubri and Kokrajhar districts in Assam have been put on high alert, while in north Bengal, administrative preparations have been stepped up in Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar districts.

Authorities have shifted around 12,000 people living along Sankosh river in Alipurduar district, downstream of Bhutan, to safer locations. Extra vigilance has been enforced along all rivers descending from the Bhutan hills. Public address systems have been deployed across river-adjacent blocks, including Nagrakata and Banarhat in Jalpaiguri district, warning all to remain on high alert.

The evacuations were carried out after a glacial lake in Bhutan's Gasa region burst its banks on Thursday evening, unleashing water mixed with mud, rocks and debris into the downstream river system. No major disaster or untoward incident has been reported in north Bengal and Assam districts so far. Officials confirmed the immediate threat has largely subsided.

After inspecting Sankosh riverbanks and local shelter homes, Alipurduar Superintendent of Police Amit Kumar Shaw assured public that there is no cause for panic and that authorities are prepared for any contingency. "The latest update indicates that the water level upstream has receded slightly...We have safely relocated over 6,000 to 7,000 people and arranged shelters for more than 4,000 people in local schools..." he said.

In Assam, District Commissioner of Kokrajhar Pankaj Chakravarty told *The Indian Express:* "...The water (Sankosh river) seems to be receding at this point. Currently, we do not anticipate inundation ...in vulnerable areas." He said state and national disaster response forces were on standby and would respond in event of flooding.

Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma said state government was closely monitoring the glacial lake outburst in Bhutan.

NATIONAL FERTILIZERS LIMITED
(A Govt. of India Undertaking)
A-11, Sector-24, Noida-201301
Ph.: 0120-2412294/2412445, Extn.1113, Fax: 0120-2412397

E-TENDER NOTICE

"Bids are invited on the GeM portal for the contract for "Upkeep and Maintenance of Corporate Office, A-11, Sector-24, NOIDA, Registered Office at SCOPE Complex, Core-III, 7, Institutional Area, Lodi Road, New Delhi, and NFL House at C--46, Sector--40, NOIDA".

1) GeM Tender No. GEM/2026/B/8212960 dated 29.10.2026
2) Last date for submission is 03.11.2026 by 15:00 Hrs.

For details, visit website: www.nationalfertilizers.com or GeM Portal. Note: Corrigendum /addendum if any, will be published only on our website.

Chief Manager I/c (HR-Admin)

IRCON INTERNATIONAL LIMITED
NAVRATNA COMPANY
(A Govt. of India Undertaking)
Website : www.ircon.org, CIN - L45203DL1976GOI008171

e-Procurement Notice

e-Tender No.: IRCON/1038/NHAI-Rupnagar/e-Tender/BW/01 Date: 30.10.2026

e-Tender for and on behalf of IRCON International Limited is invited from bidders meeting qualifying requirements for the work of "Execution of Balance Civil Works in connection with construction of four/six lane Greenfield Ludhiana – Rupnagar National Highway No. NH-205K at identified locations from Junction with NE-5 Village near Manewal (Ludhiana) to Junction with NH-205 near Bheora Village (Rupnagar) between design Ch. 66.440 to design Ch. 90.500 including spur to Kharar with Ludhiana Bypass between design Ch. 0.000 to design Ch. 19.200 under Bharatmala Pariyojana in the state of Punjab."

Estimated of the Work	Rs. 70,07,61,198.22 (including GST)
Tender Document Fee	Rs. 50,000/-
Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)	Rs. 1,40,15,300/-
Completion Period	06 Months

Tender Documents will be available on e-tender portal website https://etenders.gov.in/eprocure/app w.e.f. 31.10.2026 and last date of submission of above tenders is 16.11.2026 upto 15.00 hrs. Corrigendum, if any, would be hosted only on the website. Executive Director/VME
C-4, District Centre, Saket, New Delhi-110017, email - masood.ahmad@ircon.org

IN THE HIGH COURT OF DELHI AT NEW DELHI
(ORDINARY ORIGINAL CIVIL JURISDICTION)
(Under Order V Rule 20 r/w Section 151 CPC)

I. A. 10767/2024 in CS (COMM) 299/2021
Societe Des Produits Nestle S. A. & Anr. PLAINTIFF(S)
Vs
Sagar Store & Ors. DEFENDANT(S)

To, DEFENDANT NO. 9
Mr. Sanjay (Owner) Gaurav Market, Ram Park, Ghaziabad

WHEREAS, the above named plaintiffs have instituted the captioned suit against you, the above named defendant no 9, and whereas it has been shown to the satisfaction of this Court that it is not possible to serve you, the above named defendant no. 9, in the ordinary way, therefore, this notice is given by way of publication directing you, the above named defendant No. 9, to make appearance before Joint Registrar (Judicial) of this Court on 07th Day of Jaunuary, 2027 at 11:00 AM
Take further notice that in default of appearance of you, the above named defendant no. 9, on the date(s) fixed in the captioned suit, the suit will be heard and determined ex parte in the absence of you, the above named defendant no. 9 Given under my hand and the seal of this Court, this 30th Day of September, 2026. Sd/-
ASSISTANT REGISTRAR (IPD)
For REGISTRAR GENERAL (RB)

Aurangzeb's tomb has a deadline: Rane

Zeeshan Shaikh
Mumbai, October 30



Maharashtra Cabinet minister Nitesh Rane

NEARLY 319 years after Mughal emperor Aurangzeb was buried in an open grave in Khuldabad, Maharashtra cabinet minister Nitesh Rane has renewed the demand for its removal, claiming that a date has already been decided but will not be disclosed.

Speaking about the removal of encroachments from historic forts at an event in Chhattrpati Sambhajinagar on Thursday, Rane credited Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis with taking initiative to free the state's forts from what he described as "jihad". He turned his attention to Aurangzeb's tomb, declaring that the site too had a deadline.

"We do not want that garbage here. Those who love it can take it to their Pakistan. We do not want it here. People will ask me when it will happen. I will not reveal the date. Fadnavis knows when to break this news".

He added that Aurangzeb's tomb should not be associated with the identity of Maharashtra or used to defame the state.

This is not the first time Rane has threatened to remove the tomb. In March 2025, amid demands by BJP leaders and Hindutva organisations to raze it, he had said the government had already planned its removal and journalists would learn about it only after demolition. He had invoked the demolition of Babri Masjid while asking Hindutva organisations to play their part.

The tomb at Khuldabad is a protected monument under the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). In March 2025, Fadnavis had said while there was agreement with removal demand, any action would have to be within the framework of the law.

In a written reply to the Rajya Sabha in April 2025, Union Culture Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat confirmed its protected status.



UP ATS nabs 4 youths for 'plot' to kill Armyman or target police installation

Express News Service
Lucknow, October 30

THE UTTAR Pradesh Police's Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) on Friday arrested three youths and detained a juvenile in Lucknow for allegedly hatching a conspiracy to kill a member of the Army or police force or attack a police establishment before recording a video of the incident, on the instructions of their Pakistan-based handler.

The motive of their handler, linked to the banned Shahzad Bhatti network, was to create fear among people, the agency claimed.

The accused were identified as Gagandeep Singh (26) and Rajat Kumar (19) of Amritsar in Punjab and Krish (21), a resident of neighbouring Gurdaspur district, officials said. The juvenile, a Punjab resident, is aged 17, they said.

A foreign-made pistol and 20 cartridges were recovered from their possession, it was claimed.

In a press statement, the ATS claimed to have received intelligence inputs that some youths from Punjab with alleged links to the Shahzad Bhatti network were planning to kill an Armyman or a policeman or attack a police establishment in India. A probe revealed Gagandeep and his associates were in contact with Rana Bhai, an active member of Shahzad Bhatti network, the agency said, adding the four were travelling to Lucknow on his instructions to carry out an attack.

They were asked to record the killing and send the video to Rana Bhai along with information of sensitive establishments, the investigators said. A case was registered against them at the ATS police station in Lucknow.

The accused set out from Punjab's Amritsar on October 27, the ATS added. They communicated with Rana Bhai through Instagram and WhatsApp, it was alleged. After reaching Lucknow, the accused recorded a video of the city railway station and sent it to their handler. They were promised Rs 3 lakh after the targeted killing and were instructed to flee to Nepal to evade arrest, officials stated.

"During the interrogation, the accused said Rana Bhai had told them that weapons ...had been sent from Pakistan and would be handed over to them by a local contact in Lucknow" police officer said. Those firearm and cartridges were seized from them.



● WEB EXCLUSIVE
What happens when the state kills in the name of protection? — *Jhuma Sen*
Log on to www.indianexpress.com

● WORDLY WISE
In our age there is no such thing as 'keeping out of politics'.
—*George Orwell*

The Indian EXPRESS
~ FOUNDED BY ~
RAMNATH GOENKA
IN 1932
BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

In Israel, a deadlock & the difficulties of change

YET AGAIN, the outcome of an election reflects the fragmented political landscape in Israel. Neither of the blocs, led by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his principal challenger Gadi Eisenkot, have secured the 61 seats needed for a majority in the 120-member Knesset. Coalition negotiations could take weeks, but at least two things are already clear. One, Netanyahu has not been decisively rejected by Israel's deeply divided electorate in the first election held since Hamas's horrific terror attack, which the opposition had sought to turn into a referendum on security failures on his watch. His Likud party has won 27 seats, while his bloc, which includes several far-right parties, has secured 53. At the same time, it would be difficult to interpret this as a mandate for him. The bigger story, perhaps, is the 19 seats won by the Arab parties — the Joint List and the United Arab List (Ra'am) — an all-time high and almost double their current tally of 10. This makes the Arab community, which makes up one-fifth of Israel's population, and which seems to have largely voted for political partnership with the Jewish community, pivotal to any attempt at government formation.

Netanyahu's hostility towards the Arab parties is well known, and Eisenkot, during his campaign, ruled out partnering with them, citing deep differences over issues such as national security and Gaza. An alliance between Netanyahu and Eisenkot to form a national unity government also appears highly unlikely. All possibilities remain irresolute on the table, including another election, with Netanyahu continuing as caretaker PM in the interim. This election, therefore, has revealed both the persistence of frozen political faultlines and the difficult possibilities of new alignments. Beyond the immediate jostling for power, too, the openings for change are hemmed in by challenges.

Domestically, the record representation of Arab parties could mark a turning point in the political participation of the Palestinian citizens of Israel. A change in government, and perhaps the beginning of a process of national reconciliation, could arguably create room for recalibrating Israel's ties with its Arab neighbours. But there are limits to such a shift. Eisenkot has opposed Palestinian statehood and advocated maintaining Israeli security presence in Gaza — positions that will hinder normalisation with Saudi Arabia and expansion of the Abraham Accords. The relationship with the US, which has been strained over the past year, is unlikely to be transformed by a change of PM, either. The immediate test will lie in the aftermath of next week's midterms. Given that an Eisenkot government will not lead to any major change in Israel's foreign policy, the country will, in all likelihood, continue to find itself isolated internationally.

A step forward in Jamia, a long road ahead

THE JAMIA Millia Islamia administration's decision to restore student union elections after nearly two decades is a resonant victory for its students. It brings to an end a bitter standoff, during which repressive disciplinary action and restrictions on essential services illustrated and deepened a breakdown of trust. That it should have taken an 18-day hunger strike by students to arrive at a resolution is a travesty.

Spectres of vicious politicisation have been invoked to justify the suspension of student elections across universities in the country. The Lyngdoh Committee, constituted in 2005, recognised the dangers of money, muscle power and excessive external political influence in campus elections. Its recommendations, which sought to make student politics more transparent and accountable, have been used by universities to do away with elections altogether. This has removed the process through which decision-making on campus can be opened up to student participation, and their concerns and grievances can be addressed. It has also contributed to a steady infantilisation of young adults. Inspired in part by the mobilisation at Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) for the revival of its student union, the Jamia protest spoke to a larger demand for a more equal campus. Like AMU, Jamia has a distinctive history of nurturing intellectual and political consciousness — student life has rarely been immune to larger questions of representation and citizenship. For too many, the campus is also a place where the costs of dissent have been experienced first-hand — for instance, during the police crackdown in December 2019 on protests against a discriminatory law that made religion a criterion for citizenship.

The Jamia impasse came as demands for accountability by the young find renewed expression through the Gen Z protests. Karnataka has green lit student polls, MP has seen judicial intervention in favour of elections, and Maharashtra has appointed a committee to frame a mechanism for their return. In Odisha, too, talks are on with stakeholders. At Jamia, the administration has committed to a time-frame. It has also ordered the withdrawal of disciplinary proceedings and campus bans linked to the protest. This is a significant moment. It must signal the beginning of a more open relationship between the university and its students.

Being like Jean-Luc Picard

ON FEBRUARY 13, 1989, when AI was still science fiction, and the future a possible utopia rather than its evil twin, Captain Jean-Luc Picard taught viewers what it means to be human, and why decency and rights matter more than the utilitarian calculations of CEOs. In "The Measure of a Man", the ninth episode in the second season of *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (TNG), Patrick Stewart, who died this week at 86, elevated, as he would do throughout his screen career, a mainstream character on a "massy" show (or film, à la *X-Men*), to literary and artistic greatness. For all the characters he played, from King Lear with the Royal Shakespeare Company to Professor Charles Xavier, it is Picard that defined him.

In the episode, Picard, the captain of the starship *Enterprise*, must defend Commander Data, in a trial to establish whether the latter is "property" or a person. Data is an android, and a scientist wants to reverse-engineer an army of workers like him for the "benefit of humanity". Stewart's fight for his friend and colleague is an intellectual and moral one, unlike all-male icons who trade in blustering ego and loud proclamations. His is a passionate defence, grounded in empathy and reason.

There is, if commentaries are to be believed, a crisis of masculinity today — too much entitlement and insecurity, making aggression and anger a virtue. At such a time, Stewart's performance matters, not least for those who strut as inventors of a changing world by "breaking things". Picard, more than any MMA star or rude podcaster, can teach people what a good man looks like.

The worldwide outbursts of the powerless pose new political questions



JOHN KEANE

REBELLIONS EVERYWHERE. Huge crowds of angry citizens on the streets and towns of France. Organised Jantar Mantar-style public protests not only in India but in countries otherwise as different as Chile, Belgium, Tunisia, Spain, Portugal, Serbia, Albania, Indonesia and Italy. Witty placards. Online satire. Loud voices and spirited chants. Street fighting. Shattered glass. Tear gas, water cannon, flash bang grenades, gunshots, truncheons. Talk of the end of an era. Speculation about new beginnings. Everywhere, a sense that enough is enough, that things are ruinously out of joint, and that to avoid future catastrophes big political changes must urgently happen.

Making sense of these simultaneous uprisings of disaffected citizens is an urgent task, but things aren't helped by the bitter categorisation struggles and confused answers given by commentators to the key questions: Do these protests share qualities in common and what do they tell us about the turbulent times through which our world is passing?

Some breaking news journalists, hunting for followers, short-circuit discussion by underscoring the frenzy, hooliganism, arson and wanton damage to property. There's some lawless violence, it's true, but anarchic disorder isn't the main feature of these protests. If anything, the opposite holds: What's impressive is the savvy self-restraint of the protests in the face of brutal military-style policing.

Other observers, meanwhile, employ the buzz phrase "Gen Z" to say these are uprisings of the young, revolts triggered by the anxieties of an emerging generation that lives in dread of the future. Young people are often at the forefront of these uprisings, but everywhere their social support base runs much wider. That's why still other interpreters categorise the protests as revolts against the greed and corruption of neoliberalism. What these protests have in common, it is said, is working-class opposition to rising inflation, unaffordable housing, and cuts to education and healthcare that favour a tax-dodging ruling class that doesn't care a fig about democracy or the wellbeing and dignity of citizens.

There are grains of truth in each interpretation, but what they fail to see is that these social outbursts (*estallidos sociales* is the phrase used by Chileans) are everywhere revolts of the powerless. We're living in an age of powerlessness in which many millions of people living in many countries, democracies included, feel that they have zero control over the key institutions and policies that shape their lives. In a world troubled by cascading fears of unending wars, genocide, climate catastrophes, demagoguery, corrupt government, worsening social inequality, and big-tech surveillance, surveys tell us that they are convinced that power is concentrated in the hands of the few and that powerlessness is the lot of the many.

Powerlessness, of course, comes in a variety of graded forms marked by different disabling effects. But it's always an awful curse on people's lives. When individuals and groups experience powerlessness, they feel the heavy weight of an ungenerous world bearing down on them. They have stories to tell, they do their best to resist in various ways, but they feel shut out. They suffer. Things fall apart. Powerlessness destroys people's very sense of belonging in a world they find remote, hostile and merciless.

What's remarkable is the way these rebellions display the flipside of powerlessness. People sense the potential power of the powerless. Aided by social media networking, organising skills and street-level energy, there's the conviction that power shouldn't be thought of as "up there" and impenetrable, that Davids can turn tables on Goliaths, that weakness can be turned into strength. In suffering, the powerless can find comfort, in hardship resilience, in silence words of resistance, in despair hopes for a better life.

In this way, the rebels with a cause expose the scandalous secret of powerlessness. They show that the powerful always depend on the downtrodden. So long as rulers want to rule, even when in extreme circumstances they try to exterminate the powerless, the powerful require the cooperation of their victims, their willingness, however blind, to follow instructions, to believe they're fated to be the victims of the superior. The sweet secret is revealed when the powerless refuse to cooperate with the powerful. At that moment, the power of the powerful comes to be seen for what it is: Contingent, refutable and defeatable. Convinced that the personal is political, the powerless get off bended knees and straighten their spines. Refusing to play the power games of the powerful, they prove that power, the capacity to get others to do what otherwise they would not do, is not the exclusive monopoly of the powerful.

> We can't know the future of these stop-start, tortoise-and-hare refusals of top-down, arbitrary power. Just one thing seems certain: Thanks to these rebellions of the powerless, our world has been reminded that the downtrodden can spring surprises on the powerful

These worldwide outbursts of the powerless pose new political questions. Are they mere examples of what the Belgian thinker Anton Jäger has sarcastically called "hyperpolitics", sporadic viral outrages that leave everything unchanged? Perhaps, instead, political miracles are coming our way when elected governments will be forced to side with these rebellions by crafting radically new policies that solve difficult structural problems, such as housing unaffordability, climate change, systemic corruption, unregulated big-tech giants and ugly mal-distributions of wealth?

Or perhaps we're witnessing the opening stages of yet more old-fashioned revolutions — those lightning-speed irruptions that gripped France (1789), Mexico (1910), Russia (1917) and Iran (1979), when the powerless rose violently in unison to crush the masters of their injustice but destroyed power-sharing democracy? Much more likely is that these rebellions are symptoms of another, less familiar type of revolution with a different rhythm: Slow-motion, long-term democratic revolutions, in which periods of calm are punctuated by angry outbursts of indignant citizens reaching for the emergency brake because they are fed up with their powerlessness.

We can't know the future of these stop-start, tortoise-and-hare refusals of top-down, arbitrary power. Just one thing seems certain: Thanks to these rebellions of the powerless, our world has been reminded that the downtrodden can spring surprises on the powerful, catch them with their pants down, and bring more democratic honesty, decency and love of justice into the lives of people disgusted by their exclusion from the unfinished democratic revolution.

John Keane is professor of Politics at the University of Sydney. His latest book is Demagogues and Despots: Democracies on the Brink *(2026)*

For energy security, E100 alone is not the answer



SHYAMASIS DAS

INDIA IS not only gung-ho about the prospect of ethanol-blended petrol; it is moving ahead at full throttle to support high blending rate to as much as entirely replacing oil in a vehicle. With the recent amendment of the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989, the government has paved the way for motor vehicles to run on pure ethanol, branded as E100. Although it may possibly take time to see E100-fuelled vehicles on Indian roads and the associated impact, we have a prequel to this drastic change in front of us.

India has already made the transition to E20 petrol, containing 20 per cent ethanol, marking a significant milestone in its biofuel programme. The policy is intended to reduce crude oil imports, save forex, and strengthen energy security. Yet, as E20 becomes mainstream and the precursor to large-scale use of higher petrol blending levels, an important question deserves closer scrutiny: How much can ethanol blending actually reduce India's dependence on imported crude oil?

The question matters for an economy that imports over 80 per cent of its crude oil requirements, leaving the country exposed to volatile international prices and geopolitical disruptions. The impact of the ongoing West Asia conflict on the international oil trade holds a mirror up to us. While ethanol blending can displace a portion of petrol consumption (depending on the blending rate), its contribution to reducing crude oil imports must be assessed against the structure of petroleum demand and the technical constraints of refining. Petrol accounts for only 15-18 per cent of the petroleum products processed from a barrel of crude oil. Diesel, by contrast, accounts for approximately 44-45 per cent. This asymmetry is central to understanding the limits of an ethanol-led strategy.

The consumption gap is equally striking. Between FY 2020-21 and FY 2024-25, India consumed approximately 503 million tonnes of diesel, compared to 200 million tonnes of petrol. Diesel powers freight transport, agriculture and industrial logistics, making it integral to economic activity. Its demand is expected to remain substantial. Ethanol blending therefore addresses a relatively small component of India's overall petroleum demand. Its benefits are real, but the scale of those benefits should not be confused with an equivalent reduction in crude oil imports.

Modelling the impact of a 20 per cent blend, accounting for the lower energy content of ethanol and the resulting reduction in vehicle fuel economy, suggests that petrol consumption could decline by about 15.56 per cent. This is a meaningful reduction in petrol consumption. However, it does not imply that crude oil imports will fall by an equivalent proportion. Crude oil processing produces several products, including petrol, diesel, LPG, aviation turbine fuel, and naphtha. Refineries can alter product yields to some extent, but the flexibility is not unlimited. Increasing the yield of diesel is constrained. Consequently, lower petrol demand does not automatically translate into a commensurate reduction in crude oil throughput. Policymakers must therefore distinguish between petrol displaced by ethanol, expenditure avoided on petrol supply and the actual reduction in crude oil imports. These are related but different outcomes.

If reducing oil import dependence is a central objective, India's biofuel strategy must give greater attention to diesel. Biodiesel blending has lagged behind ethanol, despite an earlier target of 5 per cent. Past efforts to promote non-edible oil feedstocks and used cooking oil encountered several challenges. Increasing biodiesel blending will require sustained investment in research and development, improved feedstock collection systems, viable supply chains, and technologies that can support commercially sustainable production.

Coming back to E100. Like E20, it holds promise. However, India will benefit from a broader measure of energy security. The impact of the country's biofuel programme should be assessed based on actual reductions in crude oil demand and import expenditure, rather than relying solely on the volume of ethanol blended. Reducing import exposure will require India to look beyond the petrol pump and address the full spectrum of its petroleum consumption. The real test of India's biofuel strategy is not how much ethanol it blends, but how effectively it reduces the country's dependence on imported oil.

The writer is a fellow in the Energy, Resources & Sustainability vertical, CSEP. Views are personal

The Communist Party of Xi Jinping



ANUSHKA SAXENA

EARLIER THIS week, the Communist Party of China (CPC) concluded the fifth plenary session of the 20th Central Committee with a communiqué that emphasises the session's theme, "rigorous self-governance of the Party". The key thing to watch, however, is what the personnel changes reveal about internal politics in the run-up to the 21st Party Congress. First, consider the attrition within the top leadership bodies, starting with the Central Committee. At this plenum, 162 full members and 117 alternate members attended, the lowest since the Mao era. The plenum confirmed the expulsion of 33 members and alternates and stripped former financial regulator Li Yunze of his Party posts. A year ago, the figure was 14. The Central Military Commission (CMC) lodged 16 removal cases, including former vice-chairman Zhang Youxia, former Western Theatre commander Wang Haijiang, and two successive directors of the CMC General Office, Zhong Shaojun and Fang Yongxiang. That office effectively serves as Xi's military secretariat; the purge has reached his innermost circle.

The second big takeaway is that Xi chose not to appoint any additional candidates to the CMC, which has been effectively hollowed out. It was for a long time a seven-member body, but today has just two members: Xi and Zhang Shengmin, the military's discipline chief. Even though this plenum was Xi's last real chance to rebuild the high command before October 2027, he can no longer assign seats without intense vetting. But if a new candidate were vetted for announcement now, they would have to undergo vetting again less than a year later for reassignment at the 21st Party Congress. So, Xi expressed disappointment with the state of affairs while elevating the importance of discipline and supervision through a two-pronged approach — not only by not appointing new members, but also by elevating Zhang to the Politburo mid-term. This has happened only once in CPC history.

A similar pattern appears in Central Committee promotions. Only 10 alternates were elevated to full membership, and five who ranked ahead of them in the 2022 vote order, including two lieutenant generals in the People's Armed Police, were passed over. The preference is for understaffed apparatuses rather than inefficient or corrupt ones. Finally, the communiqué introduced "Xi Jinping Thought on Party Building" as part of Xi's broader Thought and called for "breaking down unwritten rules" and regulating how "number ones" exercise power. The language around cleansing and discipline is more vehement than ever.

Two conclusions follow. First, when a two-member CMC commands the world's largest military and every cadre constantly watches their backs, errors rarely travel upward, and pressures build. Second, for India, the concern should be that the Western Theatre Command, the formation responsible for the LAC, has seen its former chief expelled. In such a climate, commanders tend to prove loyalty through assertiveness, not restraint. Even if one assumes arms exports will be impacted because defence-industry leaders are being expelled, domestic quality and production scale will likely be sustained. Any reassurance that such turmoil might offer should therefore be taken with a pinch of salt.

> For India, the concern should be that the Western Theatre Command, the formation responsible for the LAC, has now seen its former chief expelled

The writer is associate fellow, Geostrategy Programme, The Takshashila Institution. Views are personal

40 YEARS AGO

October 31, 1986



Terrorists kill 6 in Punjab

SIX PEOPLE were killed in Punjab — three shot dead by terrorists while robbing a bank of Rs 22 lakh in Hoshiarpur district — as security forces continued preventive arrests for the second day. Extremists shot dead two people and injured two in Jalandhar.

Sweets being short-weighed

SPECIAL RAIDS conducted by the Department of Weights and Measures on shops selling sweets and dry fruit in Delhi revealed many cases of short-weighing. Organised on the eve of Diwali, the raids have so far revealed that 60 of the 276 sweetmeat sellers and dry fruit vendors checked were cheating on weight. The five-day raid is expected to cover another 250 shops by November 1. While some shops had unverified weights or were deliberately short weighing, most defaulters were weighing the sweets in cardboard boxes, which weigh 50-80 gms.

'Pak used US arms against India'

STEPHEN SOLARZ, chairman of the US House of Representatives subcommittee on Asian and Pacific affairs, which will soon consider new American military aid to Pakistan, has upheld India's contention that Islamabad had used US weapons in all its wars against India. "I do not want it to happen again," he affirmed in a letter to leading Indian Americans.

Boost to India-Yugoslavia ties

YUGOSLAVIA OFFERED India a new credit of $120 million, signalling an upward swing in trade relations between the two countries, which have seen a slump in the past decade.

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

The ousting of Aleksandar Vučić is an inspiration to democrats and a warning to autocrats.

— Financial Times

READ. THINK. SHARE.

Scan the QR code to explore curated editorials and opinions from leading voices

Ashoke Sen's journey shows why science must make room for ideas yet to be tested



SUNIL MUKHI

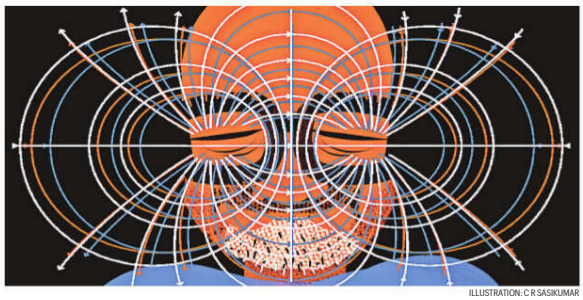


ILLUSTRATION: C R SASIKUMAR

THE SWEDISH theoretical physicist Oskar Klein is known for two important ideas, both of which appeared in the same 1926 paper. One was the Klein-Gordon equation, the earliest wave equation consistent with the laws of special relativity, which describes particles with no intrinsic angular momentum (spin). However, all the elementary particles discovered over the next eight decades were found to have a non-zero spin, so this equation appeared to be a theoretical abstraction unconnected to nature. Yet it was studied as a "toy model" in diverse contexts, and invariably taught to students of relativistic quantum theory because of its mathematical simplicity. Then, in 2012, a spinless elementary particle — the Higgs boson — was discovered, and everything fell into place: The Klein-Gordon equation is the correct framework for this particle.

This year, the centenary of Klein's paper, has seen one of the world's leading exponents of string theory — Professor Ashoke Sen — receiving the prestigious Oskar Klein Medal. He is the first Indian to feature among a stellar list of awardees that includes C N Yang, Hans Bethe and Stephen Hawking. Sen, who turned 70 this year, has had an illustrious career spanning over four decades during which he has made several influential contributions to theoretical particle physics. He also happens to be a close friend, colleague and collaborator who I have known since the late 1970s when we were both PhD students at Stony Brook University.

To appreciate the significance of Sen's research, it is useful to keep in mind the Klein-Gordon story. What started as an elegant construction consistent with the known symmetries of Physics found direct application to elementary particles almost a century later, but it did not languish in the interim — it was a rich source of theoretical possibilities, phenomena and effects, and was studied in thousands of papers. String theory is an inheritor of this tradition. The foundational idea was to formulate a relativistic quantum theory where the basic objects are extended strings rather than point particles. Somewhat surprisingly, this postulate led to a more tightly constrained formalism than standard quantum theory. String theory emerged as a consistent framework for a quantum theory of gravity coupled to interactions of electromagnetic and nuclear type, something that had resisted conventional approaches for decades.

Since its discovery, string theory has attracted intense theoretical interest, even as direct experimental application has remained out of reach. It remains to be seen whether and when it will be experimentally verified, but like the Klein-Gordon equation, it has featured in thousands of theoretical papers due to the rich possibilities and phenomena that it incorporates.

Early in his career, Sen asked himself the question: "Is there a consistency condition for relativistic strings propagating in a generic curved spacetime?" He came up with a simple but profound result — the condition is precisely the original Einstein equation, supplemented by calculable corrections. Many decades later, this discovery still looks truly remarkable.

> Since its discovery, string theory has attracted intense theoretical interest, even as direct experimental application has remained out of reach

While he was already recognised internationally as an outstanding young theoretical physicist, it was in 1994 that Sen's work on electric-magnetic duality propelled him to the next level of fame. I recall Ashoke coming up to me in the corridor of the Tata Institute, looking unusually excited, and saying: "I've found a self-dual harmonic two-form on monopole moduli space." In that moment, I understood each of the words separately, but not their impact. This mathematical result, on which he had laboured for months, provided striking evidence for electric-magnetic duality — a symmetry under which the roles of electricity and magnetism are exchanged. Many physicists had speculated about it within familiar quantum theories, but it had proved difficult to find a concrete example. Sen found substantial evidence for a specific example, and it lay within string theory. At a conference that I attended in Paris in 1994, American physicist Edward Witten described Sen's result as "the last straw that broke the camel's back" — the result that finally convinced him about duality.

The outcome of his discovery has been a unified picture of string theory as an interconnected web of possibilities for physical gravitating systems in space-time dimensions ranging from 2 to 11. While low-dimensional quantum systems are familiar, dimensions higher than our own have remained the stuff of science fiction. Interestingly, though, among the first to speculate on their existence was none other than Klein — and this is the second idea referred to at the beginning of this article. Kaluza-Klein theory, as it is known, is the beautiful observation that the equations of gravity in a hypothetical five-dimensional spacetime reduce in a suitable limit to the familiar equations of both gravity and electromagnetism in our world. Thus, two basic forces of nature can be explained in terms of a single one operating in a higher dimension. String theory realises this idea in a more precise form than its inventors could have envisioned, and Sen's work paved the way to understand how apparently different string theories are linked by a complex web of dualities, suggesting that the formalism is not just useful but also unique.

Sen's more than 300 published papers are marked by their clarity, simplicity, originality, and austere discipline. He typically starts with a small, deceptively simple premise and applies his penetrating intellect to convert it into a concrete result. Thanks to his work, today we understand more deeply the paradoxes regarding the entropy and information of black holes. He has repeatedly demonstrated that embedding outstanding physical problems into string theory gives us a better chance of understanding them, a testament to the range of possibilities inherent in this framework.

The history of Physics is replete with theoretical ideas that were confirmed long after being proposed. Yet, string theory has faced some negativity among the broader community of Indian physicists, stemming perhaps from a lack of comprehension of how frontier physics works. Fortunately, Sen worked at the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, the Harish-Chandra Research Institute and the International Centre for Theoretical Sciences, all autonomous institutes of the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), in an atmosphere that was largely supportive of this sort of theoretical research. Indeed, the founder of the DAE, Homi J Bhabha, would likely have recognised it as a logical continuation of his own research. He — and the leaders who succeeded him — created an environment with the freedom to think and an enabling and constructive ecosystem. Ashoke Sen's achievements are a powerful vindication of that vision.

The writer, a theoretical physicist, has worked at the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Mumbai and IISER, Pune

Opposition has only propaganda, not the people



RAM RAJYA

BY RAM MADHAV

THIS SUNDAY, the Opposition, led by Congress, plans a protest rally at Delhi's Ramlila Maidan demanding the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar on the specious ground that the Election Commission deleted crores of eligible voters in the name of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls.

It is interesting how the Opposition keeps changing its goalposts regarding elections in India. It made a brouhaha over EVM tampering a few years ago, alleging that EVMs with a 99 per cent battery level gave victory to the Bharatiya Janata Party while those with a 60 or 70 per cent battery level went for Congress. The ECI took pains to respond to this ludicrous claim, stating that the battery of the control unit of the EVM has no correlation with the election outcome. The CEC explained that brand new, non-reusable alkaline batteries are inserted into the EVMs and sealed in the presence of the candidates' polling agents.

Then Rahul Gandhi and his party began chanting "vote *chori*" — vote theft — without providing any valid proof. At a recent press conference, a journalist asked him "when and how" he realised that "vote *chori*" was happening. Rahul Gandhi's answer was funny. "When I was seven years old in 1977, Indiraji was prime minister. Everybody, including her, knew that they were losing. Feeling comes," he claimed. That feeling can prove wrong once, he admitted, but insisted that "it can happen once. But not twice. At no cost the third and fourth time. There is something known as a feeling." He went on to argue that in the last two-three elections, "our technical experts were telling us this was not possible. This cannot be. How is this happening? Slowly, suspicion was building up." So, it was just a feeling and suspicion, born out of his sense of entitlement, because "our technical experts" said so.

With no evidence, the Opposition went knocking on the doors of the President of India. Being a decent person, she politely told Rahul Gandhi and his ilk that they had brought complaints without any evidence. Coming out of the meeting, the Congress scion made an odd claim: He was surprised that the President did not dismiss their concerns. Then he made the absurd argument that not he and his party but the ruling establishment should "prove to us that you have not cheated in the election".



ILLUSTRATION: VIKAS AGARWAL

Like the complaints about EVM tampering, this "vote *chori*" allegation, too, has no tangible evidence to support it. Nowhere in the country did ordinary voters complain about their votes being stolen — in no booths and no villages. Then came the insistence that ballot papers should be brought back. But when elections to the Silchar Municipal Corporation were conducted in early October using paper ballots, Congress was able to win in just two out of 42 wards. The BJP won 32 and its allies two. In the elections to 28 seats in legislative councils in four states — Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka and Maharashtra — using ballot papers earlier this week, Congress managed to win just one seat while the BJP and its allies captured 16. In the Congress-ruled state of Karnataka, the NDA won all four MLC seats and the ruling party drew a blank. It is important to underscore that the voters in these elections were graduates and teachers, meaning that the educated and enlightened sections of our country are roundly rejecting Rahul Gandhi's propaganda about the SIR, EVMs, and "vote *chori*".

His campaign against the SIR, too, is a similar lie. There have been eight intensive revisions of the electoral rolls in the country since 1952; the current SIR is the ninth. Seven of those eight were conducted by Congress governments. The last time such a revision happened was in 2002-04. After two decades, the Election Commission is conducting that exercise again.

Congress is creating a ruckus over it for two reasons: One, it is unable to face the BJP juggernaut at the hustings directly, and hence an effort is being made for regime change through anarchy; and two, they want to project the hard-won victory of Narendra Modi and the BJP as election theft.

The Opposition has propaganda, but the people are with Modi. Congress may finally bring a few thousand people to Delhi, but the BJP will go to thousands of towns and villages to inform a billion Indians about the Opposition's lies and sins. It has the track record of protecting democracy from Indira Gandhi's dictatorship 50 years ago. It will protect it from Rahul Gandhi's anarchy now.

The writer is national vice-president, BJP and president, India Foundation

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Mutual trust needed

PRATAP BHANU Mehta's perceptive article ('Reforms 3.0 underline a credibility gap. First, reform the reformer', *IE*, October 30) reminds us that meaningful and enduring reform must be founded on mutual trust between the state and its citizens. Reforms 3.0 must ensure citizens are treated as honest stakeholders through self-declaration, deemed approvals and statutory timelines for routine permissions, with accountability for avoidable delays. Enforcement should be guided by clearly defined risk parameters, reasoned notices and a fair opportunity of hearing before coercive action. Citizens must also have access to independent and time-bound grievance redress mechanisms, supported by publicly accessible performance dashboards.

Bablu Kumar Gupta, Lucknow

Phones away

WHAT AND where we eat ultimately matters far less than with whom we eat ('Put your phone away and tuck in', *IE*, October 30). The Sardinian restaurant initiative cleverly turns device-free dining into a modern Ulysses Pact: Patrons voluntarily bind themselves against digital temptation to reclaim uninterrupted conversation. In an era where parallel scrolling masks deep psychological absence, choosing a living person across the table over a glowing screen is an essential conscious shift. Such policies offer a smart business model that safeguards our fraying ritual of commensality.

Harsh Pawaria, Rohtak

A PHONE at dinner does more than interrupt conversation; it teaches children that every notification deserves attention ('Put your phone away and tuck in', *IE*, October 30). Families should agree on device-free periods, especially during meals and before bedtime. Schools can reinforce digital balance without treating technology as the enemy. The aim is to restore attention, conversation and healthy routines.

P S Harishmitha, Tirupur

Counting months and bribes to a death certificate



USHA RAI

LOSING AN 80 odd-year-old sibling living with you is heartbreaking enough, but getting her death certificate was even more traumatic. Though married twice, she had no husband or children, so getting her death certificate fell on her octogenarian sibling. After informing family and friends and completing the rituals, her priority was to get the death certificate. Her bank accounts had to be closed, and the government informed her because she had spent many years working as a paediatrician in one of Delhi's better-known hospitals.

If a person dies in a hospital, the death certificate is given by the hospital, but if a person dies at home, the death certificate is given by the Municipal Corporation. Since the siblings were in Gurugram, the death certificate had to be given by the department of births and deaths certification under the Health Department of the Municipal Corporation of Gurugram (MCG). A relative, who had got the death certificate for his brother who died at the height of the COVID pandemic, offered to get it. After a week or so, he called to say that the neighbour who had got the death certificate for his brother was unable to get it because his contact in the MCG had been transferred. He then decided to get it himself since he had got his mother's death certificate from the MCG in 2015.

> She approached a person who had contact in the Common Services Centre, and he assured her he would get it, but Rs 4,000 would have to be paid to get it from the MCG. With no choice, the amount was paid, and finally it was received

He went to the MCG office and found the department had shifted to another building in Gurugram. The man sitting at the counter said that since two months had lapsed since her death, it would cost him Rs 25,000. It seemed too much money to pay for a death certificate, the mandatory right of the deceased's relative. So he sought the assistance of a lawyer who said it would be done on payment of Rs 5,000. Half the amount was paid as an advance. After a month, the lawyer expressed his inability to get it. So, three months after her death, the responsibility was back on the shoulders of the octogenarian. A member of the RWA of her locality offered to help out since he had got his father's death certificate recently. He even checked with the Common Services Centre in Gurugram and was told that because of the delayed application, it would cost Rs 12,000.

The octogenarian then approached the area's municipal councillor, and he put her in touch with his assistant, who said he would do the needful and gave forms to fill up. After two or three follow-ups, the old lady was too embarrassed to call back. Quite by chance, she shared her ordeal with a driver whom she often hired, and he said he knew the man who dealt with death certificates and would get it for her. However, that man had left the government, but he put the driver in touch with his replacement. The relevant papers, like the doctor's death certificate, the certificate from the crematorium, and the Aadhaar card, were deposited along with the application. He demanded Rs 12,000. Realising that to get the certificate she could not escape the bribe, she paid Rs 6,000 as an advance and agreed to pay the rest on getting the death certificate.

Mid-July, seven months after the death, there was an acknowledgement from the MCG that it was being processed. The website showed payment of Rs 30 for processing it and indicated the due date for getting it as August 31. But it still did not reach, and the man who had taken Rs 6,000 as an advance said he was busy with the SIR and the lady had to be patient. Then she approached a person who had contact in the Common Services Centre, and he assured her he would get it, but Rs 4,000 would have to be paid to get it from the MCG. With no choice, the amount was paid, and finally it was received in the latter half of September, nine months after her death.

Yes, there is a triple-engine sarkar in Gurugram. It came to power with a promise of "*na khaunga na khane doonga*".

The writer is a senior journalist

The uncomfortable honesty of 'Prahaar'



ANAS ARIF

TOWARDS THE latter half of Avinash Arun's *Prahaar: The Untold Story of Ujjwal Nikam*, Abbas Kazmi (Sikandar Kher), the Muslim lawyer defending Ajmal Kasab (Lalit Prabhakar), the lone surviving gunman of the 26/11 attacks, looks Ujjwal Nikam (Rajkummar Rao) in the eye and confronts him with the Islamophobia that underpins Nikam's worldview and finds expression in the society around him. Kazmi speaks of the humiliation and hostility he faces, both from within his own community and from the larger world, for doing nothing more than defending Kasab in court. He is branded a "terrorist lawyer", his professional duty reduced to a moral transgression because of whom he represents. In the eyes of the world, he might be committing a grave sin; in his own eyes, and in the eyes of the law, he is simply doing his job, no more, no less.

It is here that Arun's legal drama briefly slips the leash of hagiography, allowing a perspective to emerge that complicates the moral certainties of its protagonist. To watch *Prahaar* is to witness these competing truths collide, even as the film refuses them the time and space to fully reckon with each other. It does not quite have the courage to follow its contradictions to their logical ends, but neither is it callous enough to look away. This is what makes *Prahaar* such a complicated beast. A biopic celebrating its subject in 2026, a mainstream entertainer finding yet another villain in Pakistan, is hardly novel. If anything, it is the most expedient form of storytelling. But, in flashes, *Prahaar* sheds its skin to reveal something more incisive. It may have little interest in pursuing the answers, but at least, for a moment, it has the spine to ask the questions.

Consider the question at the heart of

> In an age when mob violence has become routine, and rage and retribution have become increasingly seductive answers to injustice, 'Prahaar' reaffirms its faith in democracy

Prahaar, one that seared itself into the national conscience in the aftermath of 26/11: Why must a man who had unleashed an unprovoked attack on innocents be afforded a trial at all? Why should the law extend its protection to a man who had so flagrantly defied it? It is in this uneasy terrain that the film moves beyond the trappings of a nationalist entertainer, placing its bets in the sanctity of due process. It makes a case for the distinction between justice and vengeance, insisting that the rule of law must hold, even when public anger demands otherwise. The moral test of a trial lies not in establishing the innocence of the accused, but in upholding the principles of justice when doing so is most difficult.

In that sense, the fact that *Prahaar* is a biopic of a public prosecutor who has long occupied the public imagination becomes almost incidental. Its subtext (screenplay by Sumit Roy) asks questions that feel more urgent today than they did nearly two decades ago. In an age when mob violence has become routine, and rage and retribution have become increasingly seductive answers to injustice, *Prahaar* reaffirms its faith in democracy. After all, the true test of a democracy lies not in how it treats those it loves, but in how it protects those it despises. And perhaps the true test of cinema in such times lies in how courageously it dares to ask the questions whose answers we may no longer be willing to hear.

Arif is a Mumbai-based screenwriter and researcher

'The opportunity for India is leveraging AI to reimagine how we use machines'

Infosys co-founder and Chairman, Axilor Ventures, Kris Gopalakrishnan on MNCs choosing India for global capability centres, investing in R&D and rethinking healthcare



(L-R) E Kumar Sharma, Deputy Editor, Financialexpress.com; Ishan Bakshi, Senior Associate Editor, *The Indian Express*; Kris Gopalakrishnan

Ishan Bakshi: You have seen several technology cycles since the early '90s to the AI era now. Do you see similarities and differences in the way they are unfolding?

A technology that's horizontal, impacts every aspect of life. We took advantage of one of those disruptions — the introduction of computing — because every business process has to be automated. We said, 'Let's do that software from India using a lower-cost economy to lower the overall cost and take advantage of the abundant talent in India.' That's the global delivery model that was created. AI too is a horizontal technology, but for the first time, we are grappling to understand it. The immediate impact is democratisation of intelligent productivity.

The first sector that was impacted is software development, programming because it can write code better than humans. We still need a human in the loop to check for bugs. But it is faster than humans so it will start impacting jobs. But it's also creating new opportunities because you need people to train and write the right prompts. In the medium to long term, it will be positive because of the productivity increase. But we must understand the downside.

E Kumar Sharma: What is the role of IT services in an AI or post-AI world?

Software development probably is about 15-20 per cent of the total effort. That's the one which is getting automated, but in the transition, even with that automation, it will probably not impact that much.

With AI, there will be new opportunities integrating with existing systems, curating data, training the models and more capabilities now are available to an organisation to leverage AI. That means new systems will have to be developed. So from an opportunity perspective, it will expand for the IT services industry.

Ishan: For some time now, we have seen the IT sector in India getting battered. Perhaps, markets and investors are not as optimistic as you seem. Are our markets overreacting?

Whatever I have seen, markets always overreact to the extreme. If you look at the revenue of the IT services companies, they are still growing, maybe not at the rate they used to. Our IT services companies are highly profitable — they are debt-free with experienced leadership with deep client relationships which ran for decades. None of that has changed. What has changed is entry-level recruitment, which is almost zero. They need to figure out how the workforce will have to be retrained and reconfigured. Reskilling is required for existing employees. Even there, the model has an advantage. Reskilling happens at a lower cost economy. That's why the profitability is still high. You don't see mass layoffs. That's the strength of this model, which is why every multinational company is today setting up their global capability centre in India. The research is moving to India because of the abundant talent that's global in experience and expertise. So, if you are passing out this year or the next, you will find it challenging to get a job in the IT industry unless you have AI skills.

Because of the lag the universities typically have, it will take three-four years for the system to react to the changing realities so recruitment will be lower. Revenues are going to be steady, but growing at three-four per cent, profitability will still be high. But the market may feel that's not enough.

Ishan: The IT sector has been a vehicle for upward mobility, which is now being cut short. Do you see this being permanent?

You have to look at actual data. The industry employs six million people out of 1.4-1.5 billion people. Of course, the multiplier effect, the per capita income of that employee is very high. Their prospects are global for a small segment of population. Aspirationally, everybody wants to go there and that is probably limited by what is happening today, but it's temporary.



Kumar: The IT sector has been profitable. Any observations on the little yield on the products front?

The model is different. The industry was created primarily when there was no venture capital. We had to bootstrap and leverage our strengths — talent, low cost, remote software development capabilities, ability to scale, high-quality workforce.

The model for the product is you make upfront investments. Typically, you need risk capital and market access to do that. The domestic market is not big enough to create large enterprises. That's why you have to go global. All the SAS (Statistical Analysis System) companies actually flip to the US because that's a larger market that values them. But now we are seeing product companies emerge. It's not a capability issue but a resource and capital one. Having said that, the top three banking products in the world are of Indian origin. So are the best logistic products in the world. At the top tier of all product companies, there are a large number of Indians. So, it proves the point that it's the right model for the right ecosystem.

Ishan: Is the binding constraint risk capital?

We have to change our risk appetite as a society. Entrepreneurship has taken root. Until recently, entrepreneurship was family-driven. Now, you are seeing first-generation entrepreneurs doing extremely well.

Kumar: When the founders of various companies in the US were investing in brain research they were looking from the longevity point of view. You were talking compute power. How has the journey been so far?

We need to invest more in research. In hindsight, it has been proven right in terms of events that happened with AI, where we now understand the strategic nature of technology, and why sovereignty is important. We need to create a product-led economy, where we own the technologies we use.

Kumar: But there is hardly investment in R&D.

Because that necessity is not there. If you want a strong India, you also have to make that happen by owning the IP that is important to us. The government may create IP but it's not going to commercialise, market and create industries around it. It is the private sector's job.

Ishan: If I had to set up a lab in a Western university and you had to set up similar facilities in India, what are the constraints?

None. It's for us to change it. I started working with IIT Madras Research Park in 1999. In 2001, I was its first investor. That's the best ecosystem we have. Over the last five years, IISc has been becoming a hotbed.

Kumar: What sector would you be investing in and what output would you expect two years from now?

Output depends on the problem. When you are trying to figure out how people age and is the Indian population susceptible to aging in the same way, you have to study somebody for 20 years. You can't get data in one year. So, longitudinal study takes longer. You have to set expectations properly. I have split my office into two parts. One is to grow wealth. Second, to use it wisely.

Ishan: Give me your best and worst case scenarios for 2035.

Now, we have 4,500 deep tech startups. I believe it will go to 45,000 at least. That will create new product categories, and technologies that we will own. We need to still understand the commercialisation part of it fully, and we need to figure out how it can be retained in those companies in India. Ownership is also about where the wealth accrues. That is a change we will see in the next 10 years. We will also work on technology sovereignty. We will see some brilliant solutions coming out of India on health care. India has the opportunity to become a laboratory for the 21st-century world.

Kumar: Can you explain the healthcare lab for the world example?

In health care, typically 70 per cent of the money is spent in the last three years of a person's life. It should be spent from the age of 20. You have to think about wellness and healthy living. That's a cultural and habit change that has to happen. Now, we need to look at public policy and incentives. We also need to leverage health insurance.

Ishan: What will be the constraint in this journey?

You have to do it strategically. The industry has to take some big bets because all of them will not succeed. If you look at renewables, for example, a lot of people went into creating solar farms. Many actually failed because it was built on a certain assumption of government subsidy and when the subsidy went away, the price per unit came down, business was no longer viable. All those cycles will happen. And that's why we need to build failure into our cultural mindset issue. The ability to take risks has to be built into society.

3 held over Kuno cheetah's death; firearm used yet to be recovered

Express News Service
Bhopal, October 30

THREE PEOPLE have been arrested in connection with the death of a 19-month-old cheetah in Madhya Pradesh's Morena district, but investigators have yet to recover the firearm suspected to have been used in the shooting.

The State Tiger Strike Force (STSF), which is leading the investigation, has questioned around 20 people in the Morena–Sheopur region and searched the houses of families suspected of involvement in hunting activities, officials said.

"Local people were suspected to be involved, and three persons were arrested and produced before the local court. They were taken to the spot where the cheetah cub was found dead for scene recreation," a wildlife official said.

Investigators are also trying to establish the precise location where the cheetah was shot. The animal's movements were recorded within a radius of around seven kilometres, but investigators are yet to determine whether it continued moving after being shot or was injured before reaching the location where it was found.

The firearm suspected to have been used is a traditional *bharmar*, a muzzle-loading firearm commonly found in rural and forested parts of the region. Five pellets were reportedly recovered from the body of KNG22, a male cub born to cheetah Nirva, during emergency surgery at Nanaji Deshmukh Veterinary Science University in Jabalpur. Investigators have identified the pellets as being consistent with those used in muzzle-loading firearms. However, the firearm itself remains untraced, and investigators are trying to establish its ownership and the person who fired it.

The STSF has also been examining the cheetah's radio-collar data to reconstruct its movements before it was found injured, officials said.

The 19-month-old cheetah was found by a monitoring team on October 25 in the territorial forest division of Morena, outside Kuno National Park. He was rescued that night and taken to Kuno before being shifted to Jabalpur for advanced treatment. He died early on October 27.

Srinagar MP Ruhullah to resign from NC and Parliament, says 'no fixing this rot from within'

Naveed Iqbal
Srinagar, October 30

SRINAGAR MP Aga Ruhullah Mehdi has formally announced his decision to resign from the National Conference (NC) and from Parliament, slamming his party for not living up to its "own poll promise of fighting for the restoration of Article 370", among other issues.

Ruhullah has been estranged with his party for over a year with differences beginning over the issue of rationalisation of reservation in J&K.

The MP's office wrote on social media on Friday, "Ruhullah Mehdi will resign from the National Conference and his Lok Sabha seat on November 3, 2026."

Ruhullah's office wrote on X, "The crown prince and his cabal treat J&K as an estate passed down through the family. They expect the people to vote, then know their place."

Continuing his attack on the party, the post said, "They take us for fools who cannot tell a broken promise from a political necessity. Ask them to honour their own manifesto, and they lecture us on how little we understand realpolitik."

Ruhullah has also criticised his party for not "living up to their own poll promise of fighting for the restoration of Article 370".

The post said, "We demanded the restoration of Article 370, the release of prisoners and the protection of our rights. They sought power on those promises, then treated us as fools for expecting them to deliver. We refuse to lend our name to this humiliation. There is no fixing this rot from within."



Aga Ruhullah Mehdi

Arguing that the Srinagar seat was won on "a promise" to the people, the post asserted that "Ruhullah Mehdi will surrender it rather than make himself an accomplice to that promise's betrayal." The post stated that he will address the people on the death anniversary of his father, politician Aga Syed Mehdi, at Behshit-e-Zehra Park, Budgam, on November 3. "We welcome all to join," the post said.

In August this year, Ruhullah had written to NC president Farooq Abdullah and hinted at a resignation.

Taking a swipe at the party's repeated assertions on demanding restoration of statehood from the Centre, the MP stated in the letter, which was released on social media, that by accepting statehood as the "outer limit of our political horizon", they are "legitimising and normalising the constitutional assault of August 2019 while signalling that the BJP's political settlement for Jammu-Kashmir is acceptable to us."

In doing so, he had said, "We also risk surrendering the constitutional protections that are indispensable to our people, given our unique geo-political reality, culture, traditions, and fragile environment."

In that letter, he had also said, "Rest assured, the resignation will come. It would have come even without you asking but before that must come accountability."

From Patna's Jadughar, Bihar museum tops in Asia, among top 10 globally alongside Louvre and Vatican

Santosh Singh
Patna, October 30

WHILE THE Louvre has the enigmatic Mona Lisa, the Bihar Museum has the magnificent Didarganj Yakshi.

It is this stunning 3rd-century BC polished sandstone sculpture, among other artefacts and features, which now has the museum in Patna sharing the spotlight with the Paris landmark in a list of "World's 100 Best Museums" published by the international travel guide, "Worth a Journey".

Ranked ninth globally and first in Asia, Bihar Museum has emerged as the only museum in the continent to secure a position in the top 10, rubbing shoulders with the Vatican Museums and the National Museum of China.

Talking to *The Indian Express*, Anjani Kumar Singh, Director General of the Bihar Museum and former Chief Secretary of Bihar, said: "The best part of the travel magazine's ranking is that it neither asked for an entry nor spoke to us. Its ranking is purely based on social media reach and visitors' reactions."

The museum had humble origins with a structure that was locally known as Jadughar or house of magic.



Spread over 13.9 acres, the museum became fully operational in 2017. BIHAR MUSEUM

In its current form, as a state-of-the-art structure on Patna's lifeline Bailey Road, the Bihar Museum became fully operational in 2017. Spread over 13.9 acres, it boasts a built-up area of 273,500 square feet.

In its assessment, Worth a Journey noted: "A modern state museum in Patna tracing Bihar's history from the Stone Age to modern times through sculptures, coins, manuscripts, and folkart. A spacious building with open courtyards and lawns houses chronological galleries, a children's gallery, and a short history film."

Highlighting the museum's primary strengths, the guide made special mention of its ancient sculpture galleries, the children's gallery, and regional folk art gallery. It recommended that visitors "set aside four to five hours to thoroughly explore the sprawling campus."

The travel guide evaluated institutions worldwide based on cultural value, infrastructure, visitor experience, and accessibility. The Bihar Museum stood out for its architecture and spatial design, planned by Maki and Associates, where open courtyards, natural light, and green spaces enhance visitor flow and overall experience.

Other features that drew special praise were the exhibitions and historical narrative. The museum's chronological arrangement traces regional history from the Stone Age through ancient empires to contemporary times, supported by a vast depth and variety of artefacts, including ancient sculptures, coins, rare manuscripts, archaeological discoveries, and regional folk art.

The modern galleries take visitors on an immersive journey through South Asia's history, featuring rare ancient Kurkihar bronze sculptures from the Pala Empire, classic Nalanda stone murtis, and vibrant regional craft traditions such as Madhubani art, Patna Qalam paintings, and Sikki grass craft.

Said DG Singh, "The criteria for assessing a museum have changed — it is no longer just about the building and the collection, but also about how much cultural and literary activity takes place and how the audience responds."

Among the literary activities mentioned are several book launch events, seminars, and a recently concluded literature festival held on the premises.

The Bihar Museum was a dream project of former Chief Minister Nitish Kumar who relocated the Maulana Mazharul Haque Arabic and Persian University for the purpose.

While the initial sanctioned cost of the project was Rs 498 crore, an additional budget of Rs 542 crore was later approved separately for an underground heritage tunnel linking the Bihar Museum with the old Patna Museum — the one known as Jadughar. This tunnel is now 70-80% complete, said sources.

Prominent visitors who have praised the museum's rich collections include author and politician Shashi Tharoor and noted lyricist Javed Akhtar.

Other museums that featured in the magazine's top 10 list are British Museum (London), Natural History Museum (London), The Metropolitan Museum of Art/ The Met (New York City), American Museum of Natural History (New York City), and China Science and Technology Museum (Beijing).

"Such rankings do make us happy and proud," said Singh. "But we are not beating our own drum about it, as a lot more work remains to be done."

KG basin row: SC says no viable solution, appoints mediator in RIL-Centre dispute

Express News Service
New Delhi, October 30

THE SUPREME Court Friday referred the gas migration dispute between the Centre and Reliance Industries Limited-led consortium in the Krishna Godavari (KG) basin, located off the Andhra Pradesh coast, to mediation and appointed former apex court judge Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai as the mediator after both sides submitted they have not been able to find a "viable solution".

In its order, a three-judge bench, led by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant, and comprising Justice Joymalya Bagchi and Justice Vipul M Pancholi, said, "Both sides have requested adjournment from time to time to enable the parties to explore settlement. We are informed that they themselves have not been able to find out a viable solution. In view of the request made on their behalf, we request Justice Ranjana P Desai to act as the mediator. We also request her to have the assistance of two domain experts as may be suggested by the parties".

Attorney General R Venkataramani, appearing for the Centre, and Senior Advocate Kapil Sibal for the consortium, urged the court to refer it to mediation to explore the possibility of arriving at a negotiated settlement. The CJI agreed and said Justice Desai will be the right person as she has immense experience in resolving commercial disputes.

The case has its origins in a production-sharing contract (PSC) signed by an RIL-led consortium with the Centre in 2000, securing rights to explore and extract natural gas from the KG basin. The contract covered various entitlements, responsibilities and revenue-sharing arrangements.

The RIL-led consortium started commercial production from the assets situated adjacent to ONGC's Godavari petroleum and mining lease and the KG-DWN-98/2 block, in April, 2009. The RIL then held 60% stake in the relevant KG-D6 block, BP PLC 30% and Niko Resources 10%. After Niko's exit, RIL's interest rose to 66.6% and BP's 33.3%.

In 2013, ONGC claimed RIL had illegally extracted natural gas from its blocks, accusing it of drilling wells near the boundaries of its hydrocarbon blocks which allowed gas to flow from ONGC's fields to RIL's KG-D6 block between 2009 and 2013, leading to "unjust enrichment" for the latter. ONGC had argued that at least four wells that RIL drilled in its KG-D6 block drew natural gas from the neighbouring block. In 2014, the Delhi HC directed the government to take a call on the matter on the basis of an independent study.

Global consultant DeGolyer and Mac Naughton (D&M), which carried out the study, said in its report, finalised in November 2015, that its analysis "indicated connectivity and continuity of the reservoirs across the blocks" operated by ONGC and RIL. A month later, the government formed a single-member panel under former Delhi HC Chief Justice AP Shah on the issue.

The panel in its report said that the government, not ONGC, was entitled to compensation from RIL as ONGC did not own the block, given all mineral resources of the country are owned by the Government of India. In November 2016, the government, based on the Shah panel report, slapped RIL and its partners with a total demand of $1.55 billion. After that, RIL and its partners decided to go for arbitration.

In July 2018, the arbitral tribunal ruled in favour of RIL, rejecting the government's claims and stating that the PSC did not prohibit contractors from extracting and selling gas that had migrated from an external source.

The Centre challenged this in the Delhi HC and a single-judge bench dismissed it in May 2024. Following an appeal, the HC division bench set aside the single-judge bench's order and the arbitral award, saying they were contrary to the settled position of law. On March 3 last year, the government raised a demand of $2.81 billion on RIL and its partners. The RIL-led consortium moved SC.

@ieExplained
#ExpressExplained
If there are questions of current or contemporary relevance that you would like explained, please write to
explained@indianexpress.com

• CYBERSECURITY

$6.3 bn stolen in 20 min: Inside the mega Binance hack

Akash Mandal
Mumbai, October 30

BINANCE, THE world's largest cryptocurrency exchange, was hit by a massive security breach late Thursday in which cyberattackers stole around $6.3 billion. The hack, considered to be the biggest-ever hack to date, led the exchange to freeze assets worth $3 billion and caused panic in the crypto market, leading to sharp falls in the prices of several cryptocurrencies.

The breach

"Binance's initial investigation suggests that the security incident may involve a compromised DevOps engineer's laptop, which allowed an attacker to gain access to a service container and submit unauthorised withdrawal transactions," the company posted on X. It later said that it had "uncovered additional points of breach".

Reuters reported that the bulk of the incident unfolded in around 20 minutes beginning late on Thursday and bore similarities to previous large attacks blamed on North Korea, citing US blockchain analysis firms TRM Labs and Chainalysis. TRM said the attackers were able to order wallets that Binance uses to empty into hacker-controlled wallets.

"The attackers gained access to the pathway through which transactions and information flow. The wallet was unaffected. However, with this access, the attackers could instruct the wallet to execute transactions," an industry executive said on the condition of anonymity.

"However, once you gain access to the DevOps system, you can identify other access points too. So, it is important to see how quickly you can contain the breach."

Impact of the hack

Bitcoin, the world's largest cryptocurrency, plunged 4.5% Thursday, hitting its lowest level since September. Ethereum slumped 5%. Other major cryptocurrencies also saw similar sell-offs, though many of them recovered slightly on Friday. "When a player as big as Binance is hit, it affects sentiment across the industry," another industry executive said.

Binance, however, assured users that the company would cover losses from its own funds. The company said it had revoked the authorisation of the network responsible for the breach and had informed law enforcement agencies and blockchain intelligence platforms.

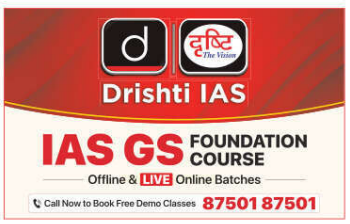
It had initially suspended deposits and withdrawals. However, it subsequently clarified that deposits would remain unaffected, while withdrawals could resume within 45 hours. The $3 billion in blocked funds represents assets frozen by the exchange and other entities, including blockchain-enabled platforms Tether and Circle, which the attackers could have accessed.

Impact on India

The impact on crypto investors in India could be significant. "India currently has around 100 million users, out of which 80-90% have direct or indirect exposure to Binance. It provides the vast majority of the liquidity in the Indian crypto market. Even Indian exchanges like CoinDCX have exposure to the exchange," one of the industry executives mentioned above said.

PAST BREACHES

- In 2019, bitcoins worth about $40 million were stolen from Binance after attackers used a combination of viruses and phishing techniques, which the exchange couldn't recover.
- North Korea's state-backed Lazarus Group stole around $1.5 billion from Bybit last year through spoofing. Only a small portion was recovered.



• POLITY

The intricate system to elect MLCs

A general election is simple: one vote for one candidate. But MLC polls are much more complex, involving preferential voting by MLAs, local bodies, graduates and teachers, besides nominations by the Governor

•Legislative Council seats: The break-up

Six states in India have Legislative Councils. Here's how their seats are distributed among different electorates and the Governor's nominees.

STATE	TOTAL MLC SEATS	ELECTED BY				NOMINATED BY GOVERNOR
		Local authorities	Graduates	Teachers	MLAs	
Andhra Pradesh	58	20	5	5	20	8
Bihar	75	24	6	6	27	12
Maharashtra	78	22	7	7	30	12
Karnataka	75	25	7	7	25	11
Telangana	40	14	3	3	14	6
Uttar Pradesh	100	36	8	8	38	10
Madhya Pradesh*	90	31	8	8	31	12
Tamil Nadu*	78	26	7	7	26	12

*NOT OPERATIONAL; SOURCE: REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE ACT, 1950



EXPERTS EXPLAIN

CHAKSHU ROY & YASHIKA KEDIA
THE WRITERS WORK AT PRS LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH

THE BJP-LED NDA has won 16 out of the 28 Legislative Council seats for which elections were held in four states.

The ruling alliance won all four seats in Karnataka, six out of 11 in Uttar Pradesh, four out of eight in Bihar, and two of five in Maharashtra. Unlike elections for Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs), not every adult citizen is eligible to vote for Members of the Legislative Councils (MLCs). Not all states have Legislative Councils, either.

A second chamber for states

India's legislatures are divided into two categories — unicameral (single House) or bicameral (two Houses). The Constitution mandates a bicameral legislature (Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha) at the national level and gives states the option of having a second chamber called the Legislative Council.

During the framing of the Constitution, there was disagreement in the Constituent Assembly on having a second chamber in states. The arguments in support of a second chamber were that it would bring different viewpoints, be the voice of reason and check hasty action by the popularly elected House.

The opposing viewpoint was that having a second chamber would be costly, delay government action and leaders would use its membership to dispense favours.

Our Constitution framers resolved these differences by giving states the power to decide whether they wanted a second chamber, capped the size of the House and put limits on its powers. And in doing so, they created a unique legislative institution.

Six states — Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh and Telangana — have a Legislative Council.

Article 171 specifies that a Legislative Council will have a minimum of 40 members, and pegs the maximum number to a third of the size of the Assembly.

The Constitution also specifies the membership structure of the state Legislative Councils. MLAs elect one-third of the Council's members, local body members elect another third, graduates elect one-twelveth, teachers elect another one-twelveth, and the Governor nominates the remaining MLCs. The Representation of People Act, 1950 provides the membership breakup of every Legislative Council in the country.

The voting process

MLCs have a six-year term and a third of a Council's members retire every two years. To contest an MLC election, an individual should be at least 30 years old and be an elector in the state. Governors can nominate individuals from the fields of literature, science, art, co-operative movement and social service who are residents of the state.

Elections for MLC seats in which MLAs are the voters are straightforward. Only those who are current members of the Assembly get to vote in the election.

But the other three categories of MLCs — local body, graduate and teacher — are all territorial constituencies. So local body members, graduates and teachers of those areas in the state get to vote in the election.

For local body MLC constituencies, only current members of those bodies can vote.

The electoral roll for graduate and teacher constituencies has different requirements. These rolls are prepared fresh before every election and even existing voters have to apply again to get on the roll. They also have to fulfil the specified criterion from the qualifying date, which is November 1 every year.

In the case of graduate constituencies, the voter should be a citizen, ordinarily a resident in the constituency and for three years holding a graduate degree from anywhere in India. In case of teacher constituencies, the voter should, in the last six years, have been a teacher in an educational institution (not lower than a secondary school) for at least three years.

Graduates and teachers

Here, a question arises. What's the rationale for an electorate representing specific sections of society (like graduates and teachers)?

The practice of lawmakers representing specific sections of society began in pre-independent India. The Government of India Act of 1935 provided for representation based on religious, economic and social grounds.

Constituent Assembly Member Shibban Lal Saxena suggested that the Council should represent the intelligentsia of a province. He suggested that some members should be elected by different subsets of the entire electorate. A subset could be graduates, members of trade unions, local body members, learned professionals, and more. This idea was then incorporated into the Constitution.

Preferential choice

Voting in a general election is simple — a voter casts their vote for one candidate. The simplicity of this process allows the use of an electronic voting machine. But voting in an MLC election is done through a single, transferable vote. This method requires a voter to rank the candidates by indicating their preference, just like in a Rajya Sabha election. *(See story and box alongside).*

A ballot paper contains the names of the candidates (besides NOTA). The voter is required to indicate their preference by writing 1, 2 or 3 in front of the candidate's name. At the time of counting of votes, candidates get eliminated if they don't get the required number of votes meeting the threshold.

In Rajya Sabha polls, MLAs have to show their votes to their party's election agent. They don't have to do so in MLC polls.

How Councils differ from Rajya Sabha

Rajya Sabha is a continuous body. But Assemblies have the power to recommend the creation and abolition of a Legislative Council.

•

Councils don't have the Constitutional mandate to give shape to legislation passed by the Assembly.

•

In 2013, a Parliamentary panel examining the creation of a Council in Rajasthan flagged a need to evolve a national policy on the creation or abolition of Councils.

•

It said that a Council, once created, should not be abolished at the whim of a newly elected state govt.

Ballot papers in Indian elections: Where they are still used, and why



VIKAS PATHAK

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi took a swipe at the Congress after it won just one of the 28 Member of Legislative Council (MLC) seats that went to the polls across four states. This is because MLC elections use ballot papers rather than electronic voting machines (EVMs), which the Congress has in the past blamed for losses.

Since the PM's remarks have brought the spotlight back to the EVMs-vs-ballot-papers debate, it's instructive to see which sets of elections in India are conducted with ballot papers.

Elections using ballot papers

Most elections to gram panchayats, panchayat samitis, and zilla parishads are held through ballot papers. A 2023 study sponsored by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj and undertaken by the Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA) found that 53% of states conduct gram panchayat elections using ballot papers.

"Only three States/UTs (Kerala, Sikkim, and Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu) conduct gram panchayat elections through EVMs in all constituencies of the gram panchayat. However, other States are in a transitional phase wherein 22 percent of the States have adopted EVMs in some of the constituencies while in the rest of the constituencies, ballot papers are still followed," the report added. "However, in the higher levels of panchayat elections, i.e., intermediate and district panchayats, the share of EVMs used by States increases. For instance, in district/zilla panchayat elections, 17 percent of States use EVMs in all the constituencies."

The report also said: "States which are using ballot papers hinted that lack of funds and awareness about the usage of EVM is one of the major hindrances in conducting panchayat elections. But the same voters cast their vote using EVMs in the assembly and the parliamentary elections; so this argument of lack of awareness among the voters is lopsided." It added that counting of ballot papers was a cumbersome process requiring huge manpower, adding that it was also not environmentally friendly.

Former elected sarpanch from Chandrapur in Maharashtra Kalyan Kumar said that the tehsildars provide symbols to candidates days before the elections in rural local bodies. "They ask for three options and allot one of these. These are not the party symbols we know." According to him, how much in touch a candidate is with their electors and whether they help them get everyday work done is more crucial than ideology in these polls.

Describing the process of elections to rural local bodies, a Bihar official told *The Indian Express* that multiple elections at gram panchayat, panchayat samitis, etc., happen at around the same time, and this makes ballot papers more handy because using so many machines would be difficult. But he agreed that ballot papers make counting difficult.

Regarding how some states conduct panchayat elections with EVMs if the symbols are not the conventional party symbols, former Election Commissioner Ashok Lavasa told *The Indian Express* that there is a procedure called "symbol loading" that is used to load the required symbols onto the EVMs. Municipal corporation elections, Lavasa said, lie within the purview of the State Election Commissions, and they can decide to use EVMs or ballot papers. The Municipal Corporation of Delhi elections, for instance, are conducted via EVMs, but Punjab decided to shift to ballot papers in 2026. The Punjab and Haryana High Court said that the Punjab Municipal Election Rules, 1994, allowed both ballot papers and EVMs, legally permitting the SEC to choose either of them.

Student union elections are also held either using EVMs or ballot papers. The Delhi University Students' Union polls, for instance, use EVMs. "The EVMs display the names of the candidates in alphabetical order. Here, the name and the ballot number of the candidate is important," said Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad national media convener Harsh Attri. The Jawaharlal Nehru University Students' Union election uses ballot papers.

Single, transferable vote

Elections held via a single transferable vote, however, have to use ballot papers. As per Article 171 of the Indian Constitution, elections to the legislative councils are held through a single, transferable vote. In this procedure, the voters have to mark their first, second, etc., preferences on the ballot paper, so that the vote is transferable. This happens on a ballot paper rather than an EVM.

Rajya Sabha elections also happen by a single transferable vote, where preferences are marked by the elector on a ballot paper. A formula is used here to calculate the quota required for a candidate to win.

• THE FORMULA TO CALCULATE RAJYA SABHA VOTES

- **The total** number of MLAs voting in a state is divided by the number of seats heading to polls plus 1. Then, 1 is added to the resulting number to calculate the quota.
- **Say the** total number of MLAs voting in a state is 200 and elections are on for four seats. So, 200 will be divided by 4+1, or 5, which results in 40. The quota will thus be 40+1, or 41. Any candidate getting 41 votes is declared elected.
- **The system** followed, however, is of a single transferable vote. So, MLAs can mark their first, second, third, preferences.
- **In the above** example, every candidate getting 41 first preference votes will be declared elected. If this does not fill all the seats, the surplus votes of those already elected are transferred to the second preference candidates of MLAs whose first preferences have already won.
- **Say, 41 is** the winning quota: If a winning candidate secures 45 votes, this would mean this candidate has four surplus votes. These four surplus votes will be moved to the second preference candidates.
- **If more** than one victorious candidate has surplus votes, the largest surplus will be transferred first. If even this does not fill all vacancies, the candidate with the lowest number of first preference votes is eliminated, and the second preference votes in their ballot paper are transferred.
- **This process** goes on until all the seats are filled.

• ECONOMY

Under Trump administration, how the capitalist US became more 'socialist'



THE US is scheduled to hold its midterm elections on November 3. Voters will decide which of the two political parties controls the US Congress, which comprises two houses — the House of Representatives and the Senate.

Unlike India, the US political system observes stricter separation of powers among the three branches of government.

The Republican Party today controls both houses of the US Congress. This is an ideal scenario for the Republicans because they also have their candidate — Donald Trump — as President. In other words, the Republicans control both the legislative and executive branches. This accords the right-wing party the ability to get not just the legislative nod for its policy agenda, but also to have a President execute it fully.

The vote could alter that equation substantially, especially if the more left-wing Democratic Party wins both houses.

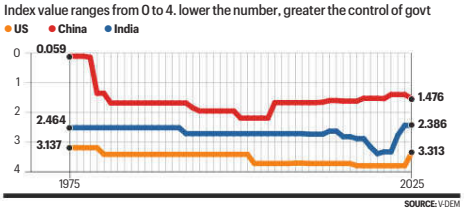
What's at stake?

Since the surprising victory of Zohran Mamdani as the New York Mayor in November last year, Trump has sharpened his attack on the Democrats, repeatedly warning voters against left-wing policies. "In state after state, the Democrat establishment has been overthrown and replaced by crazed lunatics and radicals. They call themselves Democrat socialists, but actually, they're communists," Trump said just a month ago.

Words like 'socialism' and 'communism' have long been slurs in the US, especially in the context of its Cold War with the erstwhile USSR. In contrast, the Democratic Party is moving towards more socialist policies, such as addressing inequality by taxing the rich and redistributing the proceeds among the poor. Former Vice President Kamala Harris openly called for price controls during her 2024 presidential campaign against Trump.

•STATE OWNERSHIP OF ECONOMY

Index value ranges from 0 to 4. lower the number, greater the control of govt



SOURCE: V-DEM

What about Trump's administration?

As Cullen S Hendrix, a senior fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics, pointed out recently, the US has moved towards socialism under Trump 2.0.

The defining feature of socialism is public or State ownership and/or control of productive resources — how far does the government own or directly control important sectors of the economy?

Sample the following decisions by the Trump Administration: In June 2025, the US government took a "golden share" in Japan's Nippon Steel when the latter took over US Steel. This gave the US government veto rights over US operations. Then in August 2025, the US government took a 10% stake in Intel, the American semiconductor manufacturing firm. The US government has also taken a stake in several other publicly traded companies, such as MP Materials, Lithium Americas, and Trilogy Metals.

Hendrix pointed to data from V-Dem (a global research project and independent institute that measures the quality, types, and health of democracies worldwide) on State ownership of the economy.

"The United States has consistently ranked among the countries with the least state control of the economy for nearly two decades according to the V-Dem index... Since 2010, the US had never ranked lower than 4th out of 179 covered countries, and often ranked 2nd, just behind Japan in 1st place (North Korea ranks 179th). In 2025, the first year of the second Trump administration, state control of the US economy grew, and 15 countries now have less state control than the US..." he wrote in a recent research report.

The chart alongside captures the V-Dem gauge. The closer to 0, the more State control over the economy, with 4 as the upper end suggesting an economy where very little valuable capital belongs to the State or is directly controlled by it. The US reading has shifted sharply towards greater State control under Trump, though it is still far less than some comparable economies, such as China.

The data also shows that India, too, has turned more 'socialist' under a right-wing prime minister since 2020.

Meena, Yashoda, Punita and Priyanka. Candidates for an upcoming Home Guards recruitment test, they have turned up for a trial run, hoping for a job that will change their lives and of their families. Some run alone, others with their husbands cheering them on. SHUBHAM TIGGA watches them as they race — in shorts, pyjamas and sarees — to the finish line

WOMEN WHO *run*







(Clockwise from above, right) Around 6,000 women turned up at the Sidhu Kanhu Stadium in Ramgarh district for a day-long trial run ahead of the Home Guard recruitment test; many of the women came with their husbands and children; they had to cover four rounds of the stadium ground for the 1,600-metre run. PHOTOS BY SHUBHAM TIGGA

HOLDING HIS two-year-old close to his chest, Hiralal Bedia shouts out to his wife Meena Kumari: "Don't panic, stay focused." Meena, leaning forward, her foot on the starting line, arms in position, eyes in fierce focus, nods without looking up.

As Meena, 24, takes off for the 1,600-metre run, Hiralal is a bundle of nerves. He shuffles along the sideline marked in chalk, child in hand, his phone with the video button pressed in the other. After four rounds of the Sidhu Kanhu Stadium ground in Ramgarh district, Jharkhand, Meena crosses the finish line in eight minutes and collapses. The officials tell her she has made it to the 'excellence' category — those who clock under 8 minutes.

Meena is among around 6,000 women from six blocks in Ramgarh who have turned up at the Sidhu Kanhu Stadium for a day-long trial run ahead of the physical efficiency test for recruiting Home Guards across Jharkhand. Around 20,000 men and women from across Ramgarh district will compete for a mere 284 vacant posts of Jharkhand Home Guard Vahini. In Ramgarh, the test was to be conducted between October 24 and November 5, but has now been postponed due to cyclone Arnab.

By 5 am, the stadium is packed with women runners and a few men. The organisers say the day's trial run is largely for women, and the men's run was held earlier. Just as dawn breaks, the women spill out of packed autorickshaws that are stuffed with water containers and bags of sportswear. Many of them are young mothers, accompanied by their husbands and babies. After arriving in sarees, many of them change into shorts and pyjamas. Some simply tuck in the *pallu* and pleats of their sarees and queue up for the run.

A voluntary auxiliary force under Jharkhand's Home Department, Home Guards assist the police in traffic management and law-and-order. Currently, there are 795 Home Guards in Ramgarh district. While not a government job, it's highly coveted since it comes with the khaki uniform and carries benefits such as maternity leave and night-shift allowances for women personnel.

"Jharkhand has around 30,000 active Home Guards, including nearly 12,000 women," says Kailash Karmali, the State Commandant of Home Guards.

Neelima Surin, District Commandant of Home Guards, Ramgarh, says, "Home Guards are paid a daily allowance for their duties, unlike the monthly salaries for police personnel." Monthly pay can go up to Rs 32,000 for 30 days of duty, Surin says.

The trial runs, conducted by different academies, are an opportunity for candidates to run on the ground where the official recruitment test will be conducted. These are practice races, but Meena and the others who have turned up at the stadium today sprint as if their lives depended on it.

Meena's husband catches up with her at the finish line, "just in case she has cramps and needs a leg massage".

But Meena is fine, smiling broadly. "She used to be a state-level kabaddi player," Hiralal says proudly.

'Alag level ka personality hai'

On October 15, the day of the trial run, the couple woke up at 4 am and ate black *chana* and bananas before going for a warm-up run at a ground near their house. By 6 am, they had left their village, Chotki Tongri in Hazaribagh district, for the stadium, a 15-km drive in their car.

At the ground, before the run, Meena changes into a T-shirt and track pants that she has packed from home.

She was 18 and studying BA History, when she had to drop out of college and give up her preparations for the Railways Group D exams. Her parents, she says, couldn't afford her education or her dreams.

Then in 2021, she married Hiralal. Besides their daughter, the couple have a seven-year-old son from Hiralal's late wife.

A political science graduate, Hiralal runs a Pragyan Kendra, a single-window for government, financial and digital services, in their village.

Meena says money has never been a problem since she got married, but she longed for a job and the financial independence that comes with it. "My husband earns, but I want to spend my own money — on our family and on myself," she says.

Hiralal, she says, has always motivated her. "I told her she could pursue what she wanted... I'll back her," he says.

When the Home Guard opportunity came up, he encouraged Meena to start preparing. He pointed to the state-level kabaddi medals she had won for her school, saying it would give her an edge in the 1,600-metre run. Meena fulfilled the eligibility criteria: education up to Class 7 for a rural posting, age between 19 and 40 years as of January 1, 2026, and a minimum height of 148 cm for women.

Since she applied for the job, Hiralal has been her personal coach. At 4-4.30 am every day, he takes her out for training, while his family — parents, brother and sister-in-law — take over child care and other responsibilities at home. "It has just been a month since we started training. Our daughter usually comes along. After we return, I prepare breakfast, so our son can go to school," Meena says.

She knows the job is a long shot, but she desperately wants it for herself. "Women in Jharkhand face a lot of judgment — for our clothes, for what we do. We need to change these mindsets. I know people will talk behind my back, but one day, when I achieve something, they'll praise me," she says.

What she is most excited about is the khaki uniform. "*Alag* level *ka* personality *hai* (It's a different level of personality)," says Meena, who wears sarees at home.

Meena is aware of a recent video that went viral — of Kavita Kumari, a 26-year-old widowed mother from Soso village, Ramgarh, who ran barefoot in a saree during a recent trial run. Meena finds Kavita "inspiring", but says it's not unusual for women from Adivasi communities, who have always had a sporting tradition. "After Kavita went viral, we realised that for those outside Jharkhand, it is fascinating, but for us, it is normal, just a way of life," she says.

Meena's husband catches up with her at the finish line, "just in case she needs a leg massage". But Meena is fine. "She used to be a state-level kabaddi player," he says

'Can't wear shorts in village'

Around 8.30 am, the microphone in the stadium blares, "*Kahin saree, kahin suit, kahin maathe pe hai sindoor, kaano mein hai baali, gale mein hai mangalsutra* (some are in sarees, some in salwar-suits, some are married, with vermillion on their foreheads and mangalsutra around their necks)".

In a makeshift room at the far end of the ground, Yashoda Devi, 26, changes out of her *salwar-kameez* into a T-shirt and a pair of shorts.

"Our society is still conservative, so she can't wear shorts in our village. She changes here, so she can run comfortably," her husband Santosh says, cradling their nearly year-old daughter Myra.

From Gargali village in Mandu block, the couple had covered around 25 km on a bike to reach the stadium. When Yashoda emerges in her sportswear, she takes Myra into her arms, plays with her for a while before joining a queue of around 100 runners on the track.

She is soon back, completing the 1,600-metre run in a little more than seven minutes.

"I underwent a Caesarean delivery nearly a year ago, and I still have stomach pains," Yashoda says, clutching her waist. She had worn an abdominal support belt during the run.

Her mother-in-law, concerned about Yashoda's health, had objected to the training. "But I told her, I have to run," she says.

Yashoda was 17 when she married Santosh, a farmer who also works at the Krishi Vigyan Kendra. Though she completed her graduation in sociology after marriage, she says she still has a lot of dreams and is determined to run as best as she can.

It was this determination that saw her getting up, seconds after she tripped on the field, blinded by the dust kicked up by the other runners. But she had gone on to finish the race in the 'excellence' category. "I would have done even better if I had not tripped."

These days, Yashoda has been waking up at 4 am and preparing food for her family before leaving for practice at a ground nearly 2 km from their village. "My husband looks after our daughter while I train," she says.

With their 10-year-old son attending a private school in Hazaribagh, a bulk of Santosh's monthly income of Rs 10,000 from the Krishi Kendra goes towards his school fee. Yashoda, who is part of a 14-member self-help group, says she hopes she can contribute to the family's expenses once she starts earning.

Her self-help group was recently part of an initiative to erect an Ambedkar statue in their village, but it ended badly over a land dispute with members of a dominant community in the village.

The incident left her shaken, but she believes the job will help her gain confidence. "What I couldn't do before marriage, I will do now," she says.

'I borrowed shoes to run'

Every day, Punita Devi, a widow from Melani village in Ramgarh's Patratu block, would commute nearly 30 km to Ranchi's Chandni Chowk for work. She lifted bricks at construction sites and did other odd jobs, earning around Rs 350 a day, "of which Rs 50 went towards auto fares".

With that income, food rations and what she grew on a small patch of land, Punita, a single mother, raised her two daughters, 16 and 13, and her 12-year-old son.

For the past three months, however, Punita, 32, has had a different schedule. Every morning, she wakes up at 4 am and runs nearly 5 km from Pokhra More to the Haripur panchayat building.

She runs in a saree because she doesn't want to draw any attention or controversy, something that has chased her for years.

Punita was 17 when she lost her father to tuberculosis, and was married later that year. But her husband, a labourer at Jindal Steel and Power Limited in Patratu, died of liver illness. "On Purnima night in 2019, he woke up to chew tobacco. He complained he was feeling unwell and lost consciousness. We rushed him to the hospital, but he died around 10 am," she recalls.

It's hard for a single woman in these parts, says Punita, who was accused of being a "witch" and disowned by her in-laws. But Punita says she stayed put in her husband's house, later getting her children into government residential schools.

Around three months ago, after she heard of the Home Guards recruitment, Punita began her training under a coach in Gola block, close to her mother's home in Ranchi.

Samir Ayubi, the coach, recalls that when he met Punita and heard of what she had gone through, he offered to train her for free. "She will definitely get the job, given her potential. There is also a 5% quota for widows," says Ayubi.

At the Ramgarh stadium, Punita walks in unaccompanied, and lugs her bags. When she runs, there is no one to cheer for her.

She feels "alone" when she sees women with their husbands, but the dream of a government job keeps her going. "I borrowed shoes from a friend and ran," she says. "All for my children's future."

'I am just living for my son'

When Priyanka Devi runs, it's with the hope that it will lead her to her son, whom she has not seen for the last four years since her husband deserted her in 2022. "My son is now seven. He lives with his father," says the 25-year-old, at her parents' home in Ichak village, Hazaribagh.

Priyanka was 17 when she got married and moved to her husband's home in Digwar, in Ramgarh district. Her husband, she claims, harassed her for dowry and accused her of being a "witch" before throwing her out of the house in 2022. She approached the Hazaribagh district court, seeking legal action, but the court, directing her husband to pay her a monthly maintenance of Rs 2,000, disposed of the case, says her advocate Rakesh Kumar Ranjan. "Her husband filed for divorce in Ramgarh, but the divorce has not been finalised," he says.

Priyanka says she doesn't want a divorce. All she wants is to live with her son. "When my husband left me, my son was three. For the last four years, I have not even seen my son's face," she asks.

Priyanka, who helps her parents grow vegetables, says she often feels like a burden on them. "My father worked hard to get my two sisters and me married, and it ended so badly. Now I am living only for my son," she says.

These days, she has been travelling 15-17 km from her parents' home to practise at the Hazaribagh Defence Academy. Though the academy charges candidates Rs 1,500, her coach has waived the fee. "I will put all my efforts into this and bring my son back one day," she says.

30k
Home Guards in Jharkhand, including nearly 12,000 women

₹32k
is what a Home Guard can potentially earn in a month. They are paid a daily allowance for their duties, unlike the monthly salaries for police personnel

Why the job matters

- A voluntary auxiliary force under Jharkhand's Home Department, Home Guards assist the police in traffic management and law-and-order
- While not a government job, it's coveted since it comes with the khaki uniform and benefits such as maternity leave and night-shift allowances for women personnel
- With a relatively less demanding eligibility criteria – education up to Class 7 for a rural posting, age between 19 and 40 years, and a minimum height of 148 cm for women – the job is an attractive option for many



"Women in Jharkhand face a lot of judgment — for our clothes, for what we do. We need to change these mindsets. I know people will talk, but one day, when I achieve something, they'll praise me"

MEENA KUMARI, 24
CHOTKI TONGRI, HAZARIBAGH



"I underwent a C-section delivery a year ago, and I still have stomach pains. My mother-in-law was concerned about my health. She initially objected to the training. But I told her I have to run"

YASHODA DEVI, 26
MANDU BLOCK, RAMGARH



"I feel alone when I see women with their husbands, but the dream of a government job keeps me going. I borrowed shoes from a friend... All for my children's future"

PUNITA DEVI, 32
MELANI, PATRATU BLOCK, RAMGARH



"When my husband left me, my son was three. For the last four years, I have not even seen my son's face... I will put all my efforts into this and bring my son back one day. I am living only for my son"

PRIYANKA DEVI, 25
ICHAK, HAZARIBAGH

On Shaky Ground



Shalini Langer

IT DOESN'T matter if it ain't broken, trust good red-blooded Americans to try fix it. If it is in the larger direction of the Middle East, don't bother keeping them away.

Here, Tucker (Zachary Levi) and his gang (Wes Chatham, Jake Choi, Augusto Aguilera, Quincy Isaiah) fly into the embers of a US intervention gone south in, first, Afghanistan, and then Iran. In Kabul, it is 2021, as America is making a hasty retreat in the face of a resurgent Taliban. In Iran, in a lucky or unlucky (depending on your geographical location) break for the film, the war is still not on the horizon. However, the Revolutionary Guards are villainous enough to justify Tucker's excursion.

That is just one of the many motives *The Fix* suggests for the actions of this group of Americans. Typical of this uneven film, whose ambitions are as admirable and sincere as its execution frustrating, also in the group's sights are $25 million which were stashed away behind a wall in pre-Revolution Iran, as well as jogging the memory of Larry (Liam Neeson), their CIA handler who seems to be losing his mind and has lapsed into dangerously revealing mutterings. Neeson may be a big part of the film promotions, but in the film, he plays a minor, if ponderous, role.

THE FIX
★★½
DIRECTOR: Guy Moshe
CAST: Liam Neeson, Zachary Levi, Elnaaz Norouzi, Quincy Isaiah, Wes Chatham, Jake Choi, Augusto Aguilera, Lara Wolf

Significant screen time is also devoted to Elnaaz Norouzi, the actor of Iranian-German descent who is more known to us via Hindi films and TV shows, including *Sacred Games*. Tucker brings Zara (Norouzi), an American fluent in Farsi, aboard to ease his way into Iran. Someone appears to have given a different script to Norouzi though, as she flirts — literally — in the face of real danger as a very serious Tucker keeps telling her to "listen to me".

Tucker and gang go into Tehran to extricate Maryam (Lara Wolf), an activist on the crosshairs of the Revolutionary Guards. If that isn't complicated enough, there are double-crossers at every turn, and twists at every other. We shuffle between Kabul, Virginia, Tehran and Baku, open meadows and rocky cliffs, mountain passes and marshy rivers. We oscillate between the need for a "rush" of these operatives, and their need for "closure", carrying the guilt of not having been able to save an Afghan ally in 2021.

The cinematography is excellent, and the efforts at bringing together the many pieces of this geopolitical mess commendable. But as *The Fix* labours on for an inexplicable length of 142 minutes, you can't help but feel it has lost the plot — not unlike the lay of the land in real life.



A Woman's Weave

Shubhra Gupta

ONCE UPON a medieval time, in a village populated largely by an assortment of dislikeable types, there lived a Fisherwoman (Olivia Colman). Sick of being bullied, accused of stench arising from her string of tench (a kind of fish), she goes off to the resident Weaver (Peter Dinklage), and requests him to 'make' her a husband.

Behold the Wickerman, duly created in the image of the ideal man, who has almost ceased to exist, if he ever did. That he is a veritable green forest makes sense not only because he is made of wicker but also because he is incapable of a single evil thought. When you find one of those, let me know.

Polite to a fault with the villagers, even those who make fun of the couple, and tender with his wife, the Wicker husband is also a fantastic lover: one of the most entertaining parts of this strange, wondrous fable which hits the mark more often than not, is the series of ecstatic expressions on the Fisherwoman's face, when her husband is having at her.

The secret to make us believe in men made of wicker who make wild love with real-life women is the actors' complete commitment to their parts. Alexander Skarsgård plays the Wickerman softly, gently but never lets us forget that he is also a manly man, with all his bits in perfect working order.

When the jealous Tailor's Wife (an excellent Elizabeth Debicki) is rumbled as she plots and plans against the happy couple, the Wickerman stays as noble as he ever was. No wonder the villagers, especially the men — the Barkeep, the Baker, the Doctor — hate his guts. No wonder they try poisoning the Fisherwoman's ear; she may be experienced in withstanding vicious barbs but she is at sea when it comes to matters of the heart.

WICKER
★★★
DIRECTORS: Alex Huston Fischer, Eleanor Wilson
CAST: Olivia Colman, Alexander Skarsgård, Elizabeth Debicki, Peter Dinklage, Marli Siu, Nabhaan Rizwan, Richard E Grant

With those darts flying about and finding their target, the film turns a bit morose, but switches back its sunny course soon enough: Ms Colman is great when she is mooching, but even better when she has a smile lighting up her face.

Of course, being a fable (based on a short story, *The Wicker Husband*, by Ursula Wills-Jones) there is light at the end of the tunnel for our Fisherwoman and her Wicker husband and a little wicker tyke, along with their mentor and creator, the empathetic Weaver. Of course, there is; of what use is a fable otherwise?

Shines in the Everyday

Shubhra Gupta

LEAVING HOME comes with so many caveats attached. Will we return? If it's been a while, will we be the same? Will the people left behind be the same? And that eternal question, can we ever go home again, hovers uneasily, with no easy answers.

There can be nothing more eternal than the hills. And there can be nothing more emotive than a set of old parents determined to stay where they are, waiting patiently for the answers. *Pyre*'s lead characters (Padam Singh and Hira Devi) are in their eighties. They have lived in their tiny mountain abode all their lives, dealing with nature and all its vagaries, and patience is all they have.

The two-hour film is set in a picturesque Uttarakhand hamlet, where cloudbursts and landslides are not treated as calamities. The rubble that rolls down is usually pushed to the side, and continuous makeshift repairs ensure life goes on as before. Till, of course, the deluge becomes unstoppable.

Pyre is the kind of film where nothing much happens, and everything does, the drama encapsulated in the immersive rhythms of the mountain living. The old couple wait for a return of their only son, who left for Mumbai nearly 30 years back. Livestock is tended to, sickness is attended to, even as neighbours who have lived alongside, start leaving themselves, leaving the two as the lone inhabitants of their hills: their faces, as old and craggy, are framed against their window, looking out at their beloved landscape.



PYRE
★★★
DIRECTOR: Vinod Kapri
CAST: Padam Singh, Hira Devi, Subhash Chandra, Shubham Chaudhary, Shadab Khan

Kapri moves away from the kind of broad humour and heavy sentiment he has attempted in his previous films, *Pihu* and *Miss Tanakpur Haziir Ho*, neither of which I liked, to a quieter, observational style, which suits his subject to a T. I liked *Pyre* very much.

His actors, clearly non-professionals, look natural, not Bollywood actors parachuted to the hills: the camera doesn't appear to be an intrusion. A long horn, echoing over the hillside, is used to summon neighbours Laxman and Jeevan (Subhash Chandra and Shubham Chaudhary respectively) when emergencies happen: The old woman has to frequently be taken to hospital, carried down the slope in a makeshift contraption, with the old man carting along one of his goats as barter.

The two are quite delightful in the way they squabble, like old-time spouses do, talking easily about each other's passing almost in jest, even as we know that the remaining one will be devastated at the loss. Kapri, who's also written the film, injects humour and earned pathos in their exchanges, even as the old woman refuses to stop smoking, while scolding her man on his not-so-secret tippling habit. The arrival of *dakiya* Bishan (Shadab Khan) comes with a fresh spurt of hope: Will the letter be from their long-gone son, announcing his much-awaited return?

The only false note comes when over-written drama enters their climactic conversation: It's then that they look like they are 'acting'. But that doesn't take away from the film's primary strength, which becomes a moving statement about aging, loneliness, resilience and the power of hope: When the going gets tough, you do not flee. You stay and face the odds.

• STREAMING WATCHLIST



Baththa
NETFLIX

IN 1986 Madras, Sabhari (Sai Prithviraj), a timid eight-year-old boy accidentally locks a feared criminal, Baththavachalam (Vijay Sethupathi) inside a school restroom. As the gangster faces hunger and isolation, an unexpected friendship forms between them, transforming both their lives. This leads to Baththavachalam's reconciliation with his wife, and shift away from his harsh life. The film is directed and written by Balaji Tharaneetharan.



Immortal
SONY LIV

SET IN present-day Chennai, the film follows Magi, a printing press worker searching for an affordable place to stay. He meets Sindhu, a mysterious woman who offers him a room in her luxurious apartment at a surprisingly low rent. What seems like a lucky break soon takes an unsettling turn as strange events draw Magi deeper into her world, leading him towards a mystery that dates back much further than he imagined. *Immortal* is written and directed by Mariyappan Chinna.



Nocturne
APPLETV

CREATED BY Rowan Joffé and developed by John Hlavin, *Nocturne* is a crime drama based on *Lazarus* and *The Sandman*, novels in the Joona Linna series by Alexander Ahndoril and Alexandra Coelho Ahndoril. When a victim of notorious serial killer Jurek Walter unexpectedly turns up alive, detective Jonah Lynn (Liev Schreiber) races against time to find the only person still missing. Meanwhile, his protégé, Saga Bauer (Zazie Beetz), goes undercover to extract answers from the killer himself.



Obsession
JIOHOTSTAR

THE UNCUT, original version of *Obsession* premieres in both English and Hindi. The film, written and directed by Curry Barker, features standout performances by Inde Navarrette and Michael Johnston. Scared to confess his feelings and face rejection, Bear (Johnston) buys a charm called a One Wish Willow and wishes that Nikki (Navarrette) would love him more than anyone else in the world. The wish takes immediate effect, turning Nikki into an intensely affectionate, possessive partner.

ALAKA SAHANI

All Style, No Substance

Shubhra Gupta

FEISTY FEMALE gangsters, matrilineal linkages, picturesque period settings, strong women leading from the front: Can anything be better?

Turns out, not really. When it's a Yashraj production, style is a given, and there's plenty of that strewn around the strikingly shot *Akka*, with its sprawling homesteads and old rivalries and new contenders. What there's not in such lush abundance, is substance: The plot, which takes its time getting to a tipping point by the fifth episode, at which point there's a pause till presumably the second part of the show, keeps giving way to gratuitous spurts of violence and superfluous stylistic flourishes.

The timelines flash back and forth 800 years in the past and the 1980s, as we are led into fictional Pernuru, somewhere in South India, where women rule, with a set of stringent rules that they have created. They are allowed to take lovers but not husbands; girl children are worshipped as are the *kul-devis*, which watch over the forests and lakes and the people. Rough justice is the name of the game, and there's no fury than a woman scorned.

When Rudra (Radhika Apte) shows up on the shores of Pernuru, she throws down the gauntlet. She's here to take over, a clarion call that doubles up as a wake-up call for the head of the clan Bhavani (Keerthy Suresh), and a whole host of lusty matriarchs (Tanvi Azmi) and young warriors (Anjali Patil).



AKKA
★★
DIRECTORS: Dharmaraj Shetty
CAST: Keerthy Suresh, Radhika Apte, Tanvi Azmi, Anshuman Pushkar, Monika Panwar, Vishak Nair, Poornima Indrajith, Anjali Patil, Mahesh Manjrekar
STREAMING ON: Netflix

So far, all right, even though Apte's choice of attire — slinky gowns and oversized shades look like a throwback to bad Bollywood ladies of yore — makes her stick out like a sore thumb in a place where the other women are always dressed as if they are about to go off to a wedding, a christening or a celebration that involves loud incantations to the devi and her acolytes, all very Kantaresque.

The men, in a series like this, know their place. Anshuman Pushkar plays Amar, a clansman who finds himself on the right side of the relentlessly aggressive Rudra; another extended family member Nanda (Vishak Nair) is in love with Bhavani and wants nothing less than marriage.

By the time you sort out who's who, and all the names of the different regions that are at war but will predictably come together to put up a fight against the outsiders — pragmatically, the British overlords, and the *desi sarkaari* types that follow, are told that they will cooperate as long as they each stay in their lane — it's taken up too much mindspace and patience. Why did no one think of a family tree which we could refer to every time a name and place comes up?

Also, just what is it with depicting horrific violence on screen? I cannot unsee the burnt body of a child (yes, a spoiler, fully intended) arranged on the sea-shore for joint horrified reactions that are then turned into bloody face-offs between the contestants.

Apte gets a lot of screen time, but comes off familiar. It is Keerthy Suresh, powerful and radiant, who carries this show in and as Akka

Apte gets a lot of screen time, but comes off familiar. It is Keerthy Suresh, whose brief but impactful presence in *Dorothy* lent that film a touch of much-needed grace, both powerful and radiant here, carries this show in and as Akka. If only the rest matched up: Instead of flipping the male gangster tropes, with its insertion of *matru-satta* in place of *pita-and-putra*, it comes off more as a glossy Gangs of Kantarapura, minus true grit. Will the second part fix these niggles? We'll see.

Finding Her Agency

Alaka Sahani

WHEN THE cinematic reimagining of *Sense and Sensibility*, Jane Austen's debut novel published in 1811, was announced, comparisons with Ang Lee's adaptation were inevitable. The 1995 film, featuring Emma Thompson, Alan Rickman, Kate Winslet and Hugh Grant, has long held a special place in the hearts of Austen admirers. The latest adaptation, directed by Georgia Oakley brings a contemporary charm to the story of two sisters navigating love and life.

The beating heart of this timeless story is the relationship between sisters Elinor Dashwood (Daisy Edgar-Jones) and Marianne (Esmé Creed-Miles). While Elinor represents 'sense', keeping her expectations in check, Marianne epitomises 'sensibility', wearing her heart on her sleeve. Their bond anchors the story, with both Edgar-Jones and Creed-Miles bringing a keen understanding of their respective characters to the screen.

Austen put the sisters through financial and romantic struggles, allowing them to learn from each other. Oakley's interpretation gives their journeys a contemporary inflection. As Marianne is encouraged to retain her individuality and Elinor discovers the importance of being the "mistress" of her own happiness, both emerge with a greater understanding of what it means to live on one's own terms, although the witty one-liners are reserved for the youngest sister, Margaret (Bodhi Rae Breathnach).



SENSE AND SENSIBILITY
★★★½
DIRECTOR: Georgia Oakley
CAST: Daisy Edgar-Jones, Esmé Creed-Miles, George MacKay, Frank Dillane, Caitríona Balfe, Fiona Shaw

The adaptation is infused with gentle humour and a dreamy quality, particularly in its portrayal of the English countryside that offer little indication of the hardships that await them. Following their father's death, the sisters and their mother are forced to leave their ancestral home. They move to Barton Cottage, a modest accommodation.

There is a certain moodiness to the storytelling, with cinematographer Arnaud Potier's camera lingering over wildflowers and landscapes. Roger Goula's music adds to the atmosphere. The music and dance sequences are well designed.

For anyone wondering why Austen's novels continue to inspire screen adaptations — a new retelling of *Pride and Prejudice* is set to premiere on Netflix — the answer lies in the enduring relevance of her characters. More than two centuries later, Austen's heroines continue to mirror women's struggles for agency.

Marianne unapologetically pursues what she wants, while Elinor breaks free from the restraints she put on herself. In Oakley's retelling, their journeys are not simply about finding love but about discovering the ability to define happiness on their own terms.

LEGAL AMENDMENTS WERE TO TAKE EFFECT FROM APRIL 1

CBIC mandates immediate halt on GST arrests

Aanchal Magazine
New Delhi, October 30



The GST Council has recommended withdrawal of arrest powers under GST by omission of Section 69 of CGST Act, 2017. REUTERS

IN A significant move for trade facilitation, the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) has issued instructions to its field formations to immediately stop carrying out any arrests and also implement the recommendations of the GST Council on rationalised conditions for e-way bill inspections and show-cause notices.

The missive to all Central Goods and Services Tax (CGST) field formations comes months before the proposed legislative amendments were to take effect from April 1, 2027.

All the measures — scrapping of arrest powers, change in procedures for e-way bill inspection and verification, and a minimum Rs 10,000 threshold for show-cause notices — require amendments to CGST Act, 2017 and corresponding provisions of the respective state GST laws.

This comes after legal experts had raised concerns that the recommendations made by the GST Council in its 57th meeting lacked legal backing without the legislative amendments and may result in arrests and issuance of notices till the amendments were brought in the upcoming Winter Session of Parliament.

The CBIC said these measures are "trade friendly and would help in ease of living and doing business for the taxpayers, by reducing hardships owing to arrests, random checks of conveyances in transit and issuance of show cause notices in cases involving small amounts, making the law more trust based and forward looking, as well as reducing the compliance cost arising out of low value litigations."

The GST Council had recommended in its October 8 meeting that the amended provisions may come into force with effect from April 1 next year. "However, as an interim measure of trade facilitation, it has been decided by the Central Government that till these amendments in the Act are brought into effect, the aforesaid reforms shall be implemented by the field formations of the CBIC," the directive said.

The GST Council has recommended withdrawal of arrest powers under GST by omission of Section 69 of CGST Act, 2017. "All CGST field formations are accordingly directed that no further arrests may be carried out under GST," the CBIC said. Section 69 of the CGST Act provides for the power to arrest after approval by the Commissioner.

The GST Council in its meeting earlier this month had approved sweeping process reforms, ranging from the removal of arrest powers from tax officers at the pre-prosecution stage to a minimum threshold of Rs 10,000 being put in place for issuance of show-cause notices effective retrospectively.

For e-way bill verification, the Council had recommended that vehicles carrying goods can only be stopped by tax officers from either the state of the supplier or the recipient, and only on the basis of "specific intelligence" and due authorisation. In the directive, the CBIC said a conveyance should only be intercepted based on "specific intelligence which is duly authorised by an officer not below the rank of Joint Commissioner, who must record, in writing, the reasons to believe that the goods being carried in the conveyance are being transported in contravention of the provisions of CGST Act, 2017 or the rules made thereunder".

FULL REPORT ON
WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

TATA SONS' BOARD MEETING SCHEDULED FOR NOVEMBER 26

Noel's push for restructuring & SP Group's Rs 25K-cr exit

George Mathew
Mumbai, October 30

A FRESH power struggle is brewing at the top of the Tata Group, with Chairman of Tata Trusts Noel Tata pushing the Tata Sons board to take up two contentious proposals — the Shapoorji Pallonji (SP) group's Rs 25,000-crore funding demand and a merger of two unlisted group companies with Tata Sons to preserve its unlisted status.

The crucial board meeting which is scheduled for November 26 is likely to witness dramatic scenes as other directors of the company had rejected the proposals of Noel Tata in the previous board meeting on September 17.

According to sources, Noel Tata, a director of Tata Sons, sent two letters to the Tata Sons board on Thursday, seeking discussion and decisions on these two issues in the November 26 board meeting. "Under Article 121B, a director of Tata Sons can make proposals for consideration in the board meeting. Noel Tata has done that," said a source. However, Tata Sons board has not responded to Noel Tata's letter dated October 26 so far. "This is surprising," said a source.

Noel Tata had on Monday demanded audio and video recordings of a crucial board meeting, questioned the filing of the N Chandrasekaran's reappointment resolution with the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, role of Director Venu Srinivasan and sought disclosures about reported commercial dealings between TVS Motor Company and a company associated with Chandrasekaran's immediate family.

On September 11, the RBI had declined the company's request to voluntarily surrender its Certificate of Registration (CoR) and advised it to comply with the rules applicable to NBFC-Upper Layer entities. Tata Trusts had proposed merging two wholly-owned subsidiaries, Tata Electronic Systems Solutions (TESS) and Tata Consulting Engineers (TCE), with Tata Sons.

It's unclear whether other directors will agree to the proposal of merger of two group companies with Tata Sons to remain unlisted.

The November 26 meeting also assumes significance against the backdrop of differences within the Tata Trusts and Tata Sons over whether Tata Sons should remain privately held or pursue a public listing. While Noel Tata has argued against listing, some trustees, including Venu Srinivasan and Vijay Singh, have supported it, citing transparency and accountability. The RBI's September 11 decision to reject Tata Sons' application for voluntary surrender of its registration has further intensified the debate.

FULL REPORT ON
WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

RIL's net profit rises 33.8%, consolidated revenue soars 27.8%



The company's revenue growth was supported by strong performances across its businesses. REUTERS

ENS Economic Bureau
Mumbai, October 30

RELIANCE INDUSTRIES Limited (RIL) reported a strong financial performance for the second quarter of FY27, with consolidated gross revenue surging 27.8% year-on-year (YoY) to a record Rs 3,62,268 crore for the quarter ended September 2026.

The company's consolidated profit after tax (PAT), including the share of profit from associates and joint ventures, increased 33.8% YoY to Rs 29,550 crore, compared with Rs 22,092 crore in the corresponding quarter last year.

The company's revenue growth was supported by strong performances across its businesses, particularly Oil-to-Chemicals (O2C) and Digital Services. Consolidated revenue also increased sequentially from Rs 3,40,257 crore in the June 2026 quarter.

RIL's consolidated EBITDA rose 23.9% YoY to a record Rs 62,409 crore, against Rs 50,367 crore in Q2 FY26. However, the EBITDA margin moderated to 17.2% from 17.8% in the year-ago quarter. The standout contributor was the O2C business, which reported a 679% jump in EBITDA to Rs 25,203 crore, driven by stronger transportation fuel cracks and improved petrochemical margins. Digital Services EBITDA grew 17.7% to Rs 22,223 crore, supported by subscriber additions and higher average revenue per user. Reliance Retail reported gross revenue growth of 6.4% to Rs 91,716 crore, although its EBITDA declined 8.6% amid investments in digital commerce and cost pressures.

FULL REPORT ON
WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

Jio Platforms net profit rises 13.7%

Mumbai: Jio Platforms Ltd (JPL), the digital services arm of Reliance Industries, reported a 13.7% year-on-year increase in consolidated net profit at Rs 8,387 crore for the second quarter ended September 2026, compared with Rs 7,375 crore in the corresponding quarter last year.

Revenue from operations rose 11.4% to Rs 40,475 crore during the July-September quarter, against Rs 36,332 crore in the year-ago period, reflecting sustained growth in its connectivity business and expansion of digital services. The company's operating performance remained strong, with EBITDA increasing 16.6% to Rs 21,879 crore from Rs 18,757 crore a year ago. EBITDA margin expanded to 54.1% from 51.6%, an improvement of 250 basis points. ENS

Social Security Board for gig workers notified, RSS-linked unions dominate

Ravi Dutta Mishra
New Delhi, October 30

THE MINISTRY of Labour and Employment on Friday notified the constitution of the National Social Security Board (NSSB) for unorganised, gig and platform workers mandated under the Code on Social Security to design, monitor, and recommend targeted welfare schemes to bridge the social security gap for gig workers.

The 40-member board nominated by the government for three years was dominated by Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) linked unions and organisations such as Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS) and Laghu Udyog Bharati (LUB), which has as many as 6 members on the board.

The board includes seven union representatives and seven employer representatives, with the remaining members drawn from various government departments and the parliament. Among the unions, the RSS-linked BMS has three members, while Laghu Udyog Bharati, another RSS-linked organisation that works for MSME welfare, holds three of the seven employer seats.

However, there were no representatives from most of the 12 labour unions recognised by the government, such as Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU) and All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC). The board also had state representatives from BJP-ruled states, including Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat and West Bengal only.

A query sought from the spokesperson of the Ministry of Labour & Employment remained unanswered till press time.

The Ministry of Labour and Employment said that the board will be presided over by the Union Minister for Labour & Employment and comprise representatives from Central and State Governments, prominent aggregator companies, employers, civil society organisations, workers' unions and gig & platform Associations.

FULL REPORT ON
WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

Panel formed to review banking sector, suggest reforms in 6 mths

Siddharth Upasani
New Delhi, October 30

THE GOVERNMENT on Friday announced the setting up of the High-Level Committee on Banking for Viksit Bharat.

Headed by Suresh N Patel, former Central Vigilance Commissioner, the committee will review the banking sector and have six months to submit its recommendations to the government, including roadmaps to create "globally competitive banks" and for AI and digital innovation in banking institutions, while providing safeguards against cyber risks.

Announced in FY27 Union Budget speech, the committee is to comprehensively review the sector and "align it with India's next phase of growth, while safeguarding financial stability, inclusion and consumer protection".

Its other members include RBI Deputy Governor Shirish Chandra Murmu, former Deputy Governor NS Vishwanathan, and former Indian Bank Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer Padmaja Chunduru. The Joint Secretary (Banking) from the finance ministry's Department of Financial Services will be the Member Secretary.

The government wants at least 1-2 banks in the world's top-20 by 2047. Chinese banks dominate the rankings, with State Bank of India (45) and HDFC Bank (76) the only Indian banks in the world's largest 100 by assets, as per S&P Global.

The committee's Terms of Reference include suggesting a strategy for talent acquisition and capacity building to ensure a future-ready workforce for the banking sector, suggesting reforms to bring in efficiency and enable ease of doing banking, assess long-term capital requirements, and recommend policy options to boost private investment for sustainable growth, among others.

FULL REPORT ON
WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

TRAI weighs board-level AI oversight for telcos

Ojasvi Gupta
New Delhi, October 30

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has proposed bringing the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in telecom networks under a formal accountability framework, making operators responsible for failures even when the technology is outsourced to third-party vendors.

Under draft guidelines released on Friday, operators will have to put in place board-approved AI policies, establish dedicated governance committees and introduce mechanisms to monitor and report AI-related incidents.

The proposals seek to bring greater accountability to the use of AI in a sector that forms a critical part of the country's digital infrastructure.

TRAI has cautioned that while integrating AI into telecom networks could significantly improve efficiency, it may also introduce new risks if due diligence is not exercised before deployment of AI systems. The regulator has flagged risks such as biases creeping into AI systems during training and usage, unintended model behaviour, including model drift, and adversarial attacks that could affect the resilience of telecom infrastructure, particularly its critical components. FE

NOEL TATA TO STEP DOWN AS CHAIRMAN ON NOVEMBER 11

Bahram Vakil's journey: From top corporate lawyer to Trent's chair

George Mathew
Mumbai, October 30



Bahram N Vakil

BAHRAM N Vakil, one of the country's top lawyers in restructuring, infrastructure and project finance, is set to take over as the chairman of retail major Trent Ltd.

Trent is one of India's leading retail chains, with a market capitalisation of Rs 1.63 lakh crore. Vakil will take over the baton from Noel Tata, whose career has been closely associated with building and expanding the group's retail operations. The transition comes against the backdrop of ongoing corporate rift between the Tata Sons board and Tata Trusts, led by Noel.

Noel will step down from the chairmanship of Tata Group's most prominent consumer-facing businesses on November 11 after nearly three decades of association with the company. And Vakil will overtake on the next day.

Vakil joined the board of Tata Investment Corporation in March 2025 as vice-chairman and independent director. His name had also figured among the possible candidates for a position on the Tata Sons board during discussions on board vacancies.

A legal mind

Vakil is best known as the co-founder of AZB & Partners, one of India's leading law firms. International legal publications have consistently recognised him as a leading practitioner in restructuring and project finance.

The World's Leading Lawyers for Business describes Vakil as a gregarious and hard-headed lawyer, valued by clients for his "smart, reliable and practical advice". Chambers & Partners Global has highlighted his negotiating skills, stating that "he adds value in negotiations, ensuring both parties see the other's point of view".

Vakil holds an LLM from Columbia University and is a member of the New York State Bar. "We've been right at the forefront of restructuring the bankruptcy codes and the policy and legislative changes in the laws. The government and institutions like the RBI and SEBI turn to us often because of our reputation and the integrity of our lawyers, knowing that we will have an India focus, with no agenda for a particular client or industry," Vakil was quoted as saying by AZB & Partners.

"Bahram is very macro in his approach, which is of huge value to clients when they want to see the big picture. His understanding of global economies is insightful, and has always helped the firm navigate crises," a senior lawyer said about him.

FULL REPORT ON
WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

• BRIEFLY

Centre's fiscal deficit at 42.1% of full-year target

Mumbai: **The central government's fiscal deficit in the first half of the current financial year accounted for 42.1% of the full-year target amidst weak revenue growth and higher expenditure on subsidies and capital investment, CGA data on Friday showed. In the same period a year ago, the Centre's fiscal deficit accounted for 36.5% of the relevant Budget target. In absolute terms, the fiscal deficit was Rs 7.14 lakh crore during April-September, up 25% year-on-year. FE**

RBI tightens cyber checks on lenders

Mumbai: **India's central bank has warned banks of rising cyberattacks on financial infrastructure, seeking proof of compliance with existing rules and details of their preparedness for AI-related risks, three people familiar with the matter said. The RBI's increased vigilance comes at a time when banks worldwide are being targeted by hackers using sophisticated AI tools, putting customer data and funds at risk. REUTERS**

• MARKETS

Sensex	NIFTY	Gold ▼	US Dollar ▼
74,459.53	23,053.10	₹1,40,054	₹94.96
308.49	116.35	Silver ▼	Oil ▼
0.42%	0.51%	₹1,81,344	$114.6

NOTE: GOLD, SILVER RATES AS PER INDIA BULLION AND JEWELLERS ASSOCIATION DATA GOLD PER 10G, SILVER PER 1 KG; CRUDE OIL (INDIAN BASKET) AS OF OCTOBER 29, 2026

Jio

JIO PLATFORMS LIMITED

Regd. Office: Office-101, Saffron, Nr. Centre Point, Panchwati 5 Rasta, Ambawadi, Ahmedabad 380 006, Gujarat, India.
Phone: +91 79350 31200 | E-mail: jpl.investorrelations@jio.com
CIN: U72900GJ2019PLC110816

Extract of Unaudited Consolidated Financial Results for the Quarter / Half Year Ended 30th September, 2026

(₹ in crore, except per share data)

Particulars	Quarter Ended 30th September, 2026	Half Year Ended 30th September, 2026	Quarter Ended 30th September, 2025
Value of Sales & Services (Revenue)	47,485	93,446	42,652
Less: GST Recovered	7,010	13,798	6,320
Revenue from Operations	**40,475**	**79,648**	**36,332**
Profit Before Tax	11,259	21,686	9,937
Profit After Tax	**8,387**	**16,151**	**7,379**
Share of Profit / (Loss) of Associate and Joint Venture	0	0	(4)
Profit After Tax and Share of Profit / (Loss) of Associate and Joint Venture	**8,387**	**16,151**	**7,375**
Total Comprehensive Income (Net of Tax)*	8,509	16,326	7,428
Paid up Equity Share Capital, Equity Shares of ₹ 10/- each	8,939	8,939	8,939
Other Equity**	-	-	-
Earnings per Equity Share (in ₹) (Face value of ₹ 10/- each)			
Basic (in ₹)	9.38	18.07	8.25
Diluted (in ₹)	9.37	18.05	8.24

* Includes share of Non-Controlling Interest
** Other equity for the year ended as on 31st March, 2026 was ₹ 3,27,038 Crore.

Notes:

1. The Audit Committee has reviewed and the Board of Directors have approved the above results and its release at their respective meetings held on 30th October, 2026. The Statutory Auditors of the Company have carried out a Limited Review of the results for the quarter and half year ended 30th September, 2026.
2. Additional information on Unaudited Standalone Financial Results is as follows:

(₹ in crore)

Particulars	Quarter Ended 30th September, 2026	Half Year Ended 30th September, 2026	Quarter Ended 30th September, 2025
Value of Sales & Services (Revenue)	5,760	11,361	4,651
Less: GST Recovered	879	1,733	710
Revenue from Operations	**4,881**	**9,628**	**3,941**
Profit Before Tax	562	1,098	404
Profit After Tax	**419**	**818**	**301**
Total Comprehensive Income (Net of Tax)	434	827	311

3. The above is an extract of the detailed format of the Unaudited Standalone and Consolidated Financial Results for the quarter / half year ended on 30th September, 2026, filed with the Stock Exchanges pursuant to Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015.
The full format of the Unaudited Standalone and Consolidated Financial Results for the quarter / half year ended on 30th September, 2026, are available on the Stock Exchanges' websites (**www.bseindia.com** / **www.nseindia.com**). Company's web page **https://www.jio.com/about/investor-relations/financials/financials-results/** and can also be accessed by scanning the following Quick Response Code.

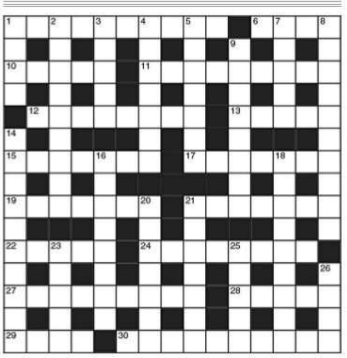
For **Jio Platforms Limited**
Sd/-
Akash M. Ambani
Managing Director

Date : 30th October, 2026

www.jio.com

Calendar

CROSSWORD 6134



ACROSS

1 All three vying desperately (10)
6 Strike action when comrades are sent back (4)
10 Blame one put on the head of Dean Swift (5)
11 She's a singer of low songs (9)
12 David and Sam split difference (8)
13 Have an oral test (5)
15 Jack has to go round working on the roads (7)
17 People out - on patrol? (7)
19 They pound away with mortars (7)
21 Brace of fresh lobster (7)
22 A number make money and gain experience (5)
24 Heavy rain that may fall down or up perhaps (8)
27 Painful reminder of the need for filling time? (9)
28 What's more he has nothing to say (5)
29 The time when the boyfriend appears (4)
30 Now it's gift time (7,3)

DOWN

1 Getting deeply involved can be up to them (4)
2 Disclosures in open court or in camera (9)
3 Off-peak call (5)
4 Cutting a jacket for riding (7)
5 Without any breaks? That's no French way to work (7)
7 Still producing cheerful songs (5)
8 Those who claim to be teachers? (10)
9 Censorious to a dangerous degree? (8)
14 Details put as specified in the agreement (10)
16 A hot line arranged for the opera (8)
18 Charged with putting under test perhaps (9)
20 A cider's mixed in a cocktail (7)
21 Arms dealers made worse by corruption (7)
23 It's a fight in quite rough terms (5)
25 Clean down (5)
26 Hasn't she the heart to marry? (4)

SOLUTIONS CROSSWORD 6133 **ACROSS:** 1 Brigade, 5 Moses, 8 Precedent, 9 Ace, 10 Dies, 12 Strike up, 14 Ration, 15 Bazaar, 17 Pomander, 18 Nero, 21 Ego, 22 On the mend, 24 Spent, 25 Rooster **DOWN:** 1 Biped, 2 Ire, 3 Abet, 4 Events, 5 Mythical, 6 Stage name, 7 Sleeper, 11 Extempore, 13 Point out, 14 Repress, 16 Debtor, 19 Order, 20 Nemo, 23 Eft

JUMBLED WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective circles below. Select the letters in the shaded circles and jumble them to get the answer for the given quip.

For the ____ ____, almost more than any other, has the power to recall memories and it is a pity that you use it so little. - Rachel Carson (5,2,5)

LVEEE

ROSSG

ACOLLN

ILYFMS

SOLUTIONS: L-ove, S-cross, C-loral, F-limsy
ANSWER: For the **sense of smell**, almost more than any other, has the power to recall memories and it is a pity that you use it so little. - Rachel Carson

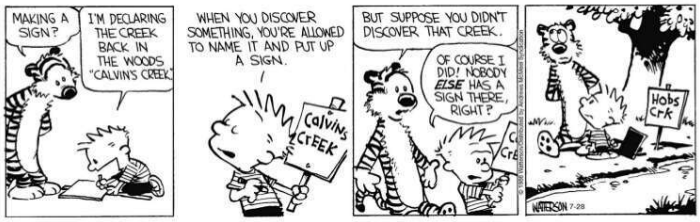
OVER THE HEDGE

BY MICHAEL FRY & T LEWIS



CALVIN & HOBBES

BY BILL WATTERSON



MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG



SUDOKU 6488

DIFFICULTY LEVEL 5s

INSTRUCTIONS

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

DIFFICULTY LEVEL
1s = Very easy; 2s = Easy; 3s = Medium; 4s = Hard; 5s = Very Hard; 6s = Genius

3			8			9		
9	6	4						
			7		3		4	
	9					1	8	
4								5
		5	2			7		
	7			1		3		
					7	5	8	
		6			9			4

SOLUTION SUDOKU 6487

5	6	7	9	2	1	3	4	8
9	1	4	8	6	3	5	7	2
8	2	3	5	4	7	9	6	1
1	3	6	2	5	8	7	9	4
4	8	9	7	3	6	2	1	5
7	5	2	1	9	4	8	3	6
2	7	8	4	1	9	6	5	3
6	9	1	3	8	5	4	2	7
3	4	5	6	7	2	1	8	9

ROYAL STARS

BY GEORGIA NICOLS

ARIES (MAR 21 - APR 20): Right now, the Sun and Mercury retrograde are in the part of your chart that is associated with Halloween. Expect passion, secrets, skeletons and mortality. Though, the placement of today's Moon will encourage you to stay home and relax. Tonight: Socialise.

TAURUS (APR 21 - MAY 21): There's a strong chance you'll encounter ex-partners from your past this weekend, whether they're wearing a mask or not. Look sharp, because they say that living well is the best revenge. Increased activity and chaos on the home front will keep you on your toes. Tonight: Relax.

GEMINI (MAY 22 - JUNE 21): Money issues are on your mind today. Because some of you are expanding your family this year. Be patient with silly, goofy mix-ups at work because of Mercury retrograde. Tonight: Conversations.

CANCER (JUNE 22 - JULY 23): You'll enjoy socialising today. However, your emotions might be heightened more than usual because the Moon is in your sign. Don't make waves. Go along to get along. (You're a bit luckier than all the other signs today.) Tonight: Check your money.

LEO (JULY 24 - AUG 23): Although you love flamboyant, dramatic moments, today you might play things low-key. You're involved with family more, especially because relatives from the past are back in your life. Fortunately, you have the energy that you need. Tonight: You're strong.

VIRGO (AUG 24 - SEP 23): This is a popular day for you. You're keen to get out and see new places and meet new faces. Avoid disputes about money and possessions. Let this go and instead focus on what is working. Short trips and discussions will delight. Tonight: Enjoy privacy.

LIBRA (SEP 24 - OCT 23): Whether you're in costume or not, people will notice you more than usual today. They might take note of your style. Meanwhile, you are dealing with delayed finances. Tonight: Be friendly.

SCORPIO (OCT 24 - NOV 23): For many of you, Halloween is one of your favourite times. You love the secrecy, the passion, the skeletons and the spooky cobwebs. You certainly have the energy to make a splash today if you want to do so. Tonight: You're noticed.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV 24 - DEC 22): You have mixed messages today. In one way, you're happy to hide behind the scenes and keep a low profile. However, part of you is up for adventure and doing something different. This gives you the lovely choice of not losing. Tonight: Explore.

CAPRICORN (DEC 23 - JAN 20): With the Moon opposite your sign today, it's in your best interest to cooperate with others, perhaps even go more than halfway when dealing with someone. Steer clear of disputes with authority figures. Be smart. Tonight: Check your finances.

AQUARIUS (JAN 21 - FEB 19): Right now, the Sun is at the top of your chart which means you look good to others. You'll appreciate any chance to travel or explore your world. Tonight: Cooperate.

PISCES (FEB 20 - MAR 20): Halloween might intrigue you because you're the master of illusion. With just a few props, you can suggest an archetype. Socialising will please you today. You might hear from someone far away. Tonight: Work to get better organised.

U.P. State Industrial Development Authority
UPSIDA Complex, A-1/4, Lakhanpur, Kanpur-208024

Notice for Public Objection / Suggestion on partial amendment of Layout Plan of I.A. Salempur-2, Hathras in which Industrial Plot No. A-2 have been sub divided into 02 Industrial Plots of existing Industrial Area.

1 (a) The Layout Plan of **Industrial Area Salempur-2, Hathras** of Uttar Pradesh State Industrial Development Authority (UPSIDA) situated in District **Aligarh** has been prepared.
(b) A copy thereof will be available for inspection at the Regional Manager of the Uttar Pradesh State Industrial Development Authority, **Industrial Area Sector-1, Tala Nagari, Ramghat Road, District Aligarh,** between 10:00 am to 5:00 pm on all working days till the date mentioned in Para 3 hereafter as well as Website: **www.onlineupsida.com**
2 Objections and Suggestions are hereby invited with respect of the Draft partial amendment of Layout Plan.
3 Objections and Suggestions shall be sent in writing to the office of Regional Manager, UPSIDA at **Industrial Area Sector-1, Tala Nagari, Ramghat Road, District Aligarh,** within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice mentioning subject as **"Regarding Public Objection /Suggestion on draft partial amendment in Layout Plan of Industrial Area Salempur-2, Hathras".** Any person making the Suggestions or Objections should also give his/her full name & address, Email id and contact number. **(Regional Manager)**
U.P. State Industrial Development Authority

KALOJI NARAYANA RAO UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH SCIENCES, TELANGANA, WARANGAL

ADMISSIONS INTO PG AYUSH COURSES FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2026-27

Applications through online mode are invited from AIAPGET-2026 qualified candidates for admission into PG AYUSH courses (MD Ayurveda, MD Unani and MD Homoeopathy) in AYUSH colleges affiliated to Kaloji Narayana Rao University of Health Sciences (KNRUHS), Telangana.
The schedule for online registration of applications for admission into PG AYUSH courses for the academic year 2026–27 under various quotas is as follows:

1. **All India Quota (AIQ):** Online registration for admission into the MD Homoeopathy course in affiliated Private Homoeopathy Medical colleges under All India Quota from **08.00 AM on 31-10-2026 to 02.00 PM on 05-11-2026.**
2. **Competent Authority Quota (CQ):** Online registration for admission into PG AYUSH courses (MD Ayurveda, MD Unani and MD Homoeopathy) in colleges affiliated with KNRUHS is tentatively scheduled from **08:00 AM on 03-11-2026 to 02:00 PM on 09-11-2026.**
3. **Management Quota(MQ):** Online registration for admission into the MD Homoeopathy course in affiliated Private Homoeopathic Medical Colleges is tentatively scheduled from **08:00 AM on 08-11-2026 to 02:00 PM on 12-11-2026.**

Candidates are advised to visit the University website **http://knruhs.telangana.gov.in** for detailed notifications, prospectus, eligibility criteria, further updates and information regarding any changes to the admission process.

Date: 30/10/2026

R.O. No. : 714-PP/CL-AGENCY/ADVT/2026-27 Dt. 30.10.2026 REGISTRAR

यू०पी० राज्य विद्युत उत्पादन निगम लिमिटेड
अधिशासी अभियन्ता विद्युत उत्पादन खण्ड, मुजफ्फरनगर।
ई–निविदा सूचना
निविदा संख्या एवं कार्य का संक्षिप्त विवरण

1. **T-04/EGD/Mzn/2026-27,** विद्युत उत्पादन खण्ड, मुजफ्फरनगर के अन्तर्गत निरगाजनी, चित्तौड़ा, सलावा एवं भोला जल विद्युत गृहों हेतु लाईटिंग मैटेरियल की आपूर्ति। प्रपत्र शुल्क–रू0 472.00, धरोहर राशि रू0 8,000.00
2. **T-05/EGD/Mzn/2026-27,** विद्युत उत्पादन खण्ड, मुजफ्फरनगर में 01 वर्ष के लिए एक नग हल्के डीजल वाहन चालक सहित किराये पर लगाने का कार्य। प्रपत्र शुल्क–रू0 472.00, धरोहर राशि रू0 6,650.00

ई–निविदा की अंतिम तिथि : 30 नवम्बर 2026, 16:00 बजे

नोटः–विस्तृत जानकारी एवं प्रपत्र वेबसाईट **www.etender.up.nic.in** पर उपलब्ध है। अग्रेत्तर समस्त सूचनाए वेबसाईट पर ही प्रदर्शित की जाएंगी।

पत्रांक: 380 / वि0उ0ख0 / निविदा / मु0 नगर / T-04 & 05 दिनांक: 30.10.2026

"राष्ट्रहित में बिजली बचायें"

Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Limited
(Wholly owned by Govt. of Karnataka undertaking)
(CIN-U04010KA2002SGC030438)

NOTIFICATION INVITING TENDER (Through KPP Portal)

BESCOM invites tender through KPP Portal from eligible bidders against Tender No: **BESCOM/2026-27/SE0505, Dated: 30.10.2026** for Providing Human resource service (Graduate Engineers and Diploma Engineers) for carrying out DAS operations at both BESCOM Integrated Control Centre's (BICC-1, HSR Layout & BICC-2 Rajajinagar). Availability of Bid document: **On or after 05.11.2026.**
The detailed notification can be obtained from the Website: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.** Further details can be obtained from the office of the undersigned.

Sd/- General Manager (DAS), BICC-1,17th Cross, 24th Main, HSR Layout, 2nd Sector, Bengaluru-560102.

For Electricity related complaints call : 1912
Download BESCOM Mithra Mobile APP.

NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING
MALKAJGIRI MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, PROJECTS, MMC, HYDERABAD

Tender Notice No.13/SE (Projects)/MMC/2026-27 (2nd Call) Dt:29.10.2026

Item No.	Name of Work
1.	"Restoration Measures for ROB at Moulali, Secunderabad"

Events	Date & Timings
Start Date	31.10.2026 12.00 PM
Last Date & Time for receipt of Bids	17.11.2026 12.00 PM
Technical Bid Opening	17.11.2026 12.30 PM
Price Bid Opening	18.11.2026 01.00 PM

Address of the officer concerned Smt. K. Rohini, SE (Projects), 9959442013. Superintending Engineer (Projects), Malkajgiri Municipal Corporation, 1st Floor, HMDA Complex, Tarnaka, Hyderabad. Further details can be seen at 'e' Procurement https://tender.telangana.gov.in.
Sd/-
Superintending Engineer(I/C) (Projects), MMC
No. 12752-PP/CL/ADVT/2026-27, Date: 30-10-2026

Mumbai Railway Vikas Corporation Limited

INVITATION FOR TENDER: MRVC-W-279
(Single Packet e-Procurement Tender Process)

Mumbai Railway Vikas Corporation Ltd. (MRVC) having its corporate office at Second Floor, Churchgate Station Building, Mumbai-400020, invites e-Tenders for the **"Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of Auxiliary Warning System (AWS) in connection with 5th & 6th Line Works between Borivali–Virar Section, Mumbai Division".** Details of Tender and Tender documents are available on e-procurement website **https://www.eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app** The last date for completed e-Tender submission at website **https://www.eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app** is **30.11.2026 up to 15:00 hours. Corrigendum, if any, will be posted on the website only.**

UJVN LIMITED
H.O.: "UJJWAL", Maharani Bagh, G.M.S. Road, Dehradun-248006
Telephones: 0135-2763808, Fax: 0135-2763508
CIN No. U40101UR2001SGC025866 Website: www.ujvnl.com

Letter No: 1017 Date: 30/10/2026

E-TENDER NOTICE

Office of the Executive Engineer (M), VyasiPower House, Hathiyari, Dehradun invites sealed online tender from interested parties. Brief summary of tender is given below:
NIT No: e-21, 22, 23/EE(M)/VP/2026-27
Name of Work: 1- Supply of spares for Hydromechanical Gates for Vyasi Power House, Hathiyari
2- Supply of various mechanical seals and spares for VyasiPower House, Hathiyari, Dehradun
3- Extension of Low Pressure Compressed air pipeline at VyasiPower House, Hathiyari, Dehradun
Estimated Cost: Rs 14,23,620/-+GST, Rs.14,30,576/- +GST, Rs. 34,56,200/- + GST repectively
Date of availability of bid document on website: 31.10.2026 from 17:00 Hrs
Last date for submission of bid on website : 21.11.2026 upto 13:00 Hrs
For fuller & further details of tender, kindly visit e- procurement portal http://uktenders.gov.in

"AVOID WASTEFUL USE OF ELECTRICITY" **Executive Engineer (M)**

UJVN Limited
(An Uttarakhand Govt. Enterprises)
H.O.: "UJJWAL" Maharani, Bagh, GMS Road, Dehradun - 248006
Telephones: 0135 -2763808, Fax: 2763508
CIN No. U40101UR2001SGC025866, Website: www.ujvnl.com

पत्र संः 1014 दिनांकः 30 / 10 / 2026

e-Tender Notice

Office of the Executive Engineer (M) Tiloth Power House, Uttarkashi invites online bid from interested parties. Brief summary of tender is given below:
Tender No.- 16/EE(M)/2026-27
Name of work- Hiring of 02 nos. non AC diesel vehicles.
Estimated cost - ₹ 8,23,164.00 (excluding taxes)
Date of availability of bid document on portal - 31.10.2026 at 16:00 hrs.
Last date of submission of bid on portal - 22.11.2026 till 16:00 hrs.
For fuller & further details, kindly visit e-procurement portal **http://uktenders.gov.in.**

Executive Engineer (Maintenance)

"Avoid wasteful use of Electricity"

Rajasthan Medical Services Corporation Ltd.
(A Govt. of Rajasthan Undertaking), Gandhi Block, Swasthya Bhawan, Tilak Marg, Jaipur-302005, India Phone No: 0141-2228066, 2228064
Website: www.rmsc.health.rajasthan.gov.in, CIN : U24232RJ2011SGC035067, E-mail: edprmsc@rajasthan.gov.in

Ref. No. :- F.02 (452)/RMSCL/PROCUREMENT/DRUG/NIB-14/2026-27/5353 Dated :- 26/10/2026

Corrigendum

In reference to the NIB provided below, Corrigendum is issued for date extension in bid. All details may be seen on **https://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in** **https://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in & https://www.rmsc.health.rajasthan.gov.in**

Sr. No.	NIB No.	UBN No.	Tender ID on E-Proc	Existing Date			Amended Date		
				Last date and time of submission of online bids	Bid security, bid form fees, RISL fees and Empanelment fees deposited and submitted physically as per bid conditions	Date and time of opening of Online technical bids	Last date and time of submission of online bids	Bid security, bid form fees, RISL fees and Empanelment fees deposited and submitted physically as per bid conditions	Date and time of opening of Online technical bids
1	NIB 14/2026	MSC2627GLOB 00054	2026_RMSCL_601385_1	04.11.2026 up to 06:00 PM	04.11.2026 up to 06:00 PM	05.11.2026 at 11:00 A.M	12.11.2026 up to 06:00 PM	12.11.2026 up to 06:00 PM	13.11.2026 at 11:00 A.M
2	NIB 16/2026	MSC2627GLOB 00055	2026_RMSCL_601406_1	04.11.2026 up to 06:00 PM	04.11.2026 up to 06:00 PM	05.11.2026 at 11:00 A.M	12.11.2026 up to 06:00 PM	12.11.2026 up to 06:00 PM	13.11.2026 at 11:00 A.M
3	NIB 17/2026	MSC2627GLOB 00056	2026_RMSCL_601413_1	04.11.2026 up to 06:00 PM	04.11.2026 up to 06:00 PM	05.11.2026 at 11:00 A.M	12.11.2026 up to 06:00 PM	12.11.2026 up to 06:00 PM	13.11.2026 at 11:00 A.M
4	NIB 18/2026	MSC2627GLOB 00062	2026_RMSCL_602015_1	29.10.2026 up to 06:00 PM	29.11.2026 up to 06:00 PM	30.11.2026 at 11:00 A.M	12.11.2026 up to 06:00 PM	12.11.2026 up to 06:00 PM	13.11.2026 at 11:00 A.M
5	NIB 19/2026	MSC2627GLOB 00060	2026_RMSCL_601878_1	27.10.2026 up to 06:00 PM	27.10.2026 up to 06:00 PM	28.10.2026 at 11:00 A.M	12.11.2026 up to 06:00 PM	12.11.2026 up to 06:00 PM	13.11.2026 at 11:00 A.M
6	NIB 20/2026	MSC2627GLOB 00057	2026_RMSCL_601480_1	04.11.2026 up to 06:00 PM	04.11.2026 up to 06:00 PM	05.11.2026 at 11:00 A.M	12.11.2026 up to 06:00 PM	12.11.2026 up to 06:00 PM	13.11.2026 at 11:00 A.M
7	NIB 21/2026	MSC2627GLOB 00061	2026_RMSCL_601887_1	04.11.2026 up to 06:00 PM	04.11.2026 up to 06:00 PM	05.11.2026 at 11:00 A.M	12.11.2026 up to 06:00 PM	12.11.2026 up to 06:00 PM	13.11.2026 at 11:00 A.M
8	NIB 22/2026	MSC2627GLOB 00064	2026_RMSCL_602481_1	05.11.2026 up to 06:00 PM	05.11.2026 up to 06:00 PM	06.11.2026 at 11:00 A.M	12.11.2026 up to 06:00 PM	12.11.2026 up to 06:00 PM	13.11.2026 at 11:00 A.M

Director (Proc.)
RMSCL, Jaipur

Raj.Samvad/C/26/12656

MUTHOOT FINCORP LTD. | GOLD AUCTION NOTICE

Regd. Office: Muthoot Centre, TC No 27/3022, Punnen Road, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, India - 695001. CIN : U65929KL1997PLC011518, Ph: +91 471 4911400, 2331427.

Notice is hereby given for the information of all concerned that gold ornaments pledged with under mentioned branches of the company , which were overdue for redemption and which have not been redeemed so for in spite of repeated notices will be auctioned on 01.12.2026 from 10 am onwards.
Auction Date: 01.12.2026 - GWALIOR DISTRICT - DABRA: 2236002013, 2236002178, 2236002245, 2236002319, 2236002345, 2236002346, 2236002398, 2236002439, 2236002445, 2236002474, 2236002501, 2236002510, 2236002580, 2236002623, 2236002626, 2236002677, 2236002857, 2236002866, 2236002918, 2236002945, 2236002959, 2236002984, 2236002985, 2236002986, 2236002991, 2236002992, 2236003008, 2236003038, 2236003039, 2236003044, 2236003074, 2236003105, 2236003112, 2236003118, 2236003128, 2236003148, 2236003160, 2236003162, 2236003163, 2236003186, 2236003198, 2236003204, 2236003208, 2236003227, 2236003340, 2236003256, 2236003302, 2236003485, 2236003530, 2236003556, 2236003586, 2236003597, 2236003598, 2236003607, 2236003621, 2236003625, 2236003626, 2236003632, 2236003649, 2236003680, 2236004199. **GWALIOR HAZIRA:** 4419002502, 4419002521, 4419002571, 4419002765, 4419002824, 4419002948, 4419002997, 4419003082, 4419003111, 4419003225, 4419003256, 4419003273, 4419003291, 4419003292, 4419003426, 4419003495, 4419003522, 4419003539, 4419003558, 4419003606, 4419003645, 4419003674, 4419003683, 4419003813, 4419003867, 4419003873, 4419003903, 4419003932, 4419003992, 4419003995, 4419004030, 4419004080, 4419004089, 4419004097, 4419004272, 4419004547, 4419004570, 4419005329, 4419005404, 4419005427, 4419005497, 4419005565, 8000114419, 8000164419. **GWALIOR NAYA BAZAR:** 4245002742, 4245002883, 4245003009, 4245003041, 4245003065, 4245003067, 4245003167, 4245003185, 4245003212, 4245003342, 4245003344, 4245003448, 4245003453, 4245003626, 4245003668, 4245003719, 4245003729, 4245003760, 4245003793, 4245003808, 4245003815, 4245003837, 4245003880, 4245003914, 4245003935, 4245003950, 4245003968, 4245003988, 4245004006, 4245004020, 4245004031, 4245004055, 4245004077, 4245004079, 4245004139, 4245004171, 4245004176, 4245004201, 4245004206, 4245004214, 4245004305, 4245004320, 4245004352, 4245004383, 4245004384, 4245004397, 4245004400, 4245004404, 4245004407, 4245004435, 4245004468, 4245004529, 4245004530, 4245004571, 4245004577, 4245004578, 4245004609, 4245004631, 4245006051, 4245006259, 4245006291, 4245006292, 4245006301. **GWALIOR-CITY CENTRE:** 2598002672, 2598002733, 2598002869, 2598002882, 2598002917, 2598003032, 2598003044, 2598003100, 2598003107, 2598003121, 2598003124, 2598003146, 2598003183, 2598003226, 2598003229, 2598003317, 2598003341, 2598003362, 2598003436, 2598003474, 2598003497, 2598003522, 2598003523, 2598003530, 2598003532, 2598003587, 2598003630, 2598003631, 2598003658, 2598003682, 2598003702, 2598003703, 2598003756, 2598003768, 2598003801, 2598003820, 2598003827, 2598003845, 2598003871, 2598003911, 2598003954, 2598004038, 2598004089, 2598004119, 2598004143, 2598004144, 2598004226, 2598004233, 2598005445, 2598005455, 2598005509, 2598005523, 2598005570, 2598005598. **GWALIOR-MOOR BAZAR:** 2579000925, 2579001007, 2579003654, 2579003712, 2579003713, 2579003731, 2579003751, 2579003752, 2579003753, 2579003767, 2579003782, 2579003837, 2579003845, 2579003853, 2579003861, 2579003862, 2579003864, 2579003865, 2579003899, 2579003936, 2579003966, 2579004036, 2579004039, 2579004053, 2579004067, 2579004079, 2579004100, 2579004159, 2579004160, 2579004208, 2579004225, 2579004251, 2579004261, 2579004274, 2579004282, 2579004284, 2579004285, 2579004331, 2579004352, 2579004384, 2579004404, 2579004468, 2579004469, 2579004481, 2579004496, 2579004505, 2579004506, 2579004507, 2579004574, 2579004613, 2579004653, 2579004666, 2579004675, 2579004680, 2579004688, 2579004702, 2579004704, 2579004724, 2579004735, 2579004750, 2579004752, 2579004764, 2579004773, 2579004824, 2579004867, 2579004879, 2579004890, 2579004892, 2579004926, 2579004933, 2579004937, 2579005090, 2579005114, 2579005125, 2579005128, 2579005134, 2579005137, 2579005235, 2579005236, 2579005243, 2579005252, 2579005270, 2579005271, 2579005272, 2579005286, 2579005306, 2579005310, 2579005316, 2579005324, 2579005336, 2579005359, 2579005370, 2579005410, 2579005458, 2579005464, 2579005483, 2579005488, 2579007155, 2579007275, 2579007458. **GWALIOR-MORAR SADAR BAZAR:** 2590004669, 2590004736, 2590004831, 2590004871, 2590004968, 2590004999, 2590005243, 2590005259, 2590005266, 2590005281, 2590005308, 2590005396, 2590005403, 2590005515, 2590005553, 2590005631, 2590005634, 2590005689, 2590005690, 2590005707, 2590005709, 2590005729, 2590005838, 2590005908, 2590005916, 2590005929, 2590005949, 2590005952, 2590005982, 2590006006, 2590006009, 2590006048, 2590006050, 2590006066, 2590006107, 2590006135, 2590006148, 2590006177, 2590006212, 2590006215, 2590006220, 2590006226, 2590006228, 2590006245, 2590006257, 2590006259, 2590006271, 2590006278, 2590006304, 2590006318, 2590006331, 2590006340, 2590006382, 2590006385, 2590006402, 2590006423, 2590006474, 2590006498, 2590006637, 2590006798, 2590006827, 2590006850, 2590006868, 2590006908, 2590006949, 2590006952, 2590006961, 2590007020, 2590007070, 2590007073, 2590007077, 2590007080, 2590007081, 2590007082, 2590007108, 2590007130, 2590007163, 2590007169, 2590007191, 2590007193, 2590007205, 2590007209, 2590007219, 2590007223, 2590007226, 2590007227, 2590009537, 2590009572, 2590009615, 2590009629, 2590009688, 2590009785. **Auction Date: 01.12.2026 MORENA DISTRICT - MORENA-MS ROAD:** 2577004237, 2577004270, 2577004312, 2577004327, 2577004328, 2577004343, 2577004344, 2577004370, 2577004384, 2577004405, 2577004419, 2577004429, 2577004476, 2577004542, 2577004552, 2577004605, 2577004618, 2577004623, 2577004634, 2577004652, 2577004660, 2577004664, 2577004704, 2577004719, 2577004741, 2577004746, 2577004748, 2577004752, 2577004769, 2577004770, 2577004792, 2577004803, 2577004808, 2577004826, 2577004842, 2577004862, 2577004863, 2577004869, 2577004885, 2577004888, 2577004909, 2577004954, 2577004966, 2577004968, 2577004977, 2577005001, 2577005008, 2577005024, 2577005135, 2577005185, 2577005186, 2577005192, 2577005197, 2577005200, 2577005224, 2577005360, 2577005364, 2577005369, 2577005382, 2577005395, 2577005403, 2577005453, 2577005472, 2577005479, 2577005485, 2577005545, 2577005577, 2577005596, 2577005612, 2577005643, 2577005644, 2577005646, 2577005684, 2577005702, 2577005710, 2577005718, 2577005765, 2577005774, 2577005784, 2577005798, 2577005806, 2577005810, 2577005819, 2577005845, 2577005859, 2577005898, 2577005911, 2577006075, 2577006088, 2577006134, 2577006193, 2577006215, 2577006257, 2577006314, 2577006336, 2577006341, 2577006440, 2577006441, 2577006497, 2577006551, 2577006571, 2577006567, 2577006838, 2577008746, 2577008820, 2577008854, 2577008869, 2577008896, 2577008917, 8000552577. **Auction Date: 01.12.2026 - SHIVPURI DISTRICT - SHIVPURI:** 2240001947, 2240001956, 2240001965, 2240001991, 2240002001, 2240002006, 2240002008, 2240002064, 2240002141, 2240002156, 2240002168, 2240002177, 2240002210, 2240002225, 2240002305, 2240002344, 2240002395, 2240002448, 2240002458, 2240002485, 2240002566, 2240002673, 2240002712, 2240002714, 2240002718, 2240002720, 2240002738, 2240002795, 2240002814, 2240002847, 2240002853, 2240002871, 2240002889, 2240002951, 2240002987, 2240003003, 2240003006, 2240003008, 2240003009, 2240003012, 2240003014, 2240003017, 2240003028, 2240003030, 2240003031, 2240003037, 2240003038, 2240003047, 2240003067, 2240003071, 2240003109, 2240003127, 2240003167, 2240003198, 2240003214, 2240003277, 2240003280, 2240003290, 2240003328, 2240003329, 2240003374, 2240003400, 2240003408, 2240003410, 2240003436, 2240003445, 2240004814.
Auction will be conducted at respective branches. please note if the auction does not get completed on the same day due to any reasons, the same will be conducted on 11.12.2026 at 10.00 am onwards at GWALIOR DISTRICT - GWALIOR NAYA BAZAR: Ground Floor, No. 397, GWALIOR NAYA BAZAR, Door No.397,GOPAL BHAWAN,NNAYA BAZAR LASHKAR,GWALIOR-474009 .The bidders are requested to produce photo id card ,Pan card .The successful bidder should transfer the money through RTGS.

MUTHOOT FINCORP LTD

HISTORIC SHOW

16 Number of years it took for an Indian to become World Wrestling Champion again, after Sushil Kumar's 66kg gold medal in 2010.

35 Years passed since the women's Worlds event began. India finally have a gold medallist in 2026 in Manisha Bhanwala.

4 Medals India's women grapplers finished with (1 gold, 2 silver, 1 bronze), making it their most successful edition in history.

INDIAN WOMEN SHINE AT WORLD WRESTLING CHAMPIONSHIPS

Manisha's gold caps best-ever display

29-year-old adds to Kajal, Tanu and Neelam's exploits as women's team claims four medals

Pritish Raj
New Delhi, October 30



Manisha Bhanwala (C) beat Abigail Nette of USA in the final to end India's 35-year wait for a Women's Wrestling World Champion. UWW

AN 18-YEAR-OLD prodigy, a wrestler making her senior debut, an experienced campaigner who missed the Asian Games, and a former Asian champion who returned empty-handed from the continental event.

Kajal Dhochak (76 kg), Tanu Sharma (72 kg), Neelam Sirohi (50 kg) and Manisha Bhanwala (59 kg) had different journeys to the World Championships podium. But they had one thing in common: all four returned with medals, helping India record its best-ever performance in women's wrestling at the event.

It was historic in many ways as for the first time in the 35-year history of the competition, India had a women's wrestling champion in Manisha and two other wrestlers reaching finals and winning four medals. Two came in Olympic weight categories (50 kg and 76 kg) and two in non-Olympic categories (59 kg and 72 kg).

The performance was particularly significant given India's showing at the Asian Games, where Antim Panghal was the country's only medallist, leaving the team with just one medal from six categories.

"I will rate this performance eight out of ten. I am proud of the fact that the girls bounced back from the Asian Games disappointment. I won't say it is ten on ten because there is still room for improvement," Ian Butler, high performance director of the Indian wrestling team, told The Indian Express.

National coach Virender Dahiya, meanwhile, said he had anticipated a four-medal haul from the outset. "I had a feeling since the start of the tournament. Our preparations were good and the girls executed the plan on the mat," he said.

One of the factors behind India's improved showing was the presence of relatively fresh faces in the team. Three of the four medallists — Kajal, Tanu and Neelam — had not competed at the Asian Games. Manisha, meanwhile, had made the trip but lost to Japanese sensation Akari Fujinami.

For Kajal and Neelam, missing out on the Asian Games squad had been a disappointment. Both were determined to make the most of the opportunity that followed at the World Championships.

"I was winning the Asian Games trial before I lost to Dipanshi. The loss stayed with me for one week and then I realised I have a shot at the Worlds. So, when I was picked, I decided to make sure I don't falter," said Neelam, who won silver in the 50 kg category.

Kajal's failure to make the Asian Games team also gave her coach Kuldeep Malik an early opportunity to plan for the World Championships. "When Kajal lost the trial at the Asian Games, the first thought that came to my mind was that I'll prepare her for the World Championships," Malik said. "The loss also fuelled her further. She immediately got back on the mat after the trials loss and started preparing for the Worlds."

Since his arrival earlier this year, Butler, the high-performance director, also focused on changing the mindset of Indian wrestlers, urging them to approach international competition with greater self-belief. "I don't want Indian wrestlers to try to be the best. We have to be the best and that is the mindset I'm working on with these girls. I'm happy to see that the results are showing," he said.

The emergence of 18-year-old Kajal, who won silver in the 76 kg category, was among the biggest highlights of the campaign. She became the first Indian to win a major medal in the heavyweight category, producing an impressive run that included a semi-final victory over three-time World Championships medallist Aiperi Medet Kyzy of Kyrgyzstan. She eventually lost a closely contested final to two-time European champion Anastasiya Alpyeyeva of Ukraine.

Kajal has enjoyed a remarkable year on the circuit, winning the U20 World title and U23 Asian title before making the podium at the senior World Championships on her debut.

Butler believes her exposure to international competition was crucial to that progress. "It is important to go out of India and compete. Kajal did that this year and we can see how much experience she gained. Her losses at ranking series and the senior Asian Championships prepared her for this. So, it is important for Indian wrestlers to test themselves regularly against the best in the world," he said. With an impressive show at the World Championships, Indian women wrestlers have tasks cut out for them next season with qualification starting for the 2028 LA Olympics.

MEDAL LIST

59 kg gold
MANISHA BHANWALA



76 kg silver
KAJAL DHOCHAK



50 kg silver
NEELAM SIROHI



72 kg bronze
TANU SHARMA

MANISHA FACTFILE

Age: 29
Home: Jind, Haryana

TRACK RECORD

Gold: Asian Championships 2025
Silver: Commonwealth Wrestling C'ships 2017
Bronze: Asian Championships 2022, 2023, 2024

> "It is an emotional moment for all of us. Our father wanted her to be a world and Olympic champion and it became our dream also"
> RINKU, MANISHA'S BROTHER

Father's dream realised four years after his death

Pritish Raj
New Delhi, October 30

THIRTEEN YEARS ago, Jind native Suresh Bhanwala persuaded his daughter Manisha to take up wrestling with just goal of seeing her win a gold medal for India on the global stage. Suresh passed away in 2022 but his dream was realised four years after his death when Manisha stood victorious at the World Championships and held aloft a t-shirt with a picture of her father.

The gesture, soon after beating Abigail Nette in the 59kg final in Astana, was a tribute to the person who was responsible, more than anyone else, for Manisha becoming the first Indian woman wrestler to be crowned world champion in the 35-year history of the tournament.

Manisha came back from 1-6 down after the first period of the final to win 8-6 and etch her name in the history books of the sport.

"I knew I would win a medal here. I carried my father's picture with me," Manisha told United World Wrestling after the bout. "I have coveted this title since 2022 when I entered the senior category and lost my father," the 29-year-old from Jind said.

"My father was my biggest support. He is the reason I have reached this level. I know he is still there watching me and supporting me," Manisha had told The Indian Express before leaving for the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games.

Back in Jind, celebrations started in the Bhanwala family immediately after the 13-year-old dream was realised.

"It is an emotional moment for all of us. Our father wanted her to be a world and Olympic champion and it became our dream also. Ever since we lost him in 2022, our family has waited for this moment. Manisha kept her promise," said her brother Rinku, who was overwhelmed with emotion.

Nervous start

Manisha's friends and family and the Indian wrestling fraternity had their fingers crossed after witnessing Kajal Dhochak (76 kg) and Neelam Sirohi (50 kg) losing their final bouts two days ago.

Manisha's start gave them more reasons to be nervous as Abigail scored a four-pointer and the Indian camp lost a challenge giving the American a 5-0 lead. The first period ended with Nette leading 6-1.

"I was not worried about Manisha trailing. She has got really good endurance and we know she can hold her ground till the last minute," her coach Mandeep told this paper.

His belief was vindicated in the second period when Manisha took seven points on the trot to clinch the bout. First, she slipped to avoid Nette's leg attack and took her down to make it 6-3. The American corner challenged the decision but lost it to make the score 4-6.

Nette was put in a par terre position (on her stomach) and Manisha made full use of the opportunity to execute a gut wrench while trying to pin the American. Nette survived but the score was tied 6-6.

In the dying moments of the game, Manisha's endurance made the difference and she scored another two points to lead 8-6 with 27 seconds to go. As Nette tired further, the Indian stood her ground to achieve what no Indian woman wrestler has done before.

On Thursday, Manisha conceded just two points and pinned home favourite Kazakhstan's Altyn Shagayeva in the semifinal.

Making up for Asiad loss

After returning empty-handed from the 2026 Asian Games, Manisha hit the mat the morning she returned from Aichi-Nagoya. "We were confident that she would win at the Asian Games but she lost a close bout to Akari Fujinami. She was determined to turn it around," Mandeep said.

Once back in India, Mandeep and Manisha decided to work on her endurance. "She is an aggressive wrestler and starts to attack early. But today, she conserved her energy and that helped her in the last one minute," explained Mandeep. After winning the world title, Manisha flexed her muscles and took a victory lap with the Indian flag. Understandably so, as she has been a serial winner at the Asian level and on Friday, finally took one of the most coveted honours in the sport.



India make it three in three as Abhishek stars in Japan rout

Express News Service
Mumbai, October 30

ABHISHEK NAIN has become one of India's most dependable sources of goals in recent years, and the striker again underlined his value with a brace as the five-time champions beat Japan 4-1 to make it three wins in a row at the Asian Champions Trophy in Jalandhar on Friday.

Playing his 150th international match, Abhishek struck in the 11th and 51st minutes. Captain Harmanpreet Singh (47th) and Vishnukant Singh (56th) scored the other goals, while Shota Yamada (15th) converted a penalty stroke for Japan. The victory sets India up for Sunday's clash against Malaysia, a side they defeated 5-1 at the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games. Japan will take on China.

India, however, had to work harder for this win than their opening two outings suggested.



Abhishek Nain (left) struck a brace on Friday. HOCKEY INDIA

Japan started with greater intent, enjoying possession and earning a penalty corner in the second minute. India, meanwhile, struggled to establish a rhythm. The breakthrough, when it came, was the product of a well-constructed move. Hardik initiated the build-up before finding Sukhjeet Singh inside the circle on the left. Sukhjeet squared the ball for Abhishek, who needled little invitation to guide it into the net and give India the lead.

Japan responded by winning another penalty corner before earning two more in quick succession towards the end of the first quarter. The second of those resulted in a penalty stroke after the ball struck Sanjay. Yamada converted in the 15th minute, beating goalkeeper Suraj Karkera to restore parity.

With the contest still level at the end of three quarters, India finally found another gear in the fourth. They earned their first penalty corner of the match in the 46th minute, and Harmanpreet made it count with a powerful, low drag-flick to put the hosts ahead.

The goal shifted the momentum decisively. Abhishek provided the vital cushion in the 51st minute. Vishnukant then put the result beyond doubt four minutes from the final hooter.

• HYLO OPEN

Anmol gets past Unnati, Sindhu next in semis

Shivani Naik
Mumbai, October 30

ANMOL KHARB'S smashes have a new-found sting and power. She roars and exhales aggression too. Once tipped to be the natural successor to Saina Nehwal, the 19-year-old may have taken two seasons too many to find her feet on the seniors circuit but definitely looks ready to bolt out off the tracks and hit a strong stride.

The net stomp - she is one of the better ones amongst the upcoming crop - has some serious explosivity and scything angles, and her rally-construction looks geared towards constantly finding ways to snap the exchange shut.

On Friday at the Hylo Open quarterfinals in Saarbrucken, Germany, the World No.53 defeated World Championships surprise quarterfinalist Unnati Hooda 21-17, 18-21, 21-16 in 68 minutes, announcing her re-



Anmol Kharb beat Unnati Hooda 21-17, 18-21, 21-16. FILE

emergence with full-throated roars that come naturally to her.

She will now face PV Sindhu in the semifinals, after the veteran Indian beat German Amalie Schulz 21-12, 21-10 in just 27 minutes.

The two compatriots are both determined and driven youngsters from Haryana, focused on the objective of finding their niche on the senior circuit. Anmol, though, has a technically stronger base and natural fearlessness that she asserts unabashedly. Unnati felt the sting in the quarters.

Anmol operates on the belief that no point will come easy but also that given she needs to take the initiative, she might as well go all out. Unnati is a fighter too, though workmanlike. That's how she took the second game - staying relentless in the rallies and chasing down every shuttle.

However, on either side of that, Anmol breathed fire every time she approached the net.

Anmol managed to pin Unnati to the backcourt and move her around, scurrying for the downward-hit strokes and deep straight hits. It is at the net where she assumes a dominant stance like An Se-young, and likes to control exchanges. Unnati wasn't left with too much time to create openings.

Fluctuating fortunes

A 12-7 lead in the opener sufficed as Anmol kept Unnati at bay. The net pick-ups were second only to her ability to keep the shuttle in play with rangy strokes as she took the opener. She will beat herself up, no doubt, for not finishing the contest in two games despite leading 11-8. But the teen from Faridabad wasn't daunted by the string of points that kept Unnati ahead till 12-11 in the decider.

That's when Anmol went on an 8-point spree with a visible increase in intensity - a hallmark of big players - and reached 19-12. Unnati still picked a bunch of points thereafter, but that's when Anmol course-corrected maturely. She had been buzzing aggressively, but with two match points frittered, she slowed down the pace of the rally - something she dictated throughout. Working the shuttle around, she teased out an error that gave her the win over the World No 21.

Anmol, who came to prominence at 16, helped India win an Asian team gold at 17, before suffering a form slump at 18, had defeated Danish World No.12 Line Christophersen in a stunning come-from-behind fightback. 18-20 down in the decider, other shoulders would've slumped. But not the Haryanvi who strikes some of the cleanest strokes in the game.

Rickelton, Mulder hit centuries as SA set Australia 288 for victory



Ryan Rickelton. AP

Associated Press
Cape Town, October 30

CENTURIES BY Ryan Rickelton and Wiaan Mulder lifted South Africa back into series contention against Australia on a day of batting domination in the deciding Newlands cricket test on Friday. South Africa began day four only 40 runs ahead and four wickets down. But a compelling fightback led by wicketkeeper Rickelton, 101 off 219 balls, and allrounder Mulder, 115 off 221 balls, earned them a lead of 287.

Mulder's dismissal in the day's last over ended South Africa's second innings at 387, setting Australia the entire fifth day to score 288 to win the three-test series which is tied at 1-1.

Australia has the record at Newlands for the highest successful fourth innings chase: 331 in 2002. But world champion South Africa has the advantage of an increasingly turning last-day pitch and an attack featuring rested and in-form off-spinner Simon Harmer.

South Africa scored 329 in its first innings and Australia replied with 429, taking a 100-run lead. The host ended day three at 140-4 and scored 247-6 through three sessions, with Rickelton and Mulder batting together for nearly 54 overs, scoring 154 runs for the sixth wicket. They frustrated Australia into trying eight bowlers during the day. Rickelton began the day with Matthew Breetzke, who was the only batter to be dismissed in the morning session - caught at fine leg off Pat Cummins, who ended a wicket drought of more than 62 overs since the first test in Durban.

South Africa crawled to 202-5 at lunch but Rickelton and Mulder then batted out the second session, scoring 92 runs. Rickelton reached 50 off 105 balls while Mulder was unbeaten on 46 at tea. Their 100-run stand came off 193 balls.

Australia squeezed, conceding only 13 runs in 10 overs after tea. But South Africa crossed 300 and Rickelton scored his third test hundred off 219 balls. He hit 12 fours overall.

BRIEF SCORES: South Africa 329 & 387 (Wiaan Mulder 115, Ryan Rickelton 101; Starc 3/65) lead Australia 429 by 287 runs

Zverev finally takes his place at the summit of men's tennis

Reuters
October 30

ALEXANDER ZVEREV, who spent years waiting for his moment to reach the summit of his sport only for a new golden generation to surge past him, has claimed the honour that long eluded him by climbing to the top of the world rankings.

Zverev had long been one of the brightest talents to emerge in the 2010s, but his path, like that of his peers, was largely blocked by the enduring dominance of Roger Federer, Rafa Nadal, Novak Djokovic and Andy Murray. Despite winning two ATP Finals titles on either side of an Olympic gold medal in 2021, Zverev struggled to make a similar impact at the Grand Slams as Jannik Sinner and Carlos Alcaraz formed a new roadblock when the greats began to decline.

All that changed this year, however, as Zverev, 29, capitalised on injuries to his major rivals and found another level to claim the French Open and US Open titles.

"It's incredibly special," said Zverev, who will take over from Sinner on Monday and become the 30th man to top the world rankings since they were introduced in 1973.

NEW ZEALAND VS INDIA: FOURTH T20I

Phillips sheds light on holes, shows India aren't invincible

Blistering century from big hitter and stunning assault in middle overs allow NZ to get off the mark in T20I series

Sandip G
New Delhi, October 30

Where match was lost

- Overs 12 to 17 bled 113 runs, powering New Zealand to their highest-ever T20I total of 259 for 7
- Jacob Duffy snared Sanju Samson and Ishan Kishan in the first over of India's chase
- Abhishek Sharma and captain Shreyas Iyer departed in the space of six balls as the visitors were four down in the Powerplay

ONE BAD match doesn't define a series, least of all a dead-rubber game. India had already sewn up the series against New Zealand, emphasised their supremacy as the two-time defending world champions, their defiance in pulling games from their brink and their supreme knack of elevating a routine win into a victory march. But the 87-run defeat in the failed pursuit of 260, inconsequential though in the context of the series, was a tear on their cloak of invincibility.

T20 nights are prone to such wild fluctuations, but the manner they unravelled would hurt them. Some passages would stick out like a lurid fever nightmare when the series ends on Sunday. Like their abject helplessness during the assault of Glenn Phillips and Michael Bracewell. Six overs that bled 113 runs, nine sixes and eight fours, was one of the most horrible passages in the country's T20 history. The chase fell apart in the first over itself, when India lost the wickets of Sanju Samson and Ishan Kishan. Jacob Duffy could laugh at the sport's inherent irony. In Wellington, his first over cost 26 runs; in Auckland he grabbed two wickets for five runs and ended the night with commendable figures of 4-0-23-4. That's T20 in a nutshell, but the philosophy-sprinkled lines wouldn't comfort India's captain Shreyas Iyer

Everything that could have gone wrong went horribly wrong. Bowling was hideous, bowling changes were awry, and field settings were as timid as reactive. Iyer can't be blamed for all, he could only marshal the men he has, but he would agree that his team lacks a genuine middle-over enforcer, the shape-shifting genius that could adapt to varying conditions and still ensure that batsmen remain quiet. The death and power-play overs are anyway bound to leak runs, but tight middle overs could ensure that the runs don't blow out of proportion. Little wonder then that Hardik Pandya and Jasprit Bumrah are missed.

Those six overs reduced the chase into an impossible act, despite the high-grade explosives in India's granary. It began with Bracewell, often wasted down the order but endowed with a sweet swing of the blade, in the twelfth over. He pulled Naman Dhir's second for the first of his two overs. He struck a six and four to hammer 16 runs in the over. Dhir was an injudiciously defensive choice, a ploy to squeeze in an over or two when a new batsman was at the crease. Bracewell had arrived in the previous over, after Mayank Yadav had hustled Bevon Jacobs into a miscued pull shot. The over had cost only four runs and brought India back into the game. But the next over overturned the momentum.



Glenn Phillips scored his third T20I hundred. AP

The refuge in Dhir betrayed India's sparse alternatives in the middle overs. Axar Patel is a diminished force; Mayank had already exhausted three of his four overs; Prince Yadav is proficient at the death and start, but still apprenticing the middle-over act. Nonetheless, Iyer dialled Prince to cruel outcome. Eighteen runs ensued. Yadav strove the fuller length, which on a ground with shorter straight boundaries was suicidal. The extra bounce was ideal for hard length, and it was no coincidence that Mayank Yadav was India's most penetrative bowler. But few others found the length comfortable.

The worst was yet to be. Iyer furiously waved at Axar. He is not as precise with his length or shrewd with his designs as he once used to be. Bracewell pilloried him for 18 runs in his four balls. Dhir shelled Phillips's catch to aggravate Axar's angst. Iyer immediately summoned Arshdeep Singh, who momentarily applied the brakes with a seven-run burst. Iyer searched for faces. It fell on the still-callow Nitish Reddy. All Iyer watched were rockets fizzing along the Eden Park skyline. Four sixes flew from Phillips' pounding bat. He skimmed 90 from 42 balls, but had to wait for his hundred until the 19th over.

The free-flowing Bracewell hoarded all the strike in the next over. He ensured he didn't waste it, as he crunched the tearaway for 20 runs, including three monstrous sixes. The first was a gorgeous lapped maximum over long-leg, the second was bunted over the keeper, hunkering down on his knees, and the third was glided past fine-leg in a breathless exhibition on improvised batsmanship. He perished in the next over, but the Kiwis had rocketed to 227 in 17.2 overs.

In moments like these, India missed a group of bowlers with the expertise to bowl into the pitch, slip in the cutters and bowl with a scrambled seam, tricks that New Zealand's seamers employed cleverly. They also pounded out the short-length ball, angling it away from the left-hander or into the body of the right-handers to cramp them for room. Matthew Fisher bowled an excellent heavy ball to induce a spliced slash from Abhishek Sharma, India's last beacon of hope. A clutch of twenties and Tilak Varma's 35 lent some respectability to India's total.

After the hosts wrapped up the game, Iyer dwelled on the need to introspect. "It is important to retrospect. We have to see how to bounce back. We have to go back to the drawing board and execute [our plan]," he said. It could be convenient to brush away the game as an aberration, but in sport there is always a cause and effect. The causes for the defeat would hurt India as much as the effect they produced.

BRIEF SCORES: NZ 259/7 (Phillips 107; Mayank 3/48) beat India 172/9 (Tilak 35; Duffy 4/23) by 87 runs.

Rohit likely to return as MI captain in 2027

Devendra Pandey
Mumbai, October 30



Rohit Sharma. BCCI

MUMBAI INDIANS are likely to hand over captaincy to Rohit Sharma for their forthcoming IPL season 2027, *The Indian Express* understands. The decision doesn't come as a surprise especially after the five-time champions have gone through a complete overhaul of the support staff over the past week.

It is learnt that Mumbai wanted Rohit to take over the franchise captaincy from Hardik Pandya midway through the last IPL when the franchise was struggling. As previously reported by this newspaper, the franchise had already made up its mind on moving on from Pandya as captain, but the question remained who they would turn to. Under Pandya's reign, MI had lost 10 of 14 games, finished ninth, and extended their title drought to six years. With the likes of Suryakumar Yadav and Jasprit Bumrah part of the setup for a while, there was an option to install a new face. Even Tilak Varma, who is seen as strong leadership material, was an option, should the franchise want to build for the future.

Instead, the franchise has turned to Rohit, who has captained them to five IPL titles — the joint-highest alongside MS Dhoni. "Rohit initially had suggested Tilak Varma's name but the franchise has requested him to take over captaincy which he has now agreed. There were series of talks that had happened before him flying to New Zealand and Rohit's suggestions were sought during appointment of new coaches as well," a source told *The Indian Express*.

Last week, when asked about the possibility of Rohit captaining the team for next season, an MI source said, "This is speculation. Until we don't finish trade window and retention we will not decide this. "And why do you say for one season He's still playing and will keep playing for MI till he wants to play." The source added that a call on the captain will be taken along with the coach when auction-related decisions take place. Now with retention deadline around the corner, MI have made the big decision.

With Rohit set to take over as captain, all eyes are on the future of Pandya at the franchise. Since last season, the all-rounder has been linked with other franchises in a trade deal.

If Pandya's trade doesn't take place, it is learnt that the player has agreed to play under Rohit's captaincy. The franchise received a lot of criticism after they decided to go with Pandya as their captain following an all-cash trade from Gujarat Titans ahead of the 2024 season. The Wankhede crowd repeatedly booed Pandya in their home fixtures.

Having already announced that Kieron Pollard will take over as the head coach, replacing Mahela Jayawardene, the franchise announced the rest of the support staff on Friday. Robin Uthappa, Mitchell McClenaghan and Dhawal Kulkarni return to the franchise they had once represented in the tournament. While Uthappa was appointed as the batting coach, former New Zealand pacer McClenaghan will take over as the bowling coach. Former India fielding coach T Dilip was named as the new fielding coach, while Kulkarni was named the new development bowling coach.

SPORTING STALWARTS

Saina, Dravid on 2030 CWG Organising Company Board

Mihir Vasavda
Mumbai, October 30





Saina Nehwal & Rahul Dravid will offer athletes' perspective. FILE

OLYMPIC MEDALLIST Saina Nehwal and former India cricket captain and coach Rahul Dravid have been nominated as directors on the 2030 Commonwealth Games Organising Company (OC) Board, in a move that will bring two prominent sporting figures into the governance structure of the event.

The Indian Express has learnt that the union sports ministry officially nominated Nehwal and Dravid earlier this week as the two representatives from the sporting fraternity. Indian Premier League franchise Gujarat Titans owner Jinal Mehta, who is also the managing director of Torrent Power, and Ananya Birla have been nominated as the two representatives from the private sector.

The organising company is likely to be chaired by Gujarat Deputy Chief Minister Harsh Sanghavi. Union sports secretary Hari Ranjan Rao and PT Usha, the Indian Olympic Association president who also heads the Commonwealth Games Association of India, are set to be the vice-chairpersons. Senior bureaucrat M Thennarasan, a principal secretary in the Gujarat government, has been appointed chief executive officer.

100th edition

Ahmedabad will host the centenary edition of the Commonwealth Games in 2030, with the programme expected to feature 17 sports. The Games will mark the return of the multi-sport event to India for the first time since the controversial 2010 edition in New Delhi. The inclusion of athletes and private-sector representatives on the organising company's board is seen as an attempt to bring greater sporting experience and corporate expertise into the planning and delivery of the event.

"The idea is to get good, credible names in the governance structure," a source said.

The inclusion of athletes on the organising company's board is seen as an attempt to bring greater sporting experience into the planning of the event

"Rahul and Saina come with impeccable credibility. Their inclusion will bring athletes' voice to the planning and delivery phase." *The Indian Express* reached out to Dravid and Nehwal, asking if they had accepted the nomination and the scope of their role, but neither responded.

Break from the past

The 2010 Commonwealth Games did not have any athletes or private-sector representatives in its Organising Committee, which was headed by late Congress leader Suresh Kalmadi. The edition was marred by allegations of corruption and financial irregularities, with the organisation and delivery of the Games coming under intense scrutiny.

Nehwal's appointment extends a significant connection with the Commonwealth Games. She was one of the biggest stars of the 2010 edition, winning the women's singles badminton gold medal in front of a home crowd at the Siri Fort Sports Complex. The then 20-year-old, who was ranked World No.3, recovered from losing the opening game to beat Malaysia's Wong Mew Choo 19-21, 23-21, 21-13 in a 70-minute final. Her victory helped the hosts finish second in the overall standings, with 101 medals, their best-ever Commonwealth Games performance at the time. Nehwal became the first Indian to win the CWG women's singles badminton title.

Nehwal, who joined the BJP in 2020, is also contesting under the "Sportspersons of Outstanding Merit" (SOM) roster for the Indian Olympic Association elections on November 3. Dravid, meanwhile, has been associated with the development of India's Olympic and Paralympic athletes beyond cricket. In 2014, he joined the Board of Advisors of GoSports Foundation, a sports non-profit organisation, and launched the Rahul Dravid Athlete Mentorship Programme.

Details

CWG 2030
Centenary edition

VENUES: Ahmedabad, Gandhinagar

SPORTS: 15 to 17 Disciplines

LAST EDITION: Glasgow 2026

India held the 2010 CWG in Delhi

KAMDHENU PAINTS

INVESTING IN GROWTH
BUILDING VALUE.

Kamdhenu Paints has earned recognition among homeowners, dealers, painters and applicators through their everyday engagement with its products, strengthening the brand's presence across diverse markets and customer segments. As housing construction, urbanization and home improvement drive growth in India's paints and coatings industry, alongside rising demand for premium and environmentally responsible solutions, we see an opportunity to strengthen our position through a differentiated portfolio, deeper customer engagement and disciplined execution.



KAMDHENU VENTURES LIMITED
CIN: L51909HR2019PLC089207
Regd. Office: 2nd Floor, Tower-A, Building No. 9, DLF Cyber City Phase-III, Gurugram - 122 002
Phone no.: 0124-4604500, Fax: 0124-4218524, Email: cs@kamdhenupaints.com, Website: www.kamdhenupaints.com

EXTRACT OF UNAUDITED STANDALONE AND CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND HALF YEAR ENDED 30th SEPTEMBER, 2026

(₹ in Lakhs except earning per share)

S. No.	Particulars	Standalone						Consolidated					
		Quarter Ended			Half Year Ended		Year Ended	Quarter Ended			Half Year Ended		Year Ended
		30th Sep, 2026	30th June, 2026	30th Sep, 2025	30th Sep, 2026	30th Sep, 2025	31st March, 2026	30th Sep, 2026	30th June, 2026	30th Sep, 2025	30th Sep, 2026	30th Sep, 2025	31st March, 2026
		Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Audited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Audited
1	Total Income from Operations	-	91.82	-	91.82	-	-	5,810.01	4,629.24	5,678.77	10,439.25	10,702.66	24,526.25
2	Net profit/(loss) for the period before tax and exceptional items	19.36	(12.34)	(15.86)	7.02	(35.72)	(41.84)	(167.61)	(453.13)	144.53	(620.74)	270.98	51.86
3	Net profit /(loss) for the period after tax and exceptional items	19.36	(12.34)	(16.11)	7.02	(35.97)	(42.09)	(153.59)	(441.34)	101.13	(594.93)	188.43	20.18
4	Total Comprehensive Income /(loss) for the period [Comprising Profit/ (loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	19.36	(12.34)	(16.11)	7.02	(35.97)	(42.09)	(148.28)	(436.03)	96.27	(584.31)	178.70	41.42
5	Paid-up Equity Share Capital (Face value of ₹ 1 each)	3,290.00	3,290.00	3,143.55	3,290.00	3,143.55	3,290.00	3,290.00	3,290.00	3,143.55	3,290.00	3,143.55	3,290.00
6	Earnings per share in rupees: (Quarterly Not Annualized)												
	Weighted average number of equity shares of ₹ 1 each	32,90,00,000	32,90,00,000	31,43,55,000	32,90,00,000	31,43,55,000	31,44,35,247	32,90,00,000	32,90,00,000	31,43,55,000	32,90,00,000	31,43,55,000	31,44,35,247
	- Basic (in ₹)	0.01	(0.00)	(0.01)	0.00	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.05)	(0.13)	0.03	(0.18)	0.06	0.01
	- Diluted (in ₹)	0.01	(0.00)	(0.01)	0.00	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.05)	(0.13)	0.03	(0.18)	0.06	0.01

Notes:
1 The above results were reviewed and recommended by the Audit Committee & approved by the Board of Directors of Kamdhenu Ventures Limited at their respective meetings held on 30th October, 2026. The Unaudited Standalone and Consolidated financial results for the quarter and half year ended 30th September, 2026 have been limited reviewed by the Statutory Auditors of the Company, and they have issued audit report with unmodified opinion on the above results.
2 The above is an extract of the detailed format of unaudited standalone and consolidated quarterly and half year ended 30th September, 2026 results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the unaudited financial results are available on the Stock Exchange websites, www.bseindia.com, www.nseindia.com and on the Company website www.kamdhenupaints.com

For and on behalf of the Board of Directors of
Kamdhenu Ventures Limited

Sd/-
Saurabh Agarwal
Managing Director
DIN: 00005970

Place: Gurugram
Date: 30th October, 2026

KAMDHENU GROUP

Vol XCIV, Issue No. 305. Regd.No. DL-21046/03-05 RNI Regn. No. DELENG/2018/76281. Printed and Published by Ramesh Chander Malhotra on behalf of The Indian Express (P) Limited and Printed at The Indian Express (P) Limited Press, A-8, Sector-7, Noida -201301 and Published at The Indian Express (P) Limited, Mezzanine Floor, Express Building, 9 &10, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg, New Delhi 110002. Editorial office: The Indian Express (P) Limited, Mezzanine Floor, Express Building, 9&10, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg, New Delhi-110002. Phone: 0120-6651500. Advertising office: The Indian Express (P) Ltd.,Express Building, B1/B, Ramnath Goenka Marg, Sector 10, Noida-201301. Phone:01206651291. Chairman of the Board: Viveck Goenka, Chief Editor: Raj Kamal Jha, Editor: Unni Rajen Shanker, Editor (Delhi):Monojit Majumdar** ** Responsible for selection of News under the PRP Act. Copyright: The Indian Express (P) Limited. All rights reserved. Reproduction in any manner, electronic or otherwise, in whole or in part, without prior written permission is prohibited. The Indian Express®