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DEHRADUN

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CHANDIGARH



PIONEER IN SHORT

SENSEX FALLS OVER 600 POINTS

Indian equity markets suffered major losses on Monday as investors lost ₹7.12 lakh crore in market value, with the BSE Sensex plunging 609.68 points (0.71 per cent) to close at 85,102.69. The Nifty50 also fell 226 points to 25,961. Analysts attributed the decline to profit-booking after two days of gains, continuous foreign institutional investor (FII) selling, and cautious sentiment ahead of the US Federal Reserve's rate decision. Key Sensex laggards included Bharat Electronics, Tata Steel, Bajaj Finance, Adani Ports, SBI, Asian Paints, Larsen & Toubro, and Bharti Airtel, while Tech Mahindra, HCL Technologies Reliance Industries, and HDFC Bank were among the few gainers Sectoral indices saw broad declines, led by services (-3.7 per cent), realty (-3.5 per cent), and capital goods (-2.83 per cent), with midcap and smallcap indices falling 1.73 per cent and 2.2 per cent respectively. The sustained weakness in the rupee and ongoing FII outflows heightened concerns over inflation, rising import costs, and global contributing to the bearish market sentiment. Trading saw 3,348 stocks decline.

The ByStander



SUPREME COURT RESERVES BAR SEATS

The Supreme Court on Monday directed that 30 per cent of seats in State Bar councils, where elections have not yet begun, be reserved for women advocates. For the current year, the court instructed that 20 per cent of seats be filled through elections and the remaining 10 per cent by co-option if there are insufficient candidates. The bench. comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi, clarified that co-option should not exceed 10 per cent of seats. States where elections are already underway, including Andhra Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Telangana, Bihar, and Chhattisgarh, were urged to ensure fair representation of women advocates through voting. The decision follows pleas by advocates Yogamaya M G and Shehla Chaudhary.

CONGRESS SUSPENDS NAVJOT KAUR SIDHU Puniab Congress on Monday

suspended leader Navjot Kaur Sidhu from its primary membership following her controversial remark that "one who gives a suitcase of ₹500 crore becomes the chief minister." The suspension order was issued by Punjab Congress president Amrinder Singh Raja Warring. In response, Kaur Sidhu accused Warring of being "insensitive, irresponsible, morally dishonest, and corrupt" and refused to acknowledge his leadership. She also alleged that Congress candidate Karanbir Singh Burj paid ₹10 crore to party leaders for a ticket, a claim Burj denied, offering to swear in a gurdwara that no payment was made. Navjot Kaur Sidhu clarified her comments, saying they were twisted, emphasising that she and her husband, former Punjab Congress chief Navjot Singh Sidhu, never paid money for political positions.

PM questions Nehru legacy

PUBLISHED FROM:

Prime Minister Narendra Modi Monday accused Jawaharlal Nehru for partition and echoing Muhammad Ali Jinnah. Attacking independent India's first prime minister, PM Modi said, "Instead of firmly countering the baseless statements of the Muslim League and condemning them, Jawaharlal Nehru, the then Congress president, did not reaffirm his and the Congress party's commitment to Vande Mataram, but began questioning Vande Mataram itself... Under the pressure of appeasement politics, the Congress bent and agreed to break Vande Mataram to pieces. Therefore one day, it had to bend for the Partition of India," he said.

The PM was speaking at a Parliament debate on the 150th anniversary of Vande Matram.

Initiating the debate, the PM highlighted how Vande Mataram inspired the nation, energised the freedom struggle and became a symbol of national resolve which prompted Mahatma Gandhi to liken it to the national anthem. The PM said Muslim League leader Jinnah first stepped up his opposition to Vande Mataram on October 15, 1937, from Lucknow. Nehru



RAIPUR

PM Narendra Modi speaking in the Lok Sabha during a discussion on the 150th anniversary of Vande Mataram during the Winter session of Parliament

wrote to Netaji Subhash to take out processions Vande Mataram. Chandra Bose five days later, sharing Jinnah's sentiments and observing that Vande Mataram's Anandmath background had the potential to irritate the Muslims", PM Modi said.

The PM said it was ironic that Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's Vande Mataram underwent a review of its worth in his home State of Bengal at the Kolkata session of the Congress Working Committee in 1937, leaving the country in a state of shock and prompting patriots controversies around

against the decision of the Congress.

As members of the Trinamool Congress protested the PM addressing Chatterjee as Bankim da, the PM took a dig at the party saying that the Congress outsourced its decision-making process. He asserted that the policies of the Congress and its allies have remained unchanged and they continued to resort to politics of appeasement and have attempted to create

The prime minister recalled that Mahatma Gandhi wrote in 1905 that Vande Mataram has become so popular that it has emerged as national anthem and wondered why injustice was meted out to it.

'If Vande Mataram was so popular, why was injustice meted out to it, why was it betrayed in the last century. What were those forces that were so powerful to overrule the wishes of Mahatma Gandhi on Vande Mataram,'

CONTINUED ON >> P4

Government turns heat on IndiGo

RAJESH KUMAR ■ New Delhi

The civil aviation minister on Monday informed the Parliament that the Government has initiated a probe into aviation disruptions caused by IndiGo and warned of action against the airline to set an example for other airlines. Union Civil Aviation Minister K Rammohan Naidu was replying to a question by in the Rajya Sabha.

"We are doing an inquiry. We will take very, very strict action not only for this situation but also as an example,"

ON MONDAY, INDIGO'S CRISIS ENTERED ITS EIGHTH DAY, WITH 562 FLIGHTS CANCELLED **ACROSS AIRPORTS**

ruption was a result of IndiGo failing to manage its crew and duty roster. On Monday, IndiGo's crisis entered its eighth day, with 562 flights cancelled across airports.

Naidu said adding that the dis-

The revised flight duty time limitation (FDTL) was introduced after a high court order in April 2025. Of the 22 guidelines, 15 were implemented on July 1 and the remaining seven on Nov 1. The minister stressed that multiple consultations were held with all stakeholders, including IndiGo, and rules had to be followed without

"After thorough consultation and safety risk assessment, necessary variations and exemptions have been given beforehand," the minister said, adding that the crisis took place almost one whole month of operation in the new FDTL.

any compromise on safety.

IndiGo replies, DGCA action likely

RAJESH KUMAR New Delhi

IndiGo on Monday apologised for the nationwide aviation disruption caused by the carrier while seeking more time to respond to a show cause notice issued by the sector regulator. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) had given the airline, its CEO and COO time till 6pm Monday evening to respond to its notice issued on Saturday.

In its response, the airline has claimed it is "realistically not possible to pinpoint the exact cause(s)" in the timeline issued by the DGCA. It also noted that the regulator's manual allows a 15-day response time for show-cause notices.

The airline further claimed that the disruption was the result of compounding effect of multiple factors that came together in an unfortunate and unforeseeable confluence, "including minor technical glitches, schedule changes linked to the start of the winter

as well as implementation of operation under the updated crew rostering rules (Flight Duty Time Limitation Phase II) which coincided in lesser or greater measure, as per the statement.

season, adverse weather conditions and

increased congestion in the aviation system

IndiGo is "profusely apologetic" and deeply regrets the inconvenience and hardship caused to customers," it said.

In a statement, the DGCA said it has received the airlines' response and it is in the process of examining the response, and enforcement action, as deemed appropriate, will be taken in due course. The two top executives of the airline were given until 6 pm on Monday to file replies to the notices.

Additionally, CEO Piter Elbers and COO Isidro Proqueras are likely to be summoned on Wednesday by the fourmember probe panel set up by the DGCA as part of the investigations.

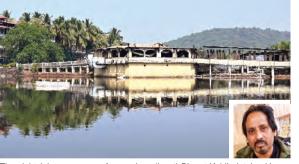
Nightclub owners fled after fire: Police

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

The owners of the Goa nightclub, where 25 people were killed in a fire on late Sunday night, have fled to Phuket, the Goa Police said on Monday. Earlier in the day, police teams from Goa and Delhi searched the north Delhi home of nightclub owners Gaurav and Saurabh Luthra, the two main accused in the tragedy.

After registering an FIR against them, a Look Out Circular was issued against them by December 7 by the Bureau of Intelligence (BOI) at the request of the Goa Police. The Bureau of Immigration at Mumbai was contacted, and it was found that both the accused had taken the 6E 1073 flight to Phuket at 5.30 am on December 7, immediately after the fire incident. which occurred around midnight, an officer of the Goa police said. He added the Goa Police had immediately dispatched a team to Delhi to conduct raids on the addresses of the accused Gaurav and Saurabh Luthra.

Investigators say the Luthras are wanted for questioning over suspected safety lapses, missing fire clear-



The nightclub seen across Arpora river. (Inset) Bharat Kohli, detained in connection the fire, who allegedly oversaw daily operations at the venue PTI

ances, and procedural violations linked to the club's operation. According to officials, the nightclub did not have a fire department NOC, and documents required for licence approvals were either incomplete or missing. Police believe these contributed to the tragedy. Early findings indicate that fire exits were inadequate and that the staff and customers had little time to escape once the flames broke out.

So far, Goa Police has arrested four senior managers of the club, chief general manager Rajiv Modak, general manager Vivek Singh, bar manager Rajiv Singhania, and gate manager Riyanshu Thakur.

All four are being questioned about operational violations on the night of the incident. Police have also detained Bharat Kohli, a resident of Sabzi Mandi in Delhi, who handled the club's day-to-day operations. His name surfaced during interrogation of one of the managers, and he will be taken to Goa for further questioning.

Police said more arrests are likely as they scrutinise the role of each member of the management team. Investigators are also checking CCTV footage, staff statements, and communication records to reconstruct events leading up to the fire.

CONTINUED ON >> P4

CM push for industrial zones

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE Bhopa

Chief Minister Dr Mohan Yadav on Monday direct-MSME Department to step up promotion of industrial areas in the Indore and Bhopal metropolitan regions, saying improved outreach would help attract new units, investment and jobs.

At a review of the department's two-year performance Khajuraho, Dr Yadav said the state would conclude its Industry Year with a programme in Gwalior by month-end, featuring foundationlaying, industrial plot allotments and inaugurations worth nearly ₹2 lakh crore.

He noted a 31 percent rise in MSME registrations and said all incentive arrears since 2019 had been cleared, with ₹2,780 crore released. He also asked officials to link food parks and rural and cottage industries with the MSME sectors.

ASHOKE RAJ ■ New Delhi

China on Monday announced online visa application for Indians. The new system will be launched on December 22. The Chinese Ambassador to India, Xu Feihong shared the update on social media, noting that the digital platform will allow users to complete visa forms and upload required documents directly through the website.

The launch comes shortly after India fully restored its visa regime for Chinese tourists and business travellers. On November 26, the Ministry of External Affairs confirmed that visas in these categories are fully functionagain, ending a five-year freeze imposed following the border tensions

in 2020. MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal stated that tourist visas for Chinese nationals – paused since the pandemic . and subsequent border events - have resumed worldwide as of November 2025. Business visas had been reintroduced earlier and continue to be processed without restrictions.

The reinstatement of visas is part of a series of peopleoriented confidence-build-



China adds online visas to the thaw

ing steps agreed upon between New Delhi and Beijing this year. These include the restart of direct commercial flights in October 2025 and progress on reviving the Kailash Manasarovar Yatra, a pilgrimage route deeply significant to Indian travellers.

Analysts say the reopening of travel channels is expected to boost tourism flows, trade activity, and person-toperson exchanges between the world's two most populous nations, providing a pos-

CHINA ALERT New Delhi: The Government of India has

issued an advisory urging Indian citizens to exercise "due discretion" when travelling to or transiting through China, following an incident in which an Indian national from Arunachal Pradesh was detained at Shanghai's Pudong Airport. The advisory comes

more than two weeks after Chinese authorities allegedly refused to acknowledge the woman's Indian passport during a transit stop on 21 November, resulting in her temporary detention. The case prompted strong concern in New Delhi. particularly over the treatment of Indian travellers holding valid documentation.

CONTINUED ON >> P4

itive signal amid ongoing diplomatic complexities.

The Chinese Embassy's new online visa system is anticipated to support this momentum by offering a faster, more accessible application experience for travellers seeking to visit China.

Meanwhile, observers point

out that based on the RTI

information, the design year

STPs in Haridwar overflow years ahead, raising concerns for Ganga another 18 MLD capacity STP

ARUN KASHYAP Haridwar

Major Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) built in Haridwar to prevent contamination of the Ganga have started overflowing well before the design year. With the plants receiving more sewage than their capacity, locals are concerned about the holy river being contaminated in Haridwar. However, officials maintain that all sewage water is released after

Information sought under the Right To Information (RTI) Act by local activist Disha Sharma revealed that there is one 14 MLD capacity and in the Sarai area of Haridwar. The 14 MLD plant receives 15-16 MLD sewage while the 18 MLD plant is receiving 20-21 MLD sewage for treatment. The biggest STP is located

in Jagjeetpur with 68 MLD capacity and this plant is receiving between 73 MLD and 75 MLD sewage. All the major STPs in this region are receiving more than their capacity for sewage, information received under the RTI

On being asked about this issue, the Uttarakhand Jal Sansthan maintenance branch (Ganga) executive engineer Harish Bansal said,



iRepresentative photo

The Pioneer

"All the overflow from the Jagjeetpur and Sarai STPs is transferred to the Peyjal Nigam STP. Their officials will be able to tell the exact quantity," he said.

The Peyjal Nigam's construction and maintenance unit (Ganga), project manager Meenakshi Mittal said that upto 75 MLD sewage is being received at the 68 MLD plant. "However, we treat all the sewage and do not release any sewage into the Ganga without treatment,"

PIONEER PHOTO

of these plants is 2030-35, which means the STPs were engineered to remain functional and meet the intended treatment capacity and performance standards till these years. With the plants overflowing well before their design years, observers opined that an overloaded STP not only loses capacity but also increases the risk of contamination in the Ganga due to incomplete treatment of the sewage. The locals allege flaws in the designing and planning of these STPs.

The Pioneer Bhopal | Tuesday | December 09, 2025

CM stresses timely ration delivery in departmental review

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

hief Minister Dr Mohan Yadav on Monday reviewed the Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Protection Department in Khajuraho and directed officials to ensure that foodgrain benefits reach every eligible beneficiary smoothly and on time. He said the welfare of poor families, labourers, farmers and women remains the central priority of his government

Dr Yadav praised the department's push on e-KYC and "rightful targeting", saying regular verification was necessary for transparency. Officials said more than 34 lakh ineligible names were removed during a large verification drive. About 14 lakh people on the waiting list later received eligibility slips and have begun accessing free

food grains.
Food Minister Govind Singh
Rajput, Chief Secretary
Anurag Jain, Additional Chief
Secretaries Neeraj Mandloi
and Rashmi Arun Shammi
and senior officials attended

Officials said a 29th "priority category" has been created for unorganised and migrant workers registered on the eShram portal. Under it, 7.25 lakh families - covering 25.18 lakh newly added workers are now receiving free ration. They said 5.25 crore beneficiaries received 66.37 lakh metric tonnes of free food grains worth Rs 19,935 crore in the past two years under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana.

The state has 536.23 lakh beneficiaries under the National Food Security Act. Officials said 497.08 lakh about 93 per cent - have completed e-KYC. Around 14 lakh new beneficiaries have been issued eligibility slips following verification.

Dr Yadav also reviewed procurement and support-price payments. Wheat farmers received Rs 29,558.40 crore as MSP and Rs 1,965 crore as bonus in the 2024-25 and 2025-26 rabi seasons. Paddy farmers received Rs 19,208.76 crore as MSP over the 2023-24 and 2024-25 kharif years, along with Rs 337.11 crore in incentives under the Mukhyamantri Krishi Unnati Yojana. The state contributed a record 9.64 lakh metric tonnes of rice to the Central Pool this year and expanded storage capacity.

Officials said women have received 616.97 lakh LPG refills in two years under the Ladli Bahna and Ujjwala schemes, backed by subsidies worth Rs 911.32 crore.

On urban gas supply, the Madhya Pradesh Urban Gas Distribution Network Development and Expansion Policy 2025 came into effect on February 14. A single-window portal has been launched for NOCs. Dr Yadav said the network should be expanded as a campaign to reach the maximum number

of households. The department highlighted transparency measures such as SMS alerts at each stage of ration movement and mandatory public reading of distribution records in gram sabhas on 26 January and 2 October. Officials said 30 fair price shops in Indore have been converted into Jan Poshan Kendras, raising operators' monthly earnings by Rs 10,000 to Rs 15,000. Vehicles under the Mukhyamantri Yuva Annadoot Yojana are monitored through a state-level GPS

system. New applications - the Moisture App, Fumigation App and Inspection App - have been introduced for warehouse monitoring.

A three-year action plan proposes modern POS machines with integrated weighing scales and iris scanners, software integration across food agencies, GPS-based route optimisation, automated cleaning systems for non-FAQ stocks and solar panels on warehouse roofs and open yards. Preparations for Simhastha 2028 were also reviewed. Officials said 40 fair price shops will operate inside the Mela area, and temporary ration cards will be issued to akharas based on demand. The area will be divided into eight zones and sixteen sectors, with dedicated warehouse arrangements and temporary gas connections for akharas.



Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav being welcomed by the public on his arrival in Khajuraho, Madhya Pradesh on Monday.

Patwari questions dropout rates, cites 56L 'missing' children

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

adhya Pradesh Congress president Jitu Patwari on Monday accused the state government of systemic neglect in school education, alleging that 56 lakh children have disappeared from the schooling system over the past seven years despite a fivefold increase in the education budget.

Addressing mediapersons at the State Congress headquarters, Patwari said he "welcomed" Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan's recent remarks highlighting poor nutrition levels among schoolchildren in Madhya Pradesh. "The Union Minister has shown the mirror to the state. He said over 50 lakh children in Madhya Pradesh have never even heard the name of fruits like apples."

education system," Patwari

said.
Citing UDISE+ data, he said total enrolment from Class 1 to 12 has fallen from 1.60 crore in 2017-18 to 1.04 crore in 2024-25, leaving 56 lakh children unaccounted for. "Where did these children go? Have they dropped out due to poverty? Are they being pushed into child labour or child marriage? The government must answer,"

Patwari also questioned how outcomes have worsened despite a dramatic rise in the school education budget-from Rs 7,000 crore in 2017 to Rs 37,000 crore this year. "Even today, children are being served dry roti and salt in mid-day meals. There is no milk, no fruits. More than 1,400 schools have only one teacher, over 10,000 schools have no principal, and one-fourth of schools lack maths and science teach-

ers. Where has this additional Rs 30,000 crore gone?" he

He criticised the state government for what he called "misplaced priorities", pointing out that official documents mention a daily allocation of Rs 12 per child for nutrition, while expenditure on cattle fodder is shown as Rs 40 per cow per day. "This is a government where neither human life nor animal life is protected-only paperwork and budget manipulation thrive," he alleged.

Patwari said Pradhan's statement validates concerns the Congress has been raising for years about poor learning levels, malnutrition, teacher shortages and failing infrastructure in state-run schools. "When we raised these issues, the BJP labelled us anti-national. Today, their own Union Minister confirms every word we said," he

Bhopal starts weekly organic market to promote chemical-free produce

Bhopal: In good news for the health-conscious in the state capital, a weekly organic market offering fresh, chemical-free produce directly from natural farmers is now open for consumers. The market, organised by the District Panchayat, the Rural Livelihood Mission and the Agriculture Technology Management Agency (ATMA) scheme of the Agriculture Development Department, will operate every Saturday from 2 pm to 8 pm at the Raag Bhopali Complex in 10 No. Market.

Complex in 10 No. Market.

Deputy Director of Agriculture Suman Prasad said the market responds to growing public concern about the health risks of crops grown with chemical fertilisers and pesticides. She said consumers are increasingly seeking cleaner and safer options and should remain aware of how their food is produced.

Prasad said about 1,250 farmers in the district have been selected for natural farming and are receiving training to shift fully to organic methods. The new weekly market, she said, gives them a dependable platform to sell their produce, while ensuring residents have access to genuine organic goods every week.

organic goods every week.
Stalls feature grains, turmeric, pulses such as chickpeas and urad, and more than 20 types of green vegetables, including spinach, garlic and bottle gourd. Prasad urged residents to visit the market and encourage farmers who have committed to chemical-free cultivation.

She said organic farming helps maintain soil fertility, protects water sources and contributes to environmental conservation, while prolonged dependence on chemical farming can lead to health issues

CM reviews revenue work, orders swift land record access

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

hief Minister Dr Mohan Yadav on Monday asked the Madhya Pradesh Revenue Department to relaunch a statewide 'Rajaswa Maha Abhiyan' to clear long-pending land disputes, urging officials to speed up decisions and make land records easily accessible online.

Reviewing the department's work at the Maharaja Convention Centre in Khajuraho, Dr Yadav said the revived campaign would help farmers and citizens resolve name transfers, partitions, boundary demarcations and corrections in revenue documents. He directed officials to identify cases pending for more than six months and maintain close coordination with presiding officers to prevent delays.

Dr Yadav stressed that digitisation must be accelerated, with the aim of making all maps and land

details available on the state portal and legally valid within two years. He also instructed officers to prepare maps for mapless villages, identify new abadi land and ensure that land acquisition procedures run entirely online through the Land Acquisition Management System (LAMS) module.

Revenue Minister Karan Singh Verma presented the department's two-year performance and a three-year action plan. Chief Secretary Anurag Jain, Additional Chief Secretary Neeraj Mandloi and Principal Secretary Vivek Porwal were among those present.

Officials said the previous Revenue Mahabhiyan, run in three phases during 2024-25, resolved more than one crore cases. Dedicated officers appointed in revenue courts across 24 districts have improved judicial pace, with 94 per cent of 41.68 lakh cases filed on the RCMS

portal over two years settled within stipulated timelines. A call centre launched on April 7, 2025 reduced cases pending beyond six months from 8,963 to 150. The department said Madhya Pradesh has pioneered geo-fencing for crop girdaavari, logging 3.80 crore survey numbers with photographic evidence. Under the Swamitva Yojana, 94 per cent of work is complete and 39.63 lakh Records of Rights have been issued in abadi areas. A major digitisation effort covering 15 crore archival pages is underway, while the Bhulekh Portal 2.0, launched on August 1, 2025, now lets citizens view complete land records and download certified copies on their mobile devices. The state reported stronger revenue collection, the appointment of more than 5,000 patwaris, full digital training for

stronger revenue collection, the appointment of more than 5,000 patwaris, full digital training for all staff and approval for 438 office buildings to strengthen field operations.

Teess protests rising crime



Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav flagged off 10 new canter buses for tourism in Panna National Park., Madhya Pradesh on Monday

small gatherings but gradually

expanded into a citywide trib-

ute because of the affection

people continue to show toward

the actor. This year, he decorated his auto with a large ban-

ner carrying Dharmendra's

photographs and a message expressing gratitude for his

contribution to Hindi cinema.

The banner drew steady attention along the BRTS corridor

Raikwar said he sees the day as

both a personal celebration and

a public gesture. Speaking to

The Pioneer, he acknowledged

the economic cost but insisted

"Each day I lose a business of

around Rs 800. I live near the

old Vidhan Sabha building and

most of my passengers come from Bhopal Railway Station,"

he said, adding that the happi-

ness and goodwill he experienced on this day outweigh the

He said that whenever the Deol

family releases a new film, fan

groups in Bhopal organise small

gatherings and screenings to

mark the occasion. Raikwar

added that Dharmendra's inter-

generational appeal ensures the

fan community remains active,

with many younger commuters

expressing interest in the trib-

and adjoining stretches.

it was secondary.

Tansen's Behat birthplace heritage STAFF REPORTER Bhopal the Prime Minister seeking removal of encroachments and national-level protection

Digvijaya urges CM to safeguard

and Rajya Sabha member Digvijaya Singh escalated pressure on the state government on Monday, urging Chief Minister Dr Mohan Yadav to act decisively on the preservation of Behat, the birthplace and meditation site of music icon Tansen.

In a detailed letter, Singh described Behat in Gwalior district as a global cultural asset central to the Dhrupad tradition, yet steadily eroding under encroachment and official neglect. He said the deterioration was harming the sentiment of musicians and young practitioners who regard the site as a foundational pillar of Indian classical music

Singh highlighted that he had previously raised the issue at the national level. In December 2024, he wrote to tity of Indian classical music, and that its protection warrants top-tier government attention.

the Prime Minister seeking removal of encroachments and national-level protection for the site. He followed this with Starred Question No 94 in the Rajya Sabha on February 13, 2025. According to the parliamentary response, the state government has not sent any proposal to the Archaeological Survey of India or the state archaeology department for conservation or development of Tansen's birthplace.

of Tansen's birthplace. He has now pushed the Dr Yadav administration to send an official proposal to ASI without delay and to initiate immediate steps at the state level to secure and upgrade the heritage zone. Singh argued that Tansen's legacy is not limited to Gwalior or Madhya Pradesh but represents a global identity of Indian classical music, and that its protection warrants top-tier government

Youth Congress protests rising crime and metro chaos at Collector office

PNS Indore

Touth Congress workers mounted an aggressive demonstration outside the Indore Collectorate on Monday, accusing the administration of failing to curb rising crime, unchecked drug abuse and operational chaos in the city's metro project. Police deployed water cannons to stop the march, forcing back protesters with heavy streams of water before they could reach the Collector Office. A delegation later submitted a memorandum and dispersed.

randum and dispersed.
Crowds began assembling at Harsiddhi Temple early in the morning, carrying banners and posters and raising slogans over what they described as a deteriorating law-and-order environment and poorly managed metro construction. The rally moved towards the Collectorate, but police had locked down the access route with barricades and additional security personnel.

As the crowd intensified, clashes appeared imminent. Protesters attempted to breach the barricades, prompting police to activate water cannons. The force of the spray knocked several Youth Congress workers off their feet, leaving some with minor injuries and triggering brief chaos. The situation was brought under control shortly afterwards.

A delegation led by city Youth Congress president Amit Patel, along with city and district Congress leaders Chintu Chouksey and Vipin Wankhede, met the SDM to submit a detailed memorandum. They demanded strict action against drug networks, stronger intervention to contain rising criminal activity and urgent corrective measures to streamline the metro project.

The Youth Congress warned that unless the administration delivers concrete progress, the agitation will intensify in the coming days.

City auto driver offers free rides in Dharmendra birthday tribute

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

Bhopal saw an unusual display of fandom on Monday as an auto driver devoted to cinema icon Dharmendra offered free rides across the city to celebrate the actor's 90th birthday. The gesture, visible on major routes through prominently displayed posters, quickly became a talking point among commuters. Kailash Raikwar, a long-time admirer of the veteran star, began operating his auto at 7 am and refused to accept any payment for the entire day. By midday, he had completed more than ten trips, mostly from Bhopal Railway Station toward central and old-city neighbourhoods. He said the exercise would continue until late evening, with no passenger

charged for any ride.
Raikwar, who runs two active fan groups - the Amanora International Fans Club and the Gazab Ji Fans Club - has been marking Dharmendra's birthday in public spaces for years. The clubs organise screenings, community events and tribute drives, and Raikwar's free-ride initiative has become a central feature of their annual observance.

vance. He said the tradition began with

Excise team seizes illegal liquor, two-wheeler

PNS Indore

The Excise Department in Indore seized a crate of illicit country liquor and a two-wheeler worth about Rs 75,000 during a routine crackdown on illegal transport and sale, officials said.

Assistant Excise Commissioner Abhishek Tiwari said that the raids were part of a checking drive at several locations in the city.

A joint team led by Controller Devesh Chaturvedi, Deputy Controller Manoj Agrawal, Flying Squad in-charge Kamlesh Solanki and Mhow Circle officers Ashok Khatri and Pawan Tikekar intercepted an Activa scooter (MP09 DP 8356) on Kodariya Road.

Officials said the scooter was carrying a crate of country-made plain liquor. Both the liquor and the vehicle, valued together at about Rs 75,000, were seized.

were seized.

A case has been registered against the accused, Ramesh, son of Devilal of Kodariya, under provisions of the Madhya Pradesh Excise Act, 1915

Cong alleges fake entries and pressure on BLOs in electoral roll revision drive

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

The Madhya Pradesh Congress on Monday filed a formal complaint with the Chief Electoral Officer, alleging widespread manipulation in the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the electoral roll. The party claims the voter list is being inflated with fake entries, accusing BJP-backed networks of driving the

Booth Level Officers (BLOs) began house-to-house verification on December 2 under the revised Election Commission schedule. Congress says early findings are alarming: several names in the 2023 roll cannot be traced to their listed addresses, and many locations mentioned in the roll do not exist. The party argues this mismatch signals a deliberate attempt to pad the electoral list with non-

existent voters.

In the complaint, Congress leader JP Dhanopia said the scale of irregularities is far higher than previously known. He noted that in multiple booths across the state, BLOs report being unable to locate voters whose names were added in recent revisions. The complaint alleges that these entries - now under scrutiny - were

inserted without physical verification, violating established

norms. The party also warns of growing pressure on field officials. The letter claims some BLOs are being discouraged from distributing verification slips, enabling questionable entries to remain unchallenged. Congress alleges that local BJP operators are attempting to influence verification outcomes by creating an atmosphere where officials hesitate to document discrep-

ancies.
The letter states that this environment compromises transparency and weakens the credibility of the ongoing revision. It says the core objective of SIR - to clean up voter lists and ensure accuracy - is being undermined by political inter-

ference.
Seeking urgent corrective action, the Congress has urged the Election Commission to direct BLOs to record discrepancies without obstruction, distribute verification slips to all voters, and reject any entry not backed by onground verification. The party has also demanded that the final electoral roll, scheduled for publication on December 16, reflect only verified and legitimate voters.



Superintendent of Police Gwalior Dharamveer Yadav with other officials with the approx 736 seized mobile phones and tablets worth Rupees 18.2 million at a press conference in Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh on Monday. Madhya Pradesh Police recovered 944 mobile phones worth Rs 2 crore missing from various districts. 944 mobile phones and handed over to their owners through the CEIR (Central Equipment Identity Register) portal.

Bagsewania police nab minor linked to burglaries

STAFF REPORTER Bhopal

agsewania police have detained a minor accused of carrying out a series of burglaries from vacant houses in Saket Nagar and Adarsh Nagar, recovering stolen items worth about Rs 1.5 lakh, officers said

on Monday.
Police said the boy, who is addicted to alcohol and drugs, targeted homes that appeared locked for several days. He allegedly conducted detailed reconnaissance before breaking

in and stealing fixtures and household equipment to fund his habits.

The first case surfaced on December 6, when Rohit Kumar Raikwar, caretaker of Dr Sunil Malik's bungalow in Saket Nagar, reported a break-in. The main gate lock had been forced open, and water taps, AC pipes and shower fittings were missing. A case under Sections 331(4) and 305(a) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita was registered.

In a second incident reported in

April, Sunil Kochkar of Adarsh Nagar told police that several items had been stolen while he was in Mumbai. His home CCTV camera had captured the thief's movements, and the case was filed under Section 305(a) BNS.

Investigators examined CCTV footage from both neighbourhoods and found that the suspect appeared identical in each incident. Based on the footage and other inputs, police detained the boy, who later confessed during questioning.

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Years-long wait ends as Bhopal Metro tracks Dec 21 launch stations followed and have now pleted by June 2028. Pul Bogde

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

ulminating months of trial runs and safety ⊿audits, Bhopal Metro wiĺl finally open services for passengers on December 21, Chief Minister Dr Mohan Yadav announced at a press briefing at the Khajuraho Convention Centre on Monday.

Approved in November 2018, the Bhopal Metro Rail Project proposes a 30-kilometre network across two corridors with 30 stations, including two underground. The project cost has risen sharply from Rs 6941 crore in 2017-18 to Rs 10033 crore, an increase of nearly 43 percent. Officials attribute the escalation to higher construction material prices, increased taxes, design changes and delays that have pushed the per-kilometre cost from Rs 249 crore to about Rs 372 crore



The first operational segment the Orange Line priority corridor from Subhash Nagar to AIIMS - includes eight stations: Subhash Nagar, Kendriya Vidyalaya, DB Mall, MP Nagar, Reni Menaleneti DBM Tirche Rani Kamalapati, DRM Tiraha, Alkapuri and AIIMS. Metro officials said passengers will travel free for the first seven days. Fares will then be offered at 75 percent, 50 percent and 25 percent discounts for three months. After the introductory period, fares will range from Rs 20 to Rs 80, matching the tar-

Congress leader Manoj Shukla with his supporters and party workers hand over the alleged bundles of fake voter lists in the

Narela state assembly constituency to Deputy District Election Officer Bhuvan Gupta at his office for investigation during the

CM pushes coordinated, long-lasting urban development

completed and 732 are in

The state said it cleared 21.50

lakh tonnes of legacy waste

under Swachh Bharat, with

Indore and Jabalpur retaining

top national rankings. Under the National Urban Livelihoods Mission, 2.66

crore meals were served under

Deendayal Rasoi and Rs

1,122.11 crore in loans extend-

E-governance milestones include GIS mapping for 413

bodies, property surveys in 305 bodies and a 93.66% dis-posal rate on CM Helpline complaints. The Housing

Board reported Rs 531.10

crore in property sales and

completion of six re-densifi-

Reforms under Atmanirbhar

Nagar saved crores through

ed to street vendors.

progress across 413 cities.

iff model used for Indore Metro. Full fares will apply once the Orange Line becomes fully operational.

Work on the 16.05-kilometre AIIMS-Karond route began in 2018, with the priority section between AIIMS and Subhash Nagar moving fastest. Early construction focused on Subhash Nagar, Kendriya School, DB Mall, MP Nagar and Rani Kamalapati stations. Two steel bridges were later erected over railway tracks. DRM Tiraha, Alkapuri and AIIMS

cleared final readiness checks. The metro will start with 27 three-coach trains, with room to expand to six coaches depending on demand. The Orange Line will eventually run from Karond Chauraha to AIIMS Saket Nagar, while the Blue Line will connect Bhadbhada Chauraha and Ratnagiri Tiraha. The Subhash Nagar depot will serve as the system's main maintenance and operations

Phase I - a seven-kilometre stretch from Pul Bogda to AIIMS with eight stations - was earlier scheduled for completion by August 2025. Phase II, a nine-kilometre segment from Karond Chauraha to Pul Bogda with six stations including two underground, and Phase III, a 14.16-kilometre elevated route from Bhadbhada Chauraha to Ratnagiri Tiraha with 14 sta-

tions, are expected to be com-

pleted by June 2028. Pul Bogda will act as the interchange point between the Orange and Blue corridors. Trial runs on the Subhash Nagar-Rani Kamalapati section were held in October 2023.

A CMRS inspection team visited Bhopal on November 12 and examined the depot, tracks and trains from November 13 to 15. Trial runs on the Subhash Nagar-AIIMS corridor recorded operating speeds between 30 and 80 km/h, with high-speed tests occasionally touching 100-120 km/h.

The metro will begin with man-ual ticketing similar to conven-tional rail systems. None of the stations on the Orange Line have parking facilities, a gap than may inconvenience passengers arriving in private vehicles. Officials said pick-and-drop points will be available, but long-term parking may be added later.



Differently abled Indian team players celebrate their victory after defeating Sri Lankan team during an International Wheelchair Cricket Match played between India and Sri Lanka at Old Campion Ground, organised by the Umang Gauravdeep Welfare Society, in Bhopal

Truck slams bike, killing mother and son on Begumganj Road

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

32-year-old man and his Amother were killed after a speeding truck crashed head-on into their motorcycle near the Dal Mill area on Bhopal Road in Begumganj around midday on Monday. The man's wife survived the collision but remains in critical condition, police said. The victims were identified as Aleem Mansoori (32) and his mother, Bhuran Bi (55), both residents of Tulsipar village. Aleem's wife, Anwari Bi (28), sustained multiple injuries and continues to fight for her life in hospital. According to police officials, the family was travelling to attend a funeral in Berkhedi Jorawar when the accident took place. Authorities said a 112 emergency response team was dispatched after receiving a distress call. Local residents helped lift the truck slightly and pulled the injured out from below before rushing them to the Civil Hospital in Begumganj. Doctors declared Aleem (32) dead on arrival. His mother (55) and wife (28) received first aid and were referred to

Bhopal in critical condition. However, a government 108 ambulance did not reach the hospital even after more than an hour, forcing locals to arrange private vehicles to transport the injured. Police said Bhuran Bi (55) died on the way. Residents alleged that delays in ambulance response contributed to the deaths along contributed to the deaths, claiming both victims might have survived with timely medical intervention. The motorcycle was left completely mangled at the scene. Police have registered a case against the truck driver, who remains under investigation.

CM seeks fair wages and mainstreaming of beedi workers

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

hief Minister Dr Mohan Yadav on Monday asked officials to work with the Forest Department to draw beedi workers into mainstream employment, saying tendu leaves should first benefit those who collect and process them in Madhya Pradesh.

Reviewing the Industrial Policy and Investment Promotion Department in Khajuraho, Dr Yadav said West Bengal's beedi industry was thriving on leaves sourced from Madhya Pradesh while thousands of local families needed stronger support. He said the state would ensure steadier work, better wages, improved social security and safer conditions, with priority for women workers. He said the initiative aimed to restore dignity and income stability for families that have long contributed to the

state economy through tendu leaf The state approved 26 new induscollection and beedi making. trial parks and clusters over 4,000 hectares, sanctioned 873 The department reported Rs 12.70 lakh crore in investment proposals through GIS and RIC. It said 327 MSME and large units had begun production in the past two years, creating 40,516 jobs, while industries received Rs 4,977 also approved. crore in assistance. Madhya Pradesh earned BRAP 2024 recognition in four categories, and 108 offence-free compliances reduced court burdens as more than 2,700 compliances

were simplified. Officials said land had been allotted for Rs 2.48 lakh crore in investment proposals, with 2.85 lakh potential jobs. Construction had started in 229 units with 81,206 projected jobs. The empowered committee resolved 105 cases, and customised packages worth Rs 18,685 crore were cleared for 43 projects expected to generate 21,835 jobs.

hectares for the PM Mitra Park, and cleared Rs 536 crore for upgrades in 33 industrial areas. Four working women's hostels with a capacity of 5,772 beds were Officials reported that GIS 2025 became the state's largest investment summit, with 72 national and international programmes. New policies for industry, logis-

tics and exports were rolled out, along with a faceless incentive system, GIS-based land allocation and an investor-support portal. Principal Secretary Raghavendra Singh said the state is targeting a Rs 25.3 lakh crore economy and Rs one lakh crore in exports by 2028-29. He said modern logistics systems and inland container depots are being developed, with a focus on attracting FDI from the US, Japan and the UK.

Chief Minister flags off 10 new canter buses at Panna National Park

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

hief Minister Dr Mohan Yadav on Monday ✓flagged off 10 new viewing canter buses at the Madla Gate of Panna National Park, expanding safari capacity and on-site booking options for visitors.

The state tourism corporation said the canters, each carrying 19 passengers, are designed to offer a higher and more spacious platform than existing safari vehicles, improving visibility and comfort. Officials said the vehicles are considered safer for children and older tourists because of their

on online booking slots, which often fill quickly and leave walk-in visitors without access to safaris even after reaching the park. With the new vehicles, tourists will be able to buy safari tickets directly at park entry gates.

The canters will be deployed across major national parks including Bandhavgarh, Kanha, Pench, Panna and Parsili in Sidhi district. Perperson fees for a round are expected to range between Rs 1,150 and Rs 1,450 depending

on the location.
Tourism officials said the expanded fleet is part of a

wider effort to strengthen visitor facilities in wildlife destinations across Madhya Pradesh under Dr Yadav's

Commissioner urges departments to upload assets on GIS portal

works under AMRUT 2.0 are reduced power demand and

ongoing Special Intensive Revision for electoral rolls, in Bhopal on Monday.

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

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hief Minister Dr Yadav

on Monday asked

✓urban bodies to raise

infrastructure standards, say-

ing cities must be judged by

quality, not the number of pro-

jects. He urged closer coordi-

nation between the Urban Development and Rural

Development departments to

advance the urban-rural clus-

At a review of the Urban Development & Housing Department in Khajuraho,

the government reported

completing 8.77 lakh houses

under PMAY Urban and

transferring Rs 1,749.17 crore

to 2.65 lakh beneficiaries.

and sewer projects have been

finished in 32 cities, while 321

ter model.

review meeting on the district GIS portal was Commissioner's office on Monday, with Commissioner Sanjeev Singh joining online to direct officials to ensure that all departmental assets are uploaded accurately.

Singh said departments must share complete information with MPSEDC so assets can be entered on the portal. He stressed that the data must be correct and comprehensive. He instructed officials to pre-

pare an action plan to achieve 100 per cent mapping on the GIS portal. Assets of anganwadis, schools, panchayat buildings and hostels should be recorded, he said, asking departments to work in coordination and classify assets properly. Officials also received training on the Parakh portal during the meeting.
District Panchayat CEO Ila

Tiwari, Joint Commissioner (Development) Dr Vinod Yadav, MPSEDC senior project manager Rakesh Dubey and divisional officers attended the meeting.

removal of unused connections. New quality-control measures mandate utility ducts on 18-metre roads and 50-year road-life standards. The three-year plan includes six lakh PMAY 2.0 approvals, Rs 1,440 crore in water projects under AMRUT 2.0, nearly 10 lakh new tap connections, eight bio-CNG plants and expansion of e-bus fleets, flyovers, parking and STPs. Institutional reforms include an Integrated Municipal Act, cadre restructuring and new EV, IT, Asset Management and Green divisions in MPUDC, which will also build a 250 MW floating solar plant at Birsinghpur. prepare GIS-based master plans for 38 cities and lead

Mumbai model moonlights as MD peddler, arrested at Idgah Hills take place. Officers said they

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

he Bhopal Crime Branch on Sunday arrested a Mumbai-based model accused of moonlighting as a drug peddler and seized 1.15 grams of high-grade MD valued at about Rs 1.65 lakh in the international market.

Police identified the suspect as Shifat Ali, a native of Shivpuri district who now lives in Mumbai and works as a model. Investigators said he bought the MD from a supplier in Indore two days earlier and travelled to Bhopal to sell it locally.

Ali was waiting near Idgah when the crime branch team closed in and detained him before any exchange could

are now questioning him to identify both the intended customer and the Indorebased supplier who provided the drug.

A senior crime branch official said the arrest could help expose the wider supply chain behind MD circulation in the state capital. A case has been registered under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, and police are mapping possible local links that may be driving demand.

The case has renewed concerns within the department about the growing number of industry being drawn into synthetic drug peddling in

held accepting bribe Bhopal: The Special Police

Dy Director agriculture

Establishment Lokayukta team in Bhopal on Monday evening arrested Deputy Director of Agriculture Jairam Hedau in Narmadapuram while allegedly taking Rs 40,000 to restore a suspended fertiliser licence. Retired Agricultural Extension Officer Rajnarayan Gupta, who manages his brother's Vinayak Fertilizer and Seed Store, had complained that Hedau sus-

pended the shop's licence after a video circulated online and demanded Rs 1 lakh and premium liquor to reinstate it. Gupta told investigators Hedau took the marked notes from a drawer at 7 pm. The team recovered the cash moments later. Section 7 of the Prevention of Corruption Act. Further action

The government said the additional fleet will ease pressure

Mist and mercury fall as cold wave rises in the State

Youth claims deception in conversion, opts for reconversion

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

planning for Simhastha 2028.

A 7 ith the initiative of Cabinet Minister Vishwas Sarang, a Bhopal resident who had earlier converted to Islam formally returned to Hinduism on Monday, undergoing a full set of purification and reinitiation rituals at the city's Gufa Mandir. Shubham Goswami, who had adopted the name Aman Khan after converting, approached Sarang last week alleging coercion, deception and pressure from the family of a woman he had been in a relationship with. Based on his complaint, police initiated action and have arrest-

ed three accused. On Monday, Shubham under-

went a havan, upanayan, guru deeksha, mundan, cow worship and Ganga-jal purification to formally re-enter Sanatan Dharma. Temple priest Rampravesh Das Devacharya Maharaj said the process followed traditional norms observed when someone returns to the faith.

Shubham alleged he had lived under pressure for months, participating in religious practices against his will and distancing himself from his family. He claimed he was forced to introduce himself as Aman Khan, was encouraged to change his

lifestyle completely, and faced threats and false cases when he resisted. He also said he lost his job and lived away from home for nearly three years.

Sarang, who attended the ceremony, said Shubham had told him he was pressured into conversion, fed beef, and pushed into jamaat activities. "Acting on his complaint, the police have taken strict steps and three individuals are in custody," he said.

Shubham said he decided to return to Hinduism after police intervention and support from local authorities. Further investigation into his allegations is underway.

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

against clerk Sahu is likely.

dense blanket of mist Aand a biting cold wave gripped Madhya Pradesh for the third straight day on Monday, pushing Bhopal's night temperature down to 7.2 degrees Celsius and sending residents to bonfires before dawn.

The chill deepened across the state on Sunday night, with most cities slipping below 10 degrees. Pachmarhi remained the coldest at 5.2 degrees, while Indore logged 5.7 degrees, its lowest December reading in a decade. The previous low was 7 degrees on December 24, 2015.

The sharp fall in temperatures has disrupted early-morning

routines across several districts, with fog-covered roads slowing traffic and reducing visibility. Street vendors reported thinner footfall, while hospitals noted a rise in cold-related discomfort among elderly residents. Authorities advised people to avoid unnecessary travel during peak mist hours. Umaria recorded 5.6 degrees, Rajgarh 6 degrees, Nowgong 6.5 degrees, Khajuraho 7.4 degrees, Rewa 7.5 degrees, Gwalior 8.9 degrees, Jabalpur 8.3 degrees and Ujjain its season's lowest at 9 degrees.

Cold day conditions have already set in across parts of Indore, Ujjain and Jabalpur divisions. Senior meteorologist Arun Sharma said the spell will persist in Indore, Shajapur, Dhar

Narsinghpur, while Bhopal remains under a full cold wave Similar conditions were report-

ed across Bhopal and Shahdol divisions on Sunday, with cold day situations in Shajapur, Narsinghpur and Betul.

On Monday the IMD issued a cold wave warning for isolated areas in Bhopal, Vidisha, Sehore, Rajgarh, Indore, Shajapur, Shahdol, Jabalpur and Seoni districts. A cold day warning was issued for Narsinghpur for the next 24 hours.

With icy northerlies sweeping the state and no relief in the immediate forecast, Madhya Pradesh is bracing for several more days of intense winter, prompting residents - especially the elderly and children - to take extra precautions.

Glassy-eyed city loses sight of rising screen time risks

ANKUSH SINGH ■ Bhopal

igital devices have moved so deeply into everyday life that screens now shape how children study, how adults work and how families unwind. But as dependence grows, doctors warn that the health costs are rising just as fast. Across Bhopal, clinicians are reporting younger patients with weakened eyesight, disturbed sleep and mounting mental stress linked directly to prolonged digital exposure.

Parents say these patterns began accelerating during the pandemic, when schooling shifted almost entirely online. For many households, mobiles and laptops became the only link to classrooms. Bhopal resident Surendra Bajpai said his Class 6 daughter spent hours each day attending online lessons, completing homework and relaxing through videos. Soon after, she struggled to see clearly and needed spectacles at 11. Her

doctors also noticed irritability and anxiety, prompting strict limits on her recreational screen use and more outdoor

Working adults face parallel problems. Software engineer Aditi Dhanwani, 29, spends most of her day coding and testing systems for a private firm. She said long screen hours leave her eyes burning and fatigued, and her sleep repeatedly disturbed. Despite medication and eye drops, her vision has continued to weaken, and headaches have become frequent.

The impact extends to older professionals. Masood Khan, 53, an accounts manager in a private media organisation, said eight to nine hours of screen exposure has become unavoidable. His eyesight has worsened over the years, he said, while acknowledging that prolonged screen use is an unavoidable part of his work-

Students preparing for competitive examinations report gain among schoolchildren.

similar strain. UPSC aspirant Yogesh Kumar Jain, 25, studies online for about six hours a day. He said prolonged screen dependence has weakened his eyesight and made it difficult to focus on distant objects. Hours of sitting have also left him with stiffness, fatigue and reduced concen-

tration. Health experts say excessive screen use begins affecting children far earlier than parents expect. Specialists advise that those below the age of two should not be exposed to screens at all. Early digital use, they warn, can hinder visual development, reduce attention span and trigger behavioural issues. Yet many parents continue giving mobiles to toddlers to keep them occupied, creating habits that can be difficult to reverse. Doctors note that these early patterns eventually influence physical fitness. Reduced out-

door play and long sitting

hours contribute to weight

Among university students and office workers, compulsive scrolling and extended gaming have fuelled sedentary lifestyles and increased mental stress. Experts say shortform videos in particular encourage addictive behaviour and shorten attention

Bhopal Chief Medical and Health Officer Manish Sharma said the situation now demands what he calls "mobile dieting". He compared excessive digital exposure to unhealthy food consumption and warned that constant scrolling leads to distraction, irritability and dependency. He added that several European countries have introduced strict screen-time rules for children and that Australia now requires social media platforms to monitor and remove accounts belong-

ing to users under 16. Sharma said these policies show global recognition that unregulated digital access is emerging as a public health concern. Without balanced routines, he said, excessive screen exposure can heighten risks of anxiety, depression and sleep disorders, particularly among young people navigating academic pressure and social expectations.

Health professionals emphasise that moderation and simple daily habits can significantly reduce risk. They recommend encouraging outdoor activity, limiting recreational screen exposure and ensuring regular breaks during work or study. For younger children, they stress that parental supervision is central to building healthier digital habits.

As digital devices continue shaping modern life, doctors say the challenge is not to resist technology but to use it responsibly. In households across Bhopal, they warn, sustained attention to balance will be key to protecting the physical and mental well-being of the generation growing up

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E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

(enforcement) Rules, 2002.

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(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)	(H)	(1)
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The online auction will be conducted on website (URL Link- https://BidDeal.in) of our auction agency ValueTrust Capital Services Private Limited. The Mortagagrs/ notice are given a last chance to pay the total dues with further interest till December 24, 2025 before 05:00 PM else these secured assets will be sold as per above schedule. The Prospective Bidder(s) must submit the Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) RTGS/ Demand Draft (DD) (Refer Column E) at ICICI Home Finance Company Limited Branch Office Address mentioned on top of the article on or before December 24, 2025 before 04:00 PM. The Prospective Bidder(s) must also submit signed copy of Registration Form & Bid Terms and Conditions form at ICICI Home Finance Company Limited Branch Office Address mentioned on top of the article on or before December 24, 2025 before 05:00 PM. Earnest Money Deposit Demand Draft (DD) should be from a Nationalized/Scheduled Bank in favor of "ICICI Home Finance Company Ltd.—Auction" agraple at the branch office address mentioned on top of the article. Auction" payable at the branch office address mentioned on top of the article.
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The online auction will be conducted on website (URL Link- https://BidDeal.in) of our auction agency ValueTrust

The Authorized Officer reserves the right to reject any or all the bids without furnishing any further reasons. For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please visit https://www.icicihfc.com. Date: December 09, 2025 Place: Gwalior Authorized Officer, "ICICI Home Finance Company Limited" CIN Number:- U65922MH1999PLC120106



IN FOCUS



Delhi Court defers bail order in Kartavya Path case to December 9

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

A Delhi court on Monday deferred its order on the bail pleas of several accused in the Kartavya Path protest case to December 9 due to Judicial Magistrate Aridaman Singh Cheema falling ill.

Outside the courtroom, parents of several accused students voiced their grief to their lawyers about being emotionally provoked by the repeated deferrals" on the bail order.

On Thursday, the judge deferred the order on the bail pleas, saying the new material put on record by the investigating officers (IOs) would require time to be perused. Several advocates pleaded that their clients had exams coming up shortly and the bail order Kartavya Path case.

needs to be released "on an urgent basis."

On November 23, a protest took place at the India Gate over rising air pollution in the national Capital.

The protesters have been accused of raising controversial slogans and using pepper spray on the police trying to contain them.

According to police, 23 protesters have been arrested in two separate cases lodged at the Parliament Street and Kartavya Path police stations. Seventeen protesters were

held in connection with a scuffle at the Parliament Street Police Station, while six were arrested in the pepper-spray case.

Fifteen of the 17 accused in the Parliament Street case were rearrested in the

Opposition blasts Govt over Vande Mataram debate PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Opposition MPs lashed out at the Government on Monday over the "Vande Mataram" debate in the Lok Sabha, calling it an attempt at diverting attention and dividing the country. Some of them also claimed that the debate was started keeping in mind next year's West Bengal Assembly polls.

Speaking in the Lok Sabha, Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra accused the BJP of committing a "big sin" by creating a controversy over Vande Mataram and claimed that Government pushed for a debate on the national song as the West Bengal assembly polls were approaching. She hit out at PM Modi, saving "he is not the prime minister he used to be as his self-confidence is decreasing and his policies are weakening the

Samajwadi Party leader Akhilesh Yadav also hit out at the BJP, claiming that those who did not participate in

now talking of the values of "Vande Mataram" and asserted that the national song should not be used as a tool to impose one's beliefs on others. He said that "Vande Mataram" should be followed in spirit, as it is a song which bonded people during the freedom struggle. He also questioned how individuals who did not participate in the freedom struggle could truly understand the meaning o f "Vande Mataram.'

Priyanka Gandhi said the Government wanted the debate to divert attention from people's problems and make fresh allegations against those who sacrificed for the country's freedom. "... Whatever complaints you have against (Jawaharlal) Nehru, whatever mistakes you think he made... If you want to hurl abuses, if you want to insult as much as you like, please make a list of that too... 999 insults, 9,999 insults... Make a list, and then we will fix a time.

"Just like we debated for 10



Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra speaks in the Lok Sabha during the Winter session of Parliament in New Delhi on Monday

Mataram, in the same way, we will ask the Speaker, we will fix a time – 10 hours, 20 hours, 40 hours, however many hours it takes for your complaint to be fully addressed," she said. "Let's close the chapter for once and all. After that, let's talk about today's issues — price rise and unemployment," she added.

Launching a strong defence of India's first prime

hours today on Vande minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, who was repeatedly criticised by treasury bench members during the debate, Priyanka Gandhi said Prime Minister Modi has been the country's PM for about 12 years, while Jawaharlal Nehru had spent as many years in jail for the independence of the country.

Priyanka Gandhi said that though PM Modi gives a good speech, there is one shortcoming that he is "weak on facts".

Congress from 1905 till now, Vande Mataram is sung, but does that happen in BJP conventions, she asked.

"Modi ji mentioned a letter in the House, in which he said that on October 20, Nehru ji had written to Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. But the Prime Minister did not mention the letter written on October 17, which Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose ji had written to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru ji.

"Netaji had written 'My dear Jawahar, reference to Vande Mataram. We shall have a talk in Kolkata and also discuss the question in the Working Committee, if you bring it up there. I have written to Dr. Tagore to discuss this matter with you when you visit Shantiniketan. Please do not forget to have a talk with him when you visit Shantiniketan," she said.

"On October 20, Nehru had replied to it. PM Modi quoted one line of this reply here, but the rest of what Nehru ji wrote was 1 'There is no doubt that the present outcry against extent a manufactured one by the Communalists. Whatever we do, we cannot pander to Communalist feelings'," she She then cited Tagore's

letter to Nehru in which he stated that the two stanzas that were always sung held such profound significance that there was no difficulty in separating that part from the rest of the poem and those sections of the book. She said there was no reason to have a debate on the national song and alleged that "we are having this debate as Bengal polls are coming and the prime minister wants to play his role in that". TMC's Kalyan Banerjee said the way PM Modi addressed author Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay was

very "disturbing". "The way he addressed the great author, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, it was really disturbing. Actually, not only Narendra Modi or (Home Minister) Amit Shah, BJP people are Bengali haters," he said.

Former CM Prithviraj Chavan slams Modi Govt over aviation monopoly

TN RAGHUNATHA Mumbai

Maharashtra's former chief minister Prithviraj Chavan on Monday came down heavily on the Narendra Modi Government for enabling "unprecedented monopoly" in the aviation sector — an unhealthy development that may prove to be"dangerous" for the country in the long-run.

Chavan — who was a Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) in the Manmohan Singh Government — said that the growing dominance of a single airline like IndiGo posed a 'serious threat" to the national economy and adversely affected passenger interests.

here, Chavan alluded to the Indigo crisis that has resulted in wide-spread flight disruptions and severe passenger distress and rooted for splitting the 20-year old private airline into two companies to ensure fair competition. Averring that two major

players now dominate India's air travel — IndiGo with 65 per cent market share and the Tata Group (Air India and AI Express) with nearly 30 per cent share, Chavan said that "a dominance by just two carriers "is extremely dangerous" for a sector that once had 10 competing airlines. Chavan said that time had come for the Government to set up its own national airline to prevent Talking to media persons monopolies in the sky.

Chavan said the current situation in the country's aviation sector was a fallout of the 'systemic indulgence' granted to IndiGo by the Government and the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA).

"Both Government and DGCA have failed to enforce their own rules and regulations, compounding the operational failures and the nationwide breakdown," he said. "Today, 40 crore passen-

gers depend on these two mega-airlines, leaving the public vulnerable to cascading crises whenever one system falters. Government must balance the situation by launching a

sector like aviation fall entirely into private hands," Chavan said. Hitting out at the Competition Commission of India (CCI), the former Union Minister said that the CCI had "miserably failed" in safeguarding consumer rights, demanding it should be dismantled and replaced by a stronger watchdog with real

Referring to reports in a section of media, Chavan demanded to know if the IndiGo's Rs 56 crore donation to the ruling BJP through electoral bonds had influenced regulatory decisions.

authority.

"Was it a contribution or a bribe for a quid pro quo? The national carrier. It was a public deserves answers," wrong policy to let a crucial Chavan asked, while public deserves answers,"

demanding a probe into the allegation.

Dwelling upon the Adani Defence & Aerospace (ADA)'s November 25, 2025 purchase of the Flight Simulation Technique Centre Pvt Ltd (FSTC), India's largest pilot training academy, Chavan chose to link this with the Civil Aviation Minister's recent statements that India will require 30,000 pilots within the next decade.

"Within days after the FSTC takeover by Adani Group, IndiGo crisis started. The acquisition of FSTC by the Adani group is likely to consolidate its control over yet another critical part of the aviation ecosystem, Chavan said. Chavan made seven specific demands - including the resignation of Civil Aviation Minister K Rammohan Naidu, splitting up of IndiGo and the Government to establish a national carrier to demolish aviation monopoly and removal of DGCA officers responsible for failing to avert the IndiGo crisis.

Chavan's other demands include: immediate suspension of IndiGo CEO Peiter Elbers, setting up of a highlevel inquiry with a 15-day deadline to submit its report, disbanding/restructuring the CCI watchdog and implementing the longpending Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) proposed Among other things, during the UPA era.

IIM Jammu launches workshop on centuries-old Basohli art

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

The Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Jammu on Monday inaugurated a unique week-long workshop on the centuries-old Basohli painting art form, providing students and participants an exclusive opportunity to learn the intricate craft directly from women artists who are officially certified under its Geographical Indication (GI) tag.

Considered one of the most vibrant and distinctive schools of Pahari miniature painting, Basohli painting originated in the erstwhile princely state of Basohli around the 17th-18th centuries. Known for its bold colours, dramatic facial features, rich borders and liberal use of beetle-wing cases for embellishment, the art form



tag in March 2023, recognising its unique geographical and cultural origin.

The workshop, described by IIM Jammu as the "first-of-

campus, brings together nationally recognised women artisans from the Basohli region who have played a pivotal role in reviv-

ing and preserving this 300year-old tradition.

Over the seven-day programme, participants will receive hands-on training under the guidance of award-

winning senior artist Sohan Singh Billowaria, state awardees Rajni Bala and Sonam Jamwal, and several others in traditional techniques, including natural pigment preparation, brushwork, gold embellishment and thematic storytelling to families that have been drawn from Hindu mytholo- practising the craft for genergy, court life and Ragamala series, which are hallmarks of authentic Basohli paintings. Speaking at the inaugura-

tion, Professor BS Sahay, Director, IIM Jammu, said he welcomes the living heritage of Basohli Art to its Jagti campus, as it hosts the master practitioners "whose devotion, skill, and cultural memory preserve the aesthetic soul of Jammu and uphold India's artistic heritage"

"By facilitating direct interand these extraordinary Centre Jammu.

women artisans, we aim to foster appreciation for indigenous art forms while promoting entrepreneurship and sustainable livelihoods in the artisan community," he said. The participating women

artists, many of whom belong ations, have gained national acclaim in recent years. Several have received state and national awards, and their works have been exhibited at prestigious platforms, including the National Museum in New Delhi.

The workshop, scheduled to end on December 14, has been organised under Anandam: The Centre for Happiness and the Painting Club, IIM Jammu, in association with the Indira Gandhi National Centre for action between our students the Arts (IGNCA), Regional

Zill Parishad polls together: Shinde

Mahayuti to contest upcoming civic,

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Nagpur

The Mahayuti will put up a united fight in the upcoming municipal corporation and zilla parishad polls, Shiv Sena leader and Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde said on Monday

He advised MLAs and ministers of his party to follow the "alliance dharma" and refrain from making any statements or behaviour that would lead to a conflict in the Mahayuti alliance of BIP, Sena, and NCP.

Addressing Shiv Sena MLAs and ministers in Nagpur, Shinde said the party contested elections for the post of presidents in 168 municipal councils and 4,000 councillors.

He said the atmosphere

was very conducive for Shiv Sena in the first phase of local body polls, voting for which was held on December 2, and that the party put up a good fight. The results will also be

good for the party, he added. "The municipal corporation and zilla parishad polls will be contested as a Mahayuti alliance. Follow the alliance dharma. Do not make any controversial statement or do anything that will cause a conflict in the

alliance," said Shinde. The first phase of the local body polls saw Mahayuti allies contesting against each other at many places in

Maharashtra. In some cases, the campaign became acerbic. prompting Shinde to raise the

issue with the top leadership of the BJP.

Naveen Patnaik dubs BJP's supplementary budget as empty vessel that make good sound

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Bhubaneswar

Leader of Opposition Naveen Patnaik termed the Odisha Government's supplementary budget as "an empty vessel' that makes "good sound".

Patnaik made the statement outside the Assembly while the House debated the Odisha Appropriation (number 2) Bill, 2025, introduced by Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi here. Though the BID president attended the session, he did not participate in the debate.

Responding to the criticism, the chief minister said Patnaik should make his comments inside the House.

'It is said by many people in our state and no expenditure being made by the Government for the people and their development. This is very sad to report. Time and again this is being brought to the attention of the state Government that there must be some expenditure for the development of the people," he

Alleging that the state Government was neglecting the expenditure on development. Patnaik claimed that everyone is suffering.

"It is not exclusively for any section; all are suffering. It

an empty vessel and you know empty vessels sounds good and they are satisfied with it. I am very sorry to report this plight," the former CM said. Replying to the debate, Maihi said the Leader of Opposition should make his statements in

(supplementary budget) is like

the House "He is not present most of the time. It is another matter if his health is not good. He should attend the proceedings and make statements. The people will not accept the

statements made on X posts,' the chief minister said. Participating in the debate, Opposition Deputy Leader

Prasanna Acharya also described the budget as "an illusion." "I heard many members

should be some economic issues," he said.

Citing NITI Aayog data, speaking and the debate is Acharya said the BJD came to mostly on political aspects. As power in 2000 when the state was almost bankrupt and we discuss budget, there

making overdrafts to pay salary of employees, but Naveen Patnaik, during his 24 years of rule, changed the state's fiscal situation.

BID left the ʻThe Government when the state's financial health was very positive. You (BJP) have inherited a Government that is revenue surplus. Therefore, try to maintain it and do not push the state to bankruptcy again," Acharya

The BID leader accused the state's BIP Government of mismanaging a strong economy handed over to it and cited falling GST collections and declining mining revenue.

BJD MLA Arun Kumar Sahoo accused the Government of poor financial management. He argued that the administration increased the budget size through loans but failed to spend effectively.

Sahoo highlighted rising crimes against women and cited incidents such as the Balasore woman student's selfimmolation death, gang rape of another at Gopalpur se beach and minor girl's death at Balanga and Malkangiri.

Congress MLA Rama Chandra Kadam questioned the Government's ability to utilise funds. He said the annual

While initiating the debate, budget remained underspent and raised doubts about how the supplementary budget would be managed.

He highlighted shortages of doctors and teachers and claimed tribal rights were being ignored while mining projects deprived them of entitlements.

BJP MLA Tankadhar Tripathy countered the allegations and pointed out how the previous BJD Government "failed" in providing drinking water to people, irrigation for agriculture, cold storage for farmers, employment for youths and

others despite ruling the state for 24 years. Mataram completed 100 years. The prime min-

India Issues China Alert

Responding to media queries on Monday, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal called for assurances from Beijing that Indian citizens will not face selective or arbitrary action at Chinese airports.

"We expect the Chinese authorities to ensure that Indian citizens transiting through Chinese airports are not selectively targeted, arbitrarily detained or harassed," Jaiswal said. He emphasised that China must uphold international norms governing air travel and abide by rules that apply to all transiting passengers.

While the MEA continues to follow up on the matter with Chinese authorities, the spokesper-

rooted in concerns about recent developments. "The Ministry of External Affairs would advise Indian nationals to exercise due discretion while travelling to or transiting through China," he added. The incident has drawn attention at a sensi-

son noted that New Delhi's current advice is

tive time in bilateral relations, which have seen a cautious resumption of exchanges-including the revival of visa services and direct flights-after years of strain. However, New Delhi's latest advisory signals that concerns over individual safety and passport recognition remain unresolved.

Further updates on travel protocols or additional advisories are expected if the situation

FROM PAGE - 1

Nightclub owners fled after fire: Police

Both Goa Police and Delhi Police have said that tracing the owners is now a top priority. The investigation remains active, and officers said they expect further breakthroughs in the coming days. Meanwhile, Saurabh Luthra posted a message on Instagram on Monday, saying the management was "deeply shaken" by the loss of lives. He wrote that the club would extend "every possible assistance and cooperation" to affected families. Police officials said the social media post does not change the status of the investigation and that efforts to find the owners will

continue until they are located and questioned. The tragedy has triggered strong public anger in Goa, with calls for accountability from both the club's owners and officials who allowed the establishment to operate despite repeated lapses. State authorities have launched parallel reviews into

the licensing process and safety inspections

PM questions Nehru legacy

carried out at the venue.

PM Modi lamented that the Constitution was "throttled" and the nation chained by the Emergency when the national song Vande

ister also noted that Vande Mataram stood like a rock and inspired unity despite British The prime minister noted that the mantra of

the national song gave power and inspiration to the entire country during the freedom struggle. Modi recalled that the British were forced to ban Vande Mataram as they brought in laws to prevent printing and propagation of

'Through Vande Mataram, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay responded to this challenge with great strength and resolve. The British divided Bengal in 1905, but Vande Mataram stood like a rock and inspired unity," he said.

1.11 crore PMAY houses sanctioned: Khattar



The Centre has sanctioned 1.11 crore houses under two schemes of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, with 95.54 lakh of those houses having already been completed and handed over to beneficiaries, Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs Manohar Lal Khattar informed the Rajya Sabha on Monday.

Attacks on ECI part of conspiracy: Rajnath Singh

Defence Minister and senior BJP leader Rajnath Singh on Monday accused the opposition parties of attacking bodies such as the Election Commission of India as part of a conspiracy to weaken the institutions of Interjecting in a discussion on 150 years of Vande Matram in Lok Sabha, Singh said constant migration, deaths and rapid urbanisation lead to



Revanth targets 10% national GDP for Telangana by 2047



CM A Revanth Reddy on Monday said he wanted Telangana to contribute 10 per cent to the national GDP by 2047. Speaking at the Telangana Rising Global Summit 2025, he also said the state Government wants to replicate the model of Guang-Dong province in China whose economy is the largest of any province in China.

Patna airport runway needs expansion: Aviation Minister

The runway at Patna airport needs expansion, and the Government has been repeatedly requesting additional land from the Bihar Government while operating the airport based on all safety risk assessments, Aviation Minister K Rammohan Naidu said in the Rajya Sabha on Monday. According to Naidu, the current runway at Patna airport is not suitable for operating many types of aircraft due to load penalties.



Siddaramaiah to follow high command on turmoil

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Belagavi (Karnataka)

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Monday reiterated that he will abide by the Congress high command's decision on the leadership change issue in

the state. The CM has been repeatedly stating for the last few days that he and Deputy CM DK Shivakumar will go by what the high command decides on the

chief minister change. "Will abide by whatever the high command decides," Siddaramaiah told reporters in response to a question on his son and Congress Member of the Legislative Council (MLC) Yathindra Siddaramaiah's statement that there is no question of leadership change as of now, and that he believes that the former will continue as CM for five years. Earlier in the day, Yathindra claimed that the Congress high command has said that there is no lead-

which is not new. I feel that, as of now, there is nothing like leadership change. I hope that he (Siddaramaiah) will complete his five-year term," Yathindra told Vidhana Soudha.

there and discuss. He will also talk about the prevailing situation in the state, he said.

Yathindra also admitted that there was confusion over the leadership issue because, "the Deputy Chief Minister was asked whether he wants to be the CM. There are aspirants in all the political parties. The high

ership change in the state. "I have been saying this,

reporters at the Suvarna To a question that Siddaramaiah had been asked to come to Delhi in January, Yathindra said the Congress high command calls the chief minister for various issues. So he will go



Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah

command has said that they will not decide it now.'

According to Yathindra. the Congress Legislative Party (CLP) elects a candidate for a

definite period. It is the CLP which decides who should be the chief minister. He claimed that, "The Congress high command has made it clear

that there is no leadership change as of now." Yathindra further claimed that high command had a meeting recently where they said they

Actress assault case: Kerala

have not taken any decision and postponed it. "So, as of now, there is no talk on the change of leadership in Karnataka," he claimed.

The power tussle within the ruling party had intensified amid speculation about a change in chief minister in the state, after the Congress Government reached the halfway mark of its five-year term on November 20.

The speculation was fuelled by an alleged " power-sharing" agreement involving Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar in 2023. However, both CM and Deputy CM had recently held breakfast meetings at each others residences, on the instructions of the high command, which is seen as a move to pause the leadership tussle between the two and to signal Siddaramaiah's continuation as the CM for the time being. especially ahead of the Belagavi legislature session.

5.17 lakh Waqf properties on UMEED portal uploaded



Union Minister of Minority Affairs Kiren Rijiju

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE New Delhi

A total of 5.17 lakh Waqf properties were initiated on the UMEED portal while 2,16,905 properties were approved by the designated approvers during the sixmonth window provided, according to the data provided by the Ministry of Minority Affairs.

The UMEED Central Portal for management of Waqf Properties in India, launched by Union Minister of Minority Affairs Kiren Rijiju on June 6, 2025, officially closed for uploads on December 6, 2025, completing its sixmonth window, as per the UMEED Act, 1995 and the clear directions of the Supreme Court.

In the final count, the momentum significantly accelerated as the deadline approached, the ministry said in a statement.

Many review meetings, training workshops, and high-level interventions even at the secretary-level injected renewed pace into the process, making the upload surge in the last hours, it said.

According to the data provided by the ministry, 5,17,040 Waqf properties were initiated on the portal with 2,16,905 properties approved by the designated approvers. A total of 2,13,941 properties have been submitted by makers and remain in the pipeline as of the deadline, the ministry said, adding that 10,869 properties stood rejected during verification

To support this massive national exercise, the Ministry of Minority Affairs conducted continuous workshops and training sessions with State/UT Waqf Boards and Minority Departments," the statement said. A two-day master trainer

workshop was also conducted in Delhi to equip Waqf Boards and State/UT officials with hands-on training for the uploading process, the ministry said.

Senior technical and administrative teams were deputed across states, and seven zonal meetings were

held nationwide. A dedicated helpline was also set up at the Ministry office for technical support and quick resolution of issues

arising during the uploads. Since the launch of the portal, secretary, Ministry of Minority Affairs, Chandra Shekhar Kumar took 20 plus review meetings, consistently guiding, motivating, and monitoring States/UTs to ensure timely and accurate uploading of existing Waqf property details, the state

The conclusion of this phase marks a significant milestone in bringing transparency, efficiency, and unified digital management to Waqf properties across India under the UMEED framework, it said.

22 MLAs close to Fadnavis, may cross over: Aaditya

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Nagpur

Shiv Sena (UBT) legislator Aaditya Thackeray on Monday claimed that 22 MLAs from a Mahauti ally have "grown close" to Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis and are ready to switch sides, an oblique reference to Deputy CM Eknath Shindeled Shiv Sena. In June 2022, the Shiv

Sena split following a rebellion led by Shinde, resulting in the collapse of the then Uddhav Thackerayled Maha Vikas Aghadi Government.

Later, in January 2024, assembly speaker Rahul Narwekar held that the Eknath Shinde-led faction was the "real" Shiv Sena, which is a constituent of the ruling Mahayuti in the state along with the BJP and Deputy CM Ajit Pawar's NCP. Shiv Sena.



Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis at Vidhan Bhavan on the first day of the Winter session of State Assembly in Nagpur

"There is one party and two factions on the treasury side. Twenty-two MLAs from one faction have grown close to the CM. They have good funds and they have started dancing to the tune of the CM,"a Aaditya Thackeray claimed, without naming the Shinde-led

The 22 MLAs are "ready to switch (sides)," he further claimed while talking to reporters in the Vidhan Bhawan premises here.

The Worli MLA also said that someone from these 22 legislators calls himself "vice-captain", a veiled reference to Industries Minister Uday Samant.

Kerala Government on Monday said it will appeal against the verdict in the actress assault case in which Malayalam actor Dileep was acquitted

Announcing the decision, State Law Minister P Rajeev said the survivor didn't get complete justice through the present verdict.

"Though those who were directly involved in the were found not the verdict everyone reporters, shortly after the court acquitted the actor in the case.

tion, he said it had even submitted a five-volume argument note at the court with regard to the case. "The Government has decided to go on appeal against the verdict. I have already talked to the chief minister and the DGP in this regard. The prosecution has been directed to initiate further proceedings in

State Cultural Affairs and Cinema Minister Saji Cheriyan also said the Government has always guilty by the court, it was supported the survivor, and its stance is to ensure the guilty are punished, however high-profile they are.

While KPCC chief Sunny Joseph said the verdict pronounced by the principal sessions court was not

had direct involvement in the crime as guilty was a relief. Joseph, in a video message, accused the prosecution of completely failing in proving the consurvivor.

reporters in Kozhikode, Satheesan said what the survivor went through is a tragedy that should never happen to any woman. This judgment finding six accused directly involved in the crime guilty will help prevent such incidents from recurring.

prosecution has failed to prove the conspiracy angle in the case, he said that will be clear only when the detailed judgment

Over 8,700 to gather as Rajasthan hosts first Pravasi Rajasthani Diwas

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE Jaipur

Rajasthan will celebrate its first-ever Pravasi Rajasthani न्यायालय जिला दण्डाधिकारी

सीहोर जिला सीहोर, म०प्र० प्र.क. /अ-78/25-26

सूचना पत्र

१- श्री साहिब शिक्षा एवं समाज कल्याण समि पता ई ८/४२ भारत नगर शाहपुरा भोपाल, इंदौ कर्यालय पता २५/१/१ ग्राम मोरोद खण्डवा रोड अहमद खान निवासी ७६-७७-७८ सिंधु साम्र अहमद खान आ० मो० अहमद ४- श्रीमती तनवी खान पत्नि श्री जफर अहमद खान ५- मो इरफान खान आ० श्री जफर अहमद खान तीन निवासी १६९/२ जूना रिसला इंदौर ६- श्रीमर्त आसिया पत्नि फैसल खान निवासी ७८ इंडस गार्डन बावडिया कलां भोपाल ७- श्री सैयद साजिद अली आ० श्री सैयद साहिब अली ८ श्रीमती फौजिया अली पत्नि सैयद साजिद अर्ल दोनो निवासी ई ८/४२, भारत नगर शाहपुर

और प्रतिभूति हित प्रवर्तन अधिनियम 2002 अंतर बंधक रखी परिसंपत्ति पर अधिपत्य दिलाने हेत्। प्राधिकृत अधिकारी, बैंक ऑफ महाराष्ट्र आस्ति वस शाखा जबलपुर द्वारा आवेदन पत्र प्रस्तुत से किया

जिसमें उन्होंने अनुबंध की शर्तों के अनुरूप ऋण की राशि वापसी नहीं करने पर बंधक रखी गई संपत्ति क आधिपत्य दिलाने का अनुरोध किया गया है विषयांतर्गत प्रकरण में दिमांक 8/12/2025 को इर

अतः आप उक्त दिनांक को इस न्यायालय में अपरा ०३.०० बजे इस न्यायालय में अनिवार्य रूप से उपस्थि रहें। अनुपस्थिति की दशा में एक पक्षीय कार्यवाही व

at the Jaipur try leaders, and policymak-Exhibition Convention Centre (JECC) on 10th December, bringing together more than 8,700 Non-

Resident Rajasthanis and industrialists who have registered to be part of this landmark occasion organised under the leadership of Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma.

The event has been envisioned to strengthen the bond between Rajasthan and its global diaspora by inviting them to Connect, Collaborate, and Contribute to the state's ambitious goal of becoming a \$350 billion economy by 2030, a vision that CM Sharma has been championing through diaspora outreach proheld in grammes Hyderabad, Surat, and Kolkata ahead of main event, where he declared, 'We have drawn up an action plan towards becoming a 350 billion dollar economy in the next

To translate this vision into action, the programme will feature sectorial sessions engaging diaspora members, indus-

five years, and I invite you

all to be a part of this his-

toric growth story of Rising

ers across Industry, Tourism, Education, Healthcare, and Water Resources, while an exclusive NRR Roundtable will provide an interactive platform for Non-Resident Rajasthanis to discuss investment opportunities and share their global expertise an initiative aligned with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Viksit Bharat' vision that aims to transform Rajasthan's diaspora network into a strategic force driving sustainable development. Laying the institutional foundation for this engagement, the state cabinet recently approved the Non-Resident Rajasthani (NRR) Policy-2025, which establishes an NRR **Investment Facilitation Cell** along with Investment Liaison Officers and Advisory Councils comprising overseas experts and business leaders, complemented by a dedicated Non-Resident Rajasthani Department with the Additional District Collector appointed as nodal officer in every district to assist NRR families, while the Rajasthan Foundation now operates 26 chapters worldwide including in New York, London, and Riyadh to maintain this global

Govt to appeal against verdict PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Opposition VD Satheesan stand taken by the prosecusaid declaring those who

while six others were found guilty.

"The state Government has always stood strongly with the survivor, and that will be continued," Rajeev satisfactory, Leader of is released.

New Delhi

this regard," he added.

spiracy part in the case and assuring justice to the Meanwhile, speaking to

When asked whether the

Third AIESC meeting boosts bilateral cooperation

ment said.

Taking forward the spirit of collaboration and ambition, the Minister urged all stakeholders to successfully implement the outcomecentric and in-depth discussions held today across school, higher and skill education and to ensure that the bridges built today continue to grow stronger in the years to come. Speaking on the occasion,

Hon Jason Clare MP, Australian Minister for Education, said "This is a win-win. It is good for Australia and it is good for India. "It is a great sign of the strength of the relationship between India and Australia. There is no such collaboration with any other country in the field of education and skill development. This shows deep trust and faith between India and Australia". Highlighting the depth

and uniqueness of the India-Australia skilling partnership, Jayant Chaudhary stated that the two countries share a one-of-its-kind institutional platform that is translating discussions into tangible outcomes through structured frameworks, such as, the Mutual Recognition of Qualifications (MRQ) 2023, a dedicated Skills Mapping Framework for demand assessment, and the signing of three key MoUs to strengthen cooperation.

The Third Australia-India **Education and Skills Council** meeting (AIESC) held in New Hon. Mr. Andrew Giles MP,

Delhi on Monday was chaired by Dharmendra Pradhan, Union Minister of Education, Government of India and Jayant Chaudhary, Minister of State for Skill Development & Entrepreneurship and Education, from the Indian side. From Australia, the meeting was chaired by Hon Jason Clare MP, Minister for Education, Government of Australia and

The meeting was also attended by Dr Sukanta Majumdar, Minister of State for Education and DoNER; Hon Julian Hill MP, Assistant Minister for International Education, Govt of Australia. Sanjay Kumar, Secretary, School Education, Dr. Vineet Joshi; Secretary, Higher Education; Ms. Debashree Mukherjee, Secretary, Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, senior Government officials from both the sides

Australian Minister for Skills

& Training.

universities. The third AIESC meeting reviewed the ongoing initiatives under school education, higher education, research, and skill develop-

and Vice-Chancellors &

representatives of Australian

Australia-India education, commitment to deepen skills and research partnerinstitutional linkages, ship, open wider avenues for expand mobility pathways, and strengthen regulatory cooperation. AIESC is a binational body that guide the strategic direction and strengthen the partnership between the two countries global priority. in the fields of the education, training, research and skill

Speaking on the occasion Pradhan said that the 3rd AIESC served as a great opportunity to build upon the progress made since the inaugural meeting of AIESC, break new ground in

ecosystem.

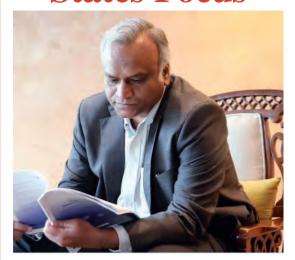
India's youth, and further deepen our bilateral engagements across the full spectrum of education and skill development as well as in areas of national and He appreciated the Australian Ministers and the

delegation for the substantive discussions on the agenda items-school education, higher education and research and skills and also for their vigorous efforts to elevate the AIESC platform to a higher-level.

education, skills and research are the key pillars of India-Australia Strategic Partnership. Both India and Australia remain committed to working together and collaborating more in Early Childhood Care and Education, technology adoption, sports education, building institutional capacities, empowering teachers, preparing youth for critical and emerging areas, like AI, advanced materials, semiconductors, MedTech, energy, and sustainability and also for innovative skilling partnerships, he

Pradhan further said that

States Focus -



PRIYANK KHARGE SLAMS BJP FOR **NEGLECTING OPPOSITION DUTIES**

Karnataka Minister Priyank Kharge on Monday hit out at the BJP ahead of the Assembly session, alleging that the party has abandoned its responsibilities as an opposition and was instead focusing only on trivial issues. Speaking to reporters on the premises of Suvarana Vidhana Soudha, Kharge took a dig at the BJP for remaining silent on matters that fall under the purview of the central government.

Responding to a question that the BJP was going to target the Congress government in the session, Kharge said, "Let them do it. They have abandoned their responsibilities as an opposition."



PM MODI URGES BIHAR NDA MPS TO SHOULDER 'GREATER RESPONSIBILITY

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday told the NDA MPs from Bihar to work with more vigour for the welfare of the people after the ruling alliance's resounding victory in the recent Assembly elections, saying "with great victory comes great responsibility".

Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) MP Shambhavi Choudhary said the prime minister conveyed the message to a delegation of NDA MPs when they called on him here to congratulate him for the NDA's massive victory in the Bihar polls.

"OVER 90% OF

FIRES IN PUNJAB.

GO UNDETECTED"

More than 90 per cent of

large farm fires in Punjab

and Haryana are now going

undetected by the official

monitoring systems as farmers are shifting stubble-

burning activities to late

afternoons, according to a

new analysis published on

Monday. The Stubble Burning

Status Report 2025 by the

International Forum for

Environment, Sustainability

and Technology (iFOREST)

said this led to major under-

estimation of the contribu-

tion of stubble burning to

Delhi's air pollution this year. IFOREST said the govern-

ment's current monitoring

protocol, run by the Consortium for Research on

Agroecosystem Monitoring

and Modeling from Space

(CREAMS) of the Indian

Agricultural Research Institute, is unable to detect

most farm fires as it

relies mainly on polar-orbit-

ing satellites that observe India only between 10.30 am

This narrow time window

At the same time, the

report finds real progress on the ground, with burnt areas

in Punjab and Haryana falling

by 25-35 per cent over recent

years. IFOREST said burnt-

area mapping provides a

more accurate picture than

active fire counts, which cur-

rently suggest a much larger

decline. Chandra Bhushan,

CEO of iFOREST, said, "Our

analysis provides incontro-

vertible evidence that India's

current stubble-burning

monitoring system is struc-

turally misaligned with

ground realities. "Farmers

have shifted burning to the

late afternoon, while our

monitoring relies on satellites

that capture active fires

only during a narrow

time window (10:30 am to

1:30 pm).

no longer matches farmers' burning practices, it said.

and 1.30 pm.

HARYANA NOW

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

LARGE FARM

J&K Police raid hotels over Form-C violations

MOHIT KANDHARI

The Jammu and Kashmir police conducted a massive drive against several hotels and a homestay for violating the mandatory Form-C reporting norms required under the Immigration & Foreigners Act in Srinagar on Monday.

The drive was conducted close on the heels of the detention of a Chinese national who had entered Ladakh and Jammu and Kashmir without permission and later stayed in an unregistered guest house in Srinagar in the last week of November 2025. The drive was conducted across several 'hot spots' of Srinagar frequented by foreign tourists. Official sources claimed

that after the Pahalgam terror attack, over 2500 foreign nationals have visited the valley along with domestic travellers.

The Chinese national was detained by the security forces after he was allegedly found using a social media app for chatting.

cials are trying to join the dots and figure out the purpose of his visit to Ladakh and Jammu and Kashmir, especially when, as per his tourist VISA, he was only permitted to visit Buddhist religious places in Varanasi, Agra, New Delhi, Jaipur, Sarnath, Gaya and Kushi Nagar.

According to a police spokesman, in the Rajbagh area, Hotel Blossoms, Hotel Grand MS, and Hotel Golden Forest had allowed foreign nationals to check in without submitting Form-C to the Foreigners Registration Office (FRO). Accordingly, FIR No. 65/2025 U/S 8 & 23-B of the Immigration & Foreigners Act was registered at Police Station Rajbagh. Similarly,in the Khanyar area, Hotel Khyber, located in Khayam, was also found violating Form-C reporting requirements. Despite repeated instructions, the management failed to produce any proof of Form-C submission. As a result, FIR No. 57/2025 was registered under relevant sections of law at Police Station Khanyar, the police



REPRESENTATIVE PHOTO

spokesman said.

In the busy Lal Bazar area, IMY Home Stay, Nowabagh Bagwanpora, owned by Mohammad Aslam Baktoo S/o Late Habibullah Baktoo, was found operating without Form-C compliance for Starobinsky Lior, a foreign national from Israel, along with others. The manage-

ment had deliberately concealed the stay of the foreign guest and failed to submit the mandatory online Form-C reporting. Accordingly, FIR No. 60/2025 U/S 8 and 23(b) of the Immigration & Foreigners Act was registered at Police Station Lal Bazar.

Nishat area, a house owner, namely Mohammad Ashraf Zargar S/o Mohammad Ramzan Zargar R/o Vakeel Colony, Brein was found in non-compliance with the mandatory reporting of Form C to FRO. In this connection, FIR No. 101/2025 U/S 8-23(b) of the Immigration and Foreigners Act was regispied by foreign nationals during their brief stay in the valley were found to be violating the norms. According to a police spokesman, Floating Castle owned by Farooq Ahmad Guroo S/o Late Gh Nabi Guroo R/o Ghat No 15 Nehru Park, boarded by Lee Ya Hui of Taiwan, Best View Houseboat owned by Faroog Ahmad Kutroo S/o Ali Mohd Kutroo R/o Ghat No 09 Da Lake, boarded by Maistruik Sergel of Russia, House Boat Crystal Palace, owned by Gh Hassan Karnai S/o Haji Gh Mohammad R/o Abi Karpora Dal lake, boarded by Naum Silviu of Romania and Houseboat Lake Palace, owned by Mohammad Altaf Gunna S/o Habibullah Gunna R/o Abi Karpora Dal Lake, boarded by Eduardo Tejerina Gonzalee of Spain, was found in violation of the norms for mandatory reporting rules. In this connection, FIR no. 94/2025 U/S 7.14, and 16 of the Immigration and Foreigner Act was registered in Police

In RamMunshi Bagh,

several houseboats occu-

Odisha records 40,947 crimes against women: Report

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Bhuhaneswar

A total of 40,947 cases of crimes against women, including 3,205 rapes, were registered in Odisha in 15 months till September, according to data provided by Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi in the assembly on Monday.

These cases were reported since July 1, 2024, Majhi said, in reply to a written question by BJD legislator Prasanna Acharya.

The BJP came to power in the state in June 2024, ending the 24-year rule of the Naveen Patnaik-led BJD government. The opposition has been regularly criticising Majhi's government, ed by the CM, 202 cases of napping of women, 796



alleging that crimes against women have increased after the BJP came to power in the state.

According to data provid-

attempted rape, 1,476 cases of sexual harassment, 9,851 cases of molestations, 2,310 cases of public disrobing of women, 8,863 cases of kideve-teasing and 556 stalking cases were registered in the state during the period.

Among the other cases registered were 129 trafficking, 277 dowry homicides, 49 dowry suicides, 5,861 dowry tortures, 6,773 non-dowry tortures and 152 voyeurism. Four cases of acid attack were also lodged during the period.

Majhi said several steps have been taken to improve the quality of investigation, fast-tracking of the cases and improving the conviction rate. Investigative Units on Crime Against Women (IUCAW) are functioning in 29 districts. These units take up investigation of important and sensitive cases, he said.

today anyone who speaks

the Bengali language is

promptly dismissed as a

Bangladeshi which is humil-

iation of the Bengali

BJP claims LoP skipped PM's speech out of guilt



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE New Delhi

The BJP on Monday alleged that both Leader of Opposition (LoP) Rahul Gandhi and Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra remained absent from the Lok Sabha out of a "sense of Parliament House complex. guilt" during Prime Minister's speech on the 150th anniversary of Vande Mataram because he exposed their party and the Gandhi family. Initiating the discussion in the Lower House, Prime Minister Modi spoke about how the original version of the Vande of appeasement. Mataram was "truncated at

the behest of" Jawaharlal Nehru to "appease" Muhammad Ali Jinnah and "this seed of division" that he sowed at that time led to the partition of India later to "appease minorities", BJP MP and national spokesperson Sambit Patra said.

"Perhaps this is the reason why the Leader of Opposition, Rahul Gandhi, and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra were absent Jinnah in Lucknow. from the House on such an important day when it is the 150th anniversary of Vande Matram and the prime minister is speaking,"

Patra charged.

Station RM Bagh.

They were absent because of the sense of guilt they had in their hearts because their own family cheated, deceived and betrayed the Vande Mataram. They knew that they wouldn't be able to bear it," he told reporters in the

Initiating the discussion on Vande Mataram in the Lok Sabha, Prime Minister Modi accused the Congress of breaking into pieces the national song under the guise of social harmony, and said it was still following the politics

He also targeted Nehru for 'agreeing" with the suggestion that Vande Mataram could antagonise Muslims. Modi cited a letter written by Nehru to Subhash Chandra Bose and claimed the former prime minister had said that the background of Vande Mataram could antagonise Muslims. He said the letter was written following a protest by Mohammad Ali

Terming Modi's speech "historic", Patra said the prime minister exposed the Congress and its betrayal towards Vande Mataram.

Bengal CM Mamata slams centre over IndiGo crisis

SAUGAR SENGUPTA | Kolkata

Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday slammed the Centre for mishandling the IndiGo crisis and asked the government to arrange for special train services as an alternative to ferry stranded passengers back to their destinations.

"Thousands of passengers are stranded at airports. so what is the alternative for them? This is a travel disaster as maximum number of flights has been stopped," Banerjee told in Kolkata even as the crisis involving India's largest air service provider entered its seventh day.

Alleging that the BJP-led Centre was only concerned about its votes and not the

interests of the people at large, Banerjee asked "the Government of India to make a plan to resolve the issue," adding, "it seems that the BIP is only concerned about capturing the institutions and not the interests of the people.

Speaking on the issue of Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressing to Bengali Novelist — and the creator of the coinage "Vande Mataram" — Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, as "Bankim Da" Banerjee attacked the former for being "unaware of the history of Bengal." This, though the Prime Minister corrected himself the next moment naming the pre-Independence writer as

"Bankim Babu.' Attacking the saffron lead-



ership she said, "they not only do not know history of Bengal but also they have been in the habit of Bengali icons like Netaji Subhas

Chandra Bose, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, Rabindranath Tagore, Vidya Sagar." She said "things have come to such a pass that culture." Referring to Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls the Chief Minister also attacked the Election Commission of India for thrusting it on the people of Bengal in "most unplanned manner." She said, "it is difficult to understand why SIR was imposed in such an unplanned manner to be completed in a matter of mere two months why was there such a hurry.' The Chief Minister was

likely to begin a two-day trip of Cooch Behar in North Bengal where she would take up the SIR issue in public rallies, Trinamool Congress sources said.

Randhawa slams Navjot Kaur's ₹500 crore CM chair claim

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE New Delhi

After her " 500 crore for CMs chair" claim, Congress general secretary Sukhjinder Randhawa on Monday said it was "unfortunate" that Navjot Kaur Sidhu made such a remark and asked how much was paid when her husband Navjot Sidhu was made a minister and then the Punjab Congress president.

Randhawa, the former deputy chief minister of Punjab, also said the Congress faces threat from no one in the state but from such people within.

"It is unfortunate that Navjot Kaur Sidhu has made such a statement. Navjot Sidhu joined the Congress from the BJP, and he was made a minister. They should tell how much was paid for Sidhu to become a minister. He was made the number 2 minister. How much was paid?

"Then he was made the Congress



They should reveal how much was paid then," Randhawa told reporters outside Parliament. He also said they all worked with Sidhu and stayed with him when he was made the minister and then the PCC president.

"The party is supreme, the party president is supreme. The chief minister remains under him and leader claimed. "My sister Navjot Kaur

should tell how much money was paid for Sidhu to become the PCC president. For three-and-a-half years, Congress workers in Punjab have been beaten up and facing action from the ruling dispensation in Punjab. Why were they (Sidhus) silent for all this

Jharkhand migrants killed in Goa nightclub fire cremated

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ranchi

The last rites of the three migrant workers from Jharkhand, killed in the fire at the Goa nightclub, were performed at their native places on Monday.

Pradeep Mahto (24) and Binod Mahto (20), two brothers from Fatehpur village in Lapung in Ranchi district, and Mohit Munda (22) of Govindpur village in Khunti district died in the inferno that ravaged the North Goa club post-midnight on Sunday.

A total of 25 people, including 14 staff members of the nightclub, were killed in the fire.

The bodies of Pradeep, Binod and Mohit, who used to work at the nightclub, were brought back to the state in the morning by a flight.

The mortal remains of Pradeep and Binod were cremated on the bank of the Karo river in Lapung, around 60 km from the state capital, in the presence of villagers and block officials.

The brothers had migrated to Goa about a year ago and



Family members and relatives of Mohit Munda, who was killed in the fire at a nightclub in North Goa mourn during his last rites in Khunti district of Jharkhand

used to send around ₹30,000 per month to their family.

"Both were unmarried. They were scheduled to celebrate Holi with us next vear." their elder brother Phagu Mahto said.

Mohit's last rites were performed as per tribal customs

at his native village. Agriculture Minister Shilpy Neha Tirkey, who coordinated with the Goa government to bring back the bodies,

said all three belonged to her

Mandar constituency.

'The bodies were sent to their native villages in special ambulances. I will request Chief Minister Hemant Soren for some welfare provisions for the families of the

victims," she told PTI. The Labour Department has handed ₹50,000 each to the families of the victims as

immediate assistance. Disaster Management Minister Irfan Ansari said compensation of ₹4 lakh

each would be provided to the kin of the workers.

"There is no such particular provision in this regard. However, as it is a very propeople government led by Chief Minister Hemant Soren, we have decided to give the compensation," he told reporters outside the assembly.

Ansari urged the Centre to provide compensation of ₹1 crore to the families of each

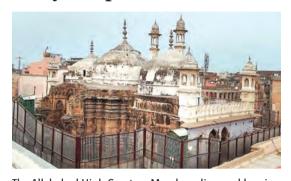


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HC adjourns hearing on plea seeking ASI survey of Gyanvapi's wazukhana



The Allahabad High Court on Monday adjourned hearing on a plea seeking an ASI survey of the 'wazukhana' area, excluding the structure described by the Hindu side as shivling, inside the Gyanvapi mosque at Varanasi till January 16. When the case was taken up on Monday, the court was informed that a related matter is pending before the Supreme Court. Subsequently, the court adjourned the hearing.

Justice Rohit Ranjan Agarwal is hearing the civil revision petition filed by Rakhi Singh, one of the plaintiffs in the Gyanvapi case. The petition has been filed challenging an order of a Varanasi judge passed on October 21, 2023 which refused to direct the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) to survey the wazukhana (ablution) area except for the structure which the Hindu side calls a shivling and the Muslims describe as a fountain inside the Gyanvapi mosque located adjacent to the Kashi Vishwanath temple.

In her revision, Rakhi Singh has pleaded that the survey of the wazukhana area is necessary in the interest of justice. It shall benefit the plaintiff(s) and defendants alike and help the court arrive at a decision in the suit, the plea said.

Red Fort blast case: Delhi court extends NIA custody of 3 doctors, preacher by 4 days

A Delhi court on Monday extended the NIA custody of three doctors and a preacher, who were arrested in connection with the November 10 Red Fort blast case, by four days. All four accused - Dr Muzammil Ganai, Dr Adeel Rather, Dr Shaheena Saeed and Maulvi Irfan Ahmed Wagay - were produced before Principal and Sessions Judge Anju Bajaj Chandna on the expiry of their 10-day NIA custody granted on November 29.

Mediapersons were barred from covering the court proceedings, which were held under tight security in and around the Patiala House district court premises.

Till now, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) has made seven arrests in the case, which is linked to a 'white-collar' terror module busted by the Jammu and

"The agency continues to pursue various leads in connection with the suicide bombing, and has been conducting searches across states in coordination with the respective police forces to identify and track the others involved in the gruesome attack," the agency said in a statement earlier.







SC orders 30% seats for women in bar councils

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

The Supreme Court on Monday directed that 30 per cent seats in State Bar councils, where the election process has not been set in motion, be kept for women advocates.

A bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi said for the current year, the State Bar councils where elections are yet to be held should fill 20 per cent seats with women candidates and 10 per cent by cooption if there are not many desirous lawyers to contest.

The top court directed that a proposal for co-option shall be placed before the court in regard to the State Bar councils where the number of contesting women lawyers are inadequate.

At the outset, senior advocate Manan Kumar Mishra, who is also the chairperson of the Bar Council of India (BCI), informed the bench that the election process as per court's earlier direction has commenced in six Bar bodies with notification of the poll.

He submitted that the BCI, in principle, is of the view that

there should be at least 30 per cent women's reservation in the State Bar councils, and suggested that for the present year, the councils

women candidates. He also proposed that 15 per cent of seats be filled by way of co-option of women members.

should be permitted to fill up

the posts by co-opting

However, the bench said it

would be appropriate if cooption is restricted to only 10 per cent seats.

The bench said it would not be prudent to reserve seats for women in the Bar councils, where the election process has already commenced.

It said in the Bar councils of Andhra Pradesh, Punjab and Harvana, Uttar Pradesh and Telangana, where elections

women members who are contesting the polls shall contest with full spirit, and the voters shall also make endeavours to ensure that adequate representation is provided to female advocates

in the councils.

It made a similar appeal to the voters of the Bar councils of Bihar and Chhattisgarh, where elections have been notified. For the remaining be undertaken so that

Bar councils, the bench said 30 per cent seats shall be represented by women advocates out of which 20 per cent shall be by election and 10 per cent by co-option.

It said, "Wherever the women members of the Bbar are reluctant to come forward and contest the 20 per cent seats, the process of co-option in such Bar councils shall

cent representation in the

executive council." The top court was hearing pleas filed by advocates Yogamaya M G and

Shehla Chaudhary seeking reservation of one-third of seats for women in all State Bar councils. Senior advocate Meenakshi Arora, appearing for the peti-

tioners, said that a blanket order for 30 per cent women's reservation across all state Bar councils may not be practical, as many states have very low percentages of practising women advocates. On December 4, the top

court asked the BCI to ensure 30 per cent reservation for women in the upcoming state Bar council elections. The pleas filed by Yogamaya and Chaudhary also sought that at least one office-bearer post be reserved for women lawyers on a rotational basis.

The pleas were filed relying upon the May 2, 2024, order of the top court, in which it was directed that one-third of seats in the executive committee of the Supreme Court Bar Association, including one office-bearer post, be reserved

Land-for-jobs scam: CBI seeks time to verify status of accused persons



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

The CBI on Monday sought time from a Delhi court to verify the status of various accused persons in the alleged land-for-jobs scam involving RJD chief Lalu Prasad, his family members and others.

Special CBI Judge Vishal Gogne is hearing the case on whether there is sufficient evidence to frame charges

The judge had, on December 4, directed the Central Bureau o f Investigation (CBI) to file a report after verifying the status of the accused in the case. Of the 103 accused, four have died. "Some time is sought on behalf of the CBI to verify the status of various accused persons in terms of the previous order. List on December 10," the judge said on Monday.

On November 10, the judge had deferred the order on framing charges against the accused till December 4.

The CBI had filed chargesheets against Lalu Yadav, his wife and former Bihar chief minister Rabri Devi, their son and former deputy chief minister Tejashwi Yadav and others in connection with the alleged scam.

The prosecution has alleged that appointments in the Group-D category of

the Indian Railways' West Central Zone based in Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh, were made during Lalu Yadav's tenure as the railway minister from 2004 to 2009 in return for land parcels gifted or transferred by the recruits in the name of the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) supremo's family members and associates.

The CBI has also claimed that the appointments were made in violation of norms and that the transactions involved benami properties, amounting to criminal misconduct and conspiracy. The accused have denied the charges and claimed that the case is politically motivated.

Court acquits actor Dileep, convicts six in 2017 actress sexual assault case

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

A Kerala court on Monday acquitted Malayalam cinema star Dileep in the sensational 2017 actress sexual assault case, in which six people, including the main accused charged with committing the crime, were pronounced guilty. In a case that made national headlines while sending shockwaves over the top actor's alleged involvement in the matter, three others, including Dileep's close friend Sarath, were also acquitted.

Coming out from the court, Dileep said that there was a "real conspiracy" by some police officials and a section of media to implicate him in the case earlier with an eye on destroying his career.

Dileep also said that his first wife and actress Maniu Warrier started a conspiracy to tag him in the case. The Left Government in Kerala said it would prefer an appeal against the lower court verdict while reiterating its support to the survivor, a multi-lingual female actor who has worked in a number of Malayalam, Tamil and Telugu movies.

Apart from Dileep (57), the eighth accused in the case, the court also acquitted three others — Charley

IndiGo crisis serious matter, says SC,



Thomas (A7), Sanil Kumar alias Mesthri Sanil (A9) and Sarath (A15). The verdict was pronounced by Ernakulam District and Principal Sessions Judge Honey M Varghese, in a tightly packed courtroom here.

Judge Honey M Varghese began by substantiating the offences charged in the case and then declared the first six accused — Sunil, Martin Antony, Manikandan B Vijesh VP, Salim H, and Pradeep, guilty.

"Since the offenses are grave and serious in nature and perpetrated against a woman, accused not entitled to get benevolence the Probation of Offenders Act.

Bail bonds of A1 to A6 are cancelled and remanded to custody," the court ordered. They were charged under Sections of the then IPC and IT Act, including criminal conspiracy, wrongful confinement, gang rape, kidnapping or abducting a woman and criminal force to a woman with an intent to outrage her modesty. Later, after reading out the charges against Dileep, the cour

found him not guilty. Dileep was acquitted after the court ruled the prosecution failed to substantiate the charges, including criminal conspiracy, wrongful confinement, assault, gang rape, and related IPC offences.

SC seeks ED's response on journalist bail plea

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Monday asked the Enforcement Directorate (ED) to file its response within three days on a bail plea of journalist Mahesh Langa in a money laundering case linked to an alleged financial fraud. A bench comprising Chief Justice of India (CII) Surva Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi also asked senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for the jailed journalist, to file rejoinder, if needed, to the ED's response within two days of it

The top court fixed the

case for further hearing on

able at the moment.

September 8 sought responses from the Gujarat Government and the ED on Langa's bail plea. While Langa's bail plea, the bench asked, "What kind of a jour-

December 15. During the brief hearing

on Monday, Sibal said a journalist has been facing as many as six cases. "The journalist is accused of extortion," the counsel for the ED said and sought a short adjournment on the ground that Solicitor General Tuhar Mehta was unavail-

The top court on issuing the notices on nalist is he?" "With due

genuine journalists. But there are also people who on their scooter say we are 'patrakar' (journalists) and

what they actually do everybody knows," the bench told Sibal. Sibal replied that these are all allegations. "In one FIR, he gets anticipatory bail, then a second FIR is lodged and again anticipatory bail is granted but now he is booked under a third FIR for income tax evasion. There are other things also against him," Sibal submitted. He added that there is a back-

On July 31, the Gujarat High Court rejected Langa's

through deceit would attract

ground to the case also.

respect, there are some very bail plea in the money laundering case on the grounds that if released on bail, prejudice would be caused to the prosecution case. On February 25, the ED said it arrested Langa in a money laundering investigation linked to an alleged financial fraud. He was first arrested in October 2024 in a GST fraud case.

The money laundering case against Langa stems from two FIRs filed by Ahmedabad police on charges of fraud, criminal misappropriation, criminal breach of trust, cheating and causing wrongful loss of lakhs of rupees to certain people.

Delhi HC agrees to hear plea on Dec 10 PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi

Woes of flyers hit by mass flight cancellations by IndiGo found a compassionate ear in the Delhi High Court, which agreed to hear one of the pleas on December 10, while the Supreme Court termed the consequent chaos a "serious matter", but stopped short of intervening.

Chief Justice of India Surya Kant said lakhs of people are stranded at the airports, even though the apex court refused to accord an urgent hearing to a plea seeking judicial intervention into the matter, saying the Centre had taken steps to address it.

IndiGo cancelled 500 flights and plans to operate 1,802 services on Monday, the civil aviation ministry said. The airline has delivered 4,500 bags

out of a total of 9,000 to the passengers, and will deliver the rest in the next 36 hours, the ministry said in a statement. When a plea concerning the cancel-

lation of flights by IndiGo was mentioned in the top court, a bench headed by the CJI said, "It is a serious matter. Lakhs of people are stranded at the airports. We know that the Government of India has taken timely action and cognisance of the issue.' The CJI, who was heading a bench

comprising Justice Joymalya Bagchi, added, "We know people may have health issues and other important

Over the day, a separate petition seeking directions to the Centre to provide support and refunds to affected passengers was mentioned in the Delhi High Court. A bench of Chief



Justice Devendra Kumar Upadhyaya and Justice Tushar Rao Gedela listed the matter for hearing on December 10.

Before the apex court, a lawyer mentioned the issue and said there have been a lot of flight cancellations by IndiGo over the last few days, and the passengers were suffering.

"The cancellations are not informed to the flyers," he said, adding that around 2,500 flights were delayed and flyers were hit at 95 airports across the country. In the High Court, the counsel for the petitioner said they had filed a

PIL on the crisis with the airline. "Several people are stuck. The ground situation at airports is inhumane. We are expecting the court to pass orders to

IndiGo and ground support staff for people stranded at the airports. There is no proper system for

refunds," he said.

When the High Court pointed out that

the Government had already passed some directions in the matter, the counsel responded in the affirmative. The bench said the PIL will be listed for hearing on December 10.

IndiGo has been facing heat from both the Centre and the passengers for cancelling hundreds of flights since December 2, citing regulatory changes in the pilots' flight duty and regulations norms. The disruptions have left lakhs of passengers stranded at airports

across the country. Over 250 IndiGo flights were cancelled from Delhi and Bengaluru airports on Monday as the disruptions of the airline's flight operations entered the seventh

At the Delhi airport, 134 flights were cancelled - 75 departures and 59 arrivals -- while at the Bengaluru airport, the carrier cancelled 117 services — 65 arrivals and 62 departures, they said.

SC seeks response from Rajasthan on plea challenging validity of anti-conversion law PIONEER NEWS SERVICE of India' with separate the apex court. The a jail term of 10 to 20 years petitioner has urged the apex

New Delhi

Monday issued notice to the Rajasthan Government seeking its response on a petition challenging the validity of the State's 2025 law

The Supreme Court on

against illegal religious A bench of Justices Dipankar Datta and Augustine George Masih tagged the plea filed by

'Catholic Bishops Conference

pending petitions challenging the validity of the provisions of the Rajasthan Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Act, 2025. The top court had earlier imprisonment for 20 years to

agreed to hear some separate pleas raising similar issues and sought replies from the state Government. During the hearing on

pending consideration before

life for mass conversions through deception and a jail term of seven to 14 years for conversions by fraudulent means. Conversion of minors, Monday, Solicitor General women, Scheduled Castes, Tushar Mehta told the bench Scheduled Tribes, and persons with disabilities that similar matters are

and a fine of at least court to declare the 2025 Act ₹10 lakh. "ultra vires and unconstitu-In September, another tional". The Rajasthan law bench of the apex court has a provision of

had sought the stand of several states on separate pleas seeking a stay on their respective anticonversion laws. The top court had then

made it clear that it would consider the prayer for staying the operation of such laws once the replies were filed.







Why India needs a legal right to disconnect

A nation cannot build a future on depleted minds and exhausted bodies. Supriya Sule's Bill offers not just legal protection but a cultural reset

Stress has become endemic in the corporate world, and "burnout" is now the widely accepted term for it. Burnout is a state of intense physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion caused by prolonged and excessive work-related stress. These two words capture the reality of today's corporate workforce on a massive scale. The death of 26-year-old chartered accountant Anna Sebastian Perayil, whose death was linked to severe work-related stress, is a case in point.

The irony is that most people do not even realise they are experiencing it, seeking treatment is a far cry. Reports of suicides and worsening mental health due to work pressure are increasingly common. Both mental and physical health deteriorate sharply, leaving individuals drained, cynical, and exhausted. Fatigue, insomnia, headaches, detachment, and disturbed sleep have become alarmingly routine.

The constant ringing of the smartphone and the rise of hybrid digital work culture have erased personal boundaries, making it difficult for many to have any "me time". Being available 24×7 has turned into a modern form of slavery that takes a heavy toll on lives.

To restore work-life balance, Supriya Sule has taken an important initiative. If her proposal succeeds, it may soon become law, introducing penalties for employers who overstep time boundaries and encroach on workers' personal lives. Supriya Sule's Right to Disconnect Bill, 2025, is a longoverdue intervention, seeking to restore a basic but endangered human need: the right to switch off and relax.

The core premise of the Bill is simple yet transformative. It states that employees should not be penalised for choosing not to respond to work-related communication after office hours. The bill sets to end the culture of checking messages throughout the day, during dinner, on weekends, and even on holidays. Studies have repeatedly shown that such constant pressure to check phone leads to sleep deprivation, chronic stress, emotional burnout, and a slow erosion of family life.

The Bill recognises that mental health is not separate from productivity; it is its very foundation. Importantly, the legislation does not ignore the realities of India's competitive and diverse business landscape. Sule's proposal allows companies to set their own after-hours communication norms through Employees' Welfare Committees. Companies that disregard these provisions could face penalties equivalent to one per cent of their total employee remuneration, ensuring that compliance is mandatory and damages are for real.

Yet the path ahead is not without challenges. India's workforce is vast and varied, and cultural attitudes often equate overwork with dedication. Smaller firms may fear compliance burdens, while multinational companies may worry about servicing their offshore clients. Besides, enforcement remains a perennial weakness in India.

Despite these obstacles, the direction is clear and the move is a step in right direction. For India to continue its progress, it must safeguard the well-being of its workers.

SAARC@40: An idea that refuses to die

As the world reorganises around regional blocs and shared vulnerabilities, South Asia cannot afford to remain disconnected. SAARC may be dormant, but its spirit endures, waiting for a political moment that restores its relevance



SANTHOSH MATHEW

Forty years ago, on a December morning in 1985, South Asia embarked on an ambitious experiment. Seven neighbours — united by shared histories yet separated by borders, suspicion and political complications — met in Dhaka to outline a collective vision for peace, prosperity and cooperation. The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) emerged from that hope, designed to transcend bilateral tensions and forge a regional identity grounded in development. Four decades later, that optimism feels remote. The organisation has been effectively frozen since 2014, its institutional vitality drained by enduring political hostilities. Yet, paradoxically, the idea of SAARC is more essential today than ever. The phrase "SAARC is dead, long live SAARC" captures this duality: the institution may be dormant, but the logic of regional cooperation remains compelling.

South Asia itself embodies profound contradictions. It is home to nearly 40 per cent of the world's democracies, each with its strengths and complexities. Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka together represent one of the most diverse political landscapes on earth. Bangladesh's strides in poverty alleviation, Bhutan's pioneering Gross National Happiness framework, Sri Lanka's social indicators, Nepal's federal evolution. Maldives' climate resilience, Pakistan's active civil society, Afghanistan's enduring cultural heritage and India's unmatched electoral scale all testify to a region rich in innovation and vitality.

To see South Asia only through the prism of conflict is to overlook its immense civilisational, demographic and strategic advantages. This potential, however, has been consistently undermined by geopolitical mistrust, particularly between India and Pakistan. SAARC's stagnation is rooted in this unresolved hostility. Without political trust at the highest level, regional structures lose momentum. The cost of this paralysis has been significant. South Asia remains among the least economically integrated regions in the world. Intra-regional trade hovers around a mere 5 per cent, compared with ASEAN's over 25 per cent. High tariffs, rigid borders and bureaucratic obstacles have stifled the movement of goods, services and ideas that could dramatically uplift the region.

Against this backdrop, the South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) deserves renewed focus. Operational since 2006, SAFTA was designed to dismantle tariff and non-tariff barriers and build a seamless regional market. Fully implemented, it could transform South Asia economically by strengthening supply chains, reducing logistics costs and opening vast new opportunities for employment and investment. The stakes are large: nearly 736 million South Asians still live in



TO SEE SOUTH **ASIA ONLY** THROUGH THE PRISM OF **CONFLICT IS TO OVERLOOK ITS IMMENSE** CIVILISATIONAL, **DEMOGRAPHIC** AND STRATEGIC ADVANTAGES. THIS

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extreme poverty. Global comparisons illustrate what is possible. The African Continental Free Trade Area is projected to raise Africa's regional income by 7 per cent and lift 30 million people out of extreme poverty by 2035. With its larger consumer base and energetic private sector, South Asia could achieve even more if SAFTA were revived with genuine political commitment.

But cooperation must extend beyond trade. South Asia's civilisational heritage — Hinduism, Buddhism and Sufi traditions — offers a reservoir of cultural connections that can be harnessed to rebuild trust even when politics stagnates. India's soft power initiatives, such as the Buddhist Circuit, the revival of

University, the International Solar Alliance and the International Big Cat Alliance, create platforms that transcend **SINCE 1865** political divides. These efforts draw

on the ethos of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam — the world is one family — and demonstrate that meaningful regional collaboration does not always require formal institutional momentum.

India's neighbourhood-first policy has, in many ways, kept the idea of SAARC alive. The South Asia Satellite exemplified technological cooperation, supporting communication and disaster management across the region. India's vaccine diplomacy during the COVID-19 pandemic further highlighted its role as a regional first responder. When global supply chains collapsed, India supplied vaccines and essential medical aid to Nepal, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Bangladesh and other neighbours. More recently, India's rapid assistance during the Sri Lankan floods under Operation Sagar Bandhu reaffirmed its consistent commitment to regional humanitarian support. Such gestures cannot replace formal diplomacy, but they help rebuild trust and demonstrate the tangible value of cooperation.

Every member of SAARC, however, must recognise what is lost by leaving the organisa-

tion dormant. South Asia faces shared, transnational problems - climate change, water scarcity, terrorism, cybercrime, unemployment and migration — that no country can solve alone. The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure provides a useful example of how coordinated security cooperation strengthens collective resilience. A comparable mechanism within SAARC could enhance intelligence-sharing and counter-terrorism efforts at a moment when radicalisation and cyber

threats are growing. Equally significant is the demographic challenge. South Asia has the world's largest youth

population, with nearly 100,000 people entering the labour force **Jioneer** each day, yet UNICEF estimates that more than half will lack the skills needed for employment by 2030. Without regional frame-

works for mobility, innovation, skilling and academic exchange, this demographic dividend could be squandered, even though instruments such as the dormant SAARC Youth Charter offer a ready framework for collaboration.

A reimagined SAARC must also prioritise mobility. Visa liberalisation, academic exchanges, cross-border tourism and digital corridors can revive cultural linkages and unlock economic potential. Drawing on Europe's multiple-entry visas or ASEAN's reciprocal arrangements, South Asia could adopt Mutual Favourable Access to facilitate travel, study and business with transformative impact.

Ultimately, SAARC's future may lie in redefining it as a flexible development platform focused on digital public goods, climate resilience, health networks and research collaboration. India's digital governance tools — UPI, Aadhaar architecture, e-governance and tele-health could anchor such a partnership, reaffirming a shared South Asian destiny rooted in cooperation, connectivity and collective prosperity.

Confronting popcorn brain in the digital age



Artists from Punjab perform at the National Craft Fair in Prayagraj.

DIGITAL EXPERIENCE

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In the relentless pulse of our digital era, silence has become a scarce commodity. Screens glow from dawn to midnight; alerts blink with the insistence of tiny sirens; content arrives in bursts designed to captivate and distract. In this environment of continuous cognitive stimulation, a troubling behavioural pattern has entered educational conversations: Popcorn Brain Syndrome. Though not a medical diagnosis, the term vividly expresses a growing reality-minds conditioned to crave rapid, high-intensity digital input, much like kernels bursting unpredictably in hot oil. For educators, this is no passing metaphor but a looming crisis. Increasingly, teachers observe shrinking attention spans, heightened restlessness, and an erosion of the ability to engage in deep, sustained thinking. The modern student,

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equipped with limitless access to information, is paradoxically losing the capacity to grapple with it meaningfully. When the brain becomes accustomed to the quick bursts of dopamine offered by fast-paced media, slower, more reflective tasks-reading, writing, analytical reasoningbegin to feel burdensome. The very founda-

tion of real learning is compromised. The signs are subtle yet unmistakable. A student where depth is celebrated over speed, where observation matters as much as reaction. sits in class, eyes fixed on the teacher, but their attention flickers. A phantom notification tugs at their mind; an impulse to check a device momentarily derails focus. This mental hopping

mirrors popcorn in motion-bright, brief, and directionless. What suffers in the process is not merely academic performance, but the deeper capacities that shape intellectual maturity: critical thinking, creativity, emotional steadiness, and the ability to connect ideas in meaningful ways. Reflection, that slow and steady cultivator of insight, Teachers now carry a dual mandate: to deliver curricu-

lum content and to rebuild the cognitive stamina necessary to absorb it. It is a daunting task-almost like teaching a child to find stillness while surrounded by whirlpools of distraction. Yet it is not an impossible one. Recognising that Popcorn Brain is a cultural construct-not a personal failing-is the first step. Our digital environment is designed to hook, stimulate, and fragment; young learners are simply

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

responding to the architecture around them. The solution, therefore, is not to reject technology but to reintroduce balance. Classrooms can become places where deliberate pauses are woven into the learning fabric. Slow reading exercises, device-free discussions, and moments of reflection can act as anchors.

Teachers can cultivate an atmosphere observation matters as much as reaction. Simple routines-journalling, mindful breathing, silent thinking-can gently retrain wander-

ing minds. Parents, too, play a pivotal role. Children absorb what they see, not what they are told. A home where conversation, play, and unstructured time coexist with digital tools helps restore natural rhythms of attention. The partnership between school and family is essential to recalibrating young minds. The broader education system must recognise this phenomenon as a silent disruptor of learning outcomes. As curricula grow more rigorous, attention has become a critically limited resource, making investment in executive function, emotional regulation and digital discipline urgent. Without intervention, Popcorn Brain will continue to fragment focus across classrooms, undermining deep engagement and sustained understanding that are essential for shaping thoughtful, purposeful thinkers.

The writer is an educator and counsellor

THE NAMAMI GANGA PROGRAMME: GANGA **GHATS REVEAL ADMINISTRATIVE LAPSES**

The front-page report of 8 December on the deteriorating condition of Ganga ghats exposes a grim and deeply troubling account of man-made neglect. The collapse of ghat infrastructure across Uttarakhand and along the Gangetic plains is the result of multiple failures, foremost among them weak municipal accountability compounded by persistent local political

interference. Ghats are often sanctioned to serve constituency interests, even when locations are ecologically fragile or geographically

The Namami Ganga programme was conceived as an ambitious and essential initiative to conserve the river and protect surrounding plains from floods during the monsoon. Yet, crores of rupees have been squandered

due to poor planning, inadequate supervision, and indifference on the ground. Public apathy has further aggravated the problem, with citizens frequently neglecting their responsibility to maintain cleanliness and preserve environmental assets created for their benefit.

Ganga ghats are sensitive environmental interventions requiring expert design and sustained oversight by conservation architects and geological scientists, yet serious consultation with such specialists appears largely absent, Local municipal authorities must therefore be held fully accountable for maintenance and for regulating public access during vulnerable periods to prevent further degradation.

VINOD JOHRI | DELHI

IndiGo disruptions signal deeper crisis

There has been widespread chaos at several airports as turbulence in IndiGo's operations continues unabated, leaving passengers anxious, exhausted, and stranded for over a week. Mass cancellations and delays have transformed terminals into scenes of distress, with travellers sleeping on floors and, in some cases, near operational areas. Many passengers missed job interviews, family emergencies, and long-planned commitments, despite tickets being reissued multiple times only to face repeated cancellations. While IndiGo has stated that operations will stabilise by December 15, this assurance rings hollow for those still marooned without clarity or support. The situation reflects not merely operational failure but a deeper issue of regulatory oversight. Both IndiGo and the DGCA ignored early warning signs arising from new pilot duty norms.

Instead of adjusting manpower to meet regulatory requirements, IndiGo expanded its winter schedule, fully aware of its staffing limitations. It is deeply concerning that regulatory authorities appeared to yield under pressure, easing norms to manage public inconvenience. Such short-term relief undermines aviation safety and accountability. This crisis must serve as a moment for corrective action, not quiet compromise. BHAGWAN THADANI | MUMBAI

Goa tragedy highlights safety failures

Apropos "Goa nightclub blaze kills 25" (Dec. 8), the devastating incident once again exposes how routine disregard for safety norms turns leisure spaces into sites of avoidable tragedy. Reports indicate a convergence of structural violations, inadequate exits, and delayed emergency access-conditions that make disaster inevitable rather than accidental. More troubling is the apparent awareness of these violations by multiple authorities, followed by delayed or diluted action.

As Goa's tourism economy expands, the need for professional oversight becomes critical, especially in venues with high crowd density and limited evacuation options. Safety cannot depend on goodwill or postincident outrage. Mandatory clearances, transparent licensing, and regular inspections must be strictly enforced. Officials who ignore violations must be held as accountable as operators who commit them. Infrastructure issues such as narrow access roads and informal expansions further compound risk and must be addressed urgently. A coordinated emergency protocol involving municipal bodies, fire services, and police should be standard, not reactive. A time-bound review of all public entertainment venues would be a constructive first step toward preventing future tragedies.

Aviation regulation under scrutiny

It takes years to build a reputation, but only days to destroy it. The ongoing IndiGo crisis appears less accidental and more self-inflicted, aided by regulatory inertia. Despite being aware of revised pilot duty norms, both the airline and the DGCA failed to act in time. IndiGo's decision to expand its winter schedule without adequate crew strength reflects corporate arrogance rather than operational prudence.

Equally culpable is the regulator's delayed auditing and passive oversight, which allowed the situation to escalate into a national disruption. When the crisis peaked, the DGCA appeared compelled to dilute enforcement to ease passenger hardship, effectively allowing the airline to escape accountability. Such precedents are dangerous in a safety-critical sector like aviation.

This year has already witnessed tragic incidents, including an aircraft crash in Ahmedabad, helicopter accidents in Uttarakhand, and an ATC systems failure

Together, these point to systemic vulnerabilities. The current disruption offers the aviation ministry a crucial opportunity to conduct a comprehensive review and institute reforms.

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Misuse of FRA: Undermining forest rights framework

From recognising ineligible encroachments to manipulating community forest rights, the law meant to protect vulnerable groups and safeguard forests is being bent and exploited. This misuse now threatens both conservation goals and the long-term credibility of India's forest rights framework







ARVIND **SINHA KUMAR JHA**

Although the Forest Survey of India, in its 2023 report, indicates an increasing trend in the country's forest cover, a major undisclosed ailment is affecting the heart of India's forest conservation efforts: the alleged widespread misuse of the Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006. Apart from procedural irregularities and misreading of provisions noticed in the implementation of the FRA, the major and substantive issues are the recognition of post-2005 encroachments on forest land as Individual Forest Rights (IFR) for habitation or cultivation, and the massscale grant of management rights (named Community Forest Resource Rights, or CFRR, under the FRA Rules amended in 2012) in cases of grossly ineligible claims.

The pattern of misuse of the FRA was initially highlighted by the 2011 NC Saxena Committee Report. The Committee, an inter-ministerial body, raised serious concerns about the recognition of ineligible claims. It found evidence that "fresh encroachers, with business interests in forest lands", were manipulating the Act in states such as Maharashtra and Assam. The Committee pointed to specific instances of forest land being cleared after the cut-off date of December 13, 2005 in protected areas such as Kawal Sanctuary and Yaval Sanctuary, stressing that the FRA was never intended to be a "ploy to distribute national wealth of forest land to all claimants irrespective of their real legal eligibility". The FRA is meant exclusively for Forest Dwelling Scheduled Tribes (FDSTs) and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (OTFDs).

The Maharashtra Forest Department launched a detailed study in 2012 covering 35,044 finally approved Individual Forest Rights (IFR) cases, encompassing over 60,000 hectares of forest land across

The Department established a system using Cartosat-1 satellite images from 2005, 2007, and 2011, overlaid with GPS polygons delineating land parcels for each claim. Data on granted cases was available on the website of Maharashtra's Tribal Research and Training Institute (TRTI), which had developed and utilised a robust, transpar-



THE FACT ALSO REMAINS THAT **GENUINE** COMMUNITIES AND ELIGIBLE LANDS, SUCH AS SACRED **GROVES AND** COMMUNITY-OCCUPIED. **CUSTOMARILY AND RULE-BASED** MANAGED AREAS **AWAITING** FORMALISATION OF **THEIR** MANAGEMENT AND **GOVERNANCE** UNDER THE FRA, HAVE SIMPLY BEEN

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ent, and technology-driven verification system for comparing land-use status before and after the December 2005 cutoff date, documenting approximately 2.9 lakh polygons under IFR claims.

Despite this technological safety net based on satellite imagery, it was found that about 16 per cent of the studied cases were granted IFRs on lands that were clearly ineligible-being fully barren, treecovered, or a mixture of both, as seen in satellite images. More than 3,000 cases showing land-use change, specifically conversion to cultivation after the 2005 cut-off date, were also found to have been cleared as valid claims. Additionally, approximately 4 per cent of cleared claims exceeded the maximum permissible limit of

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs SINCE 1865 (MoTA) amended the FRA Rules

in 2012, effectively downgrading the evidentiary value of satellite imagery. Such imagery, as well as other uses of technology, could thereafter be used only to "supplement" other forms of evidence and not as a replacement. Critics argue that this move prioritised subjective claims over reportedly discontinued their use, local governance envisioned by the FRA

Maharashtra's well-grounded system was not only derailed but the invaluable dataset of 2.9 lakh GPS polygons embedded in satellite imagery also reportedly became untraceable. Notably, in response to a requirement from the Forest Survey of India (FSI) for analysis in compliance with the Hon'ble Supreme Court's February 2019 order in Writ Petition (C) No. 109/2008, Maharashtra did not make the data available. With regard to eviction of encroachers, no state has initiated proceedings against those with rejected claims, and even the Hon'ble Supreme Court, on February 28, 2019, stayed its own eviction order within fifteen days.

The right to minor forest produce is mandated to be limited to the quantity traditionally collected The Pioneer by beneficiaries. However, the recognition process has been

misused to grant rights over the entire commercial MFP output and trade, often to Gram Sabhas, disregarding the heterogeneity and occupational diversity of their members. As a result, new intermediaries are emerging in states such as Maharashtra and Odisha. They operate as contractors in league with tendu leaf objective science. As a result, while many traders, while the intended empowerment states, including major ones such as of FDST and OTFD communities for Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh, resource conservation and democratic

is subverted. A similar atmosphere is being created in Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh to dismantle their federationbased systems

With regard to CFRRs, these are being illegally recognised almost unabated on government forest lands (such as Reserved or Protected Forests under working plans), even though their specified location is statutorily limited to "customary common forest land" or "community forest resource" as defined in the Act. Further, CFRRs are being granted to ineligible communities that do not meet the criteria under Section 3(1)(i), which requires proof of a traditional role in protection and conservation of the land under claim. Such grants to ineligible entities have been facil itated by amendments to the FRA Rules themselves, whereby the presence of even a few Scheduled Tribes or OTFDs qualifies a Gram Sabha to submit a claim. Shockingly, scrutiny of 80 randomly selected sanctioned cases from districts in Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh reveals that all are illegal recognitions. Meanwhile, genuine communities and eligible lands, such as sacred groves and customary rule-based managed areas awaiting formalisation under the FRA, have been excluded.

Unfortunately, misuse of the FRA has been continuously and systematically

ignored despite repeated complaints. Foresters objecting to ineligible claims in Sub-Divisional and District-level Committee meetings are often branded anti-tribal and persecuted. Pressurised, and frequently backed by political authorities and civil society, Committees tend to exceed the Act's provisions with impunity, without recognising that the long-term sustenance of forest rights depends on the sustainability of forest resources. While the MoTA issues regular instructions for reconsideration of rejected claims, it has never mandated scrutiny of approved claims, even on a sample basis. By reiterating that implementation responsibility lies with States and Union Territories, it overlooks the implication that reviewing rejected cases while ignoring illegally granted ones amounts to implicit permission for continued misuse.

Objective and verifiable scientific evidence must be treated as the primary defence against fraudulent claims, not merely a supplement to easily manipulated traditional evidence. The FRA Rules must therefore be amended to restore the high evidentiary value of satellite imagery and GPS data. The government, in accordance with Section 13 of the FRA, must demonstrate a genuine commitment to enforcing all existing laws.

Prosecution of powerful individuals misusing the FRA for land speculation or for harming the interests of genuine beneficiaries can act as a strong deterrent. While the Central Empowered Committee's recent action regarding alleged irregularities in IFRs granted to Podu cultivators in Telangana is welcome, rectifying errors requires significant resources and political neutrality. Comprehensive retraining must therefore be provided to Committee members to ensure strict implementation of the Act, and they must be held accountable for permitting demonstrably false claims.

The government should prioritise the establishment of a National Audit Mechanism for technology-based scrutiny of approved cases and cancellation of all illegally recognised rights. The MoTA, in collaboration with the FSI and the National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC), must develop and maintain a centralised database to securely store GPS polygons and records of recognised claims nationwide. Given the scale of potential error, the FRA must not be allowed to undermine conservation laws or the rights of genuine. eligible forest dwellers.

Towards a home-grown knowledge ecosystem







KUNTALA KARKUN India's Viksit Bharat aspiration by 2047 transcends

traditional capital investment. While tangible infrastructure remains critical, the primary constraint to sustained, high-quality growth is the knowledge ecosystem deficit. To successfully transition from a middle-income economy to a fully developed nation, India must aggressively cultivate a robust, home-grown intellectual infrastructure; one encompassing R&D, credible think tanks, advanced data infrastructure, and scalable domestic innovation capacity.

India's gross expenditure on R&D (GERD) remains persistently low at just 0.65 per cent of GDP; far below advanced economies such as the US and Germany (3 per cent), as well as emerging markets like China (2 per cent). This places India well under the global average of approximately 1.8 per cent, reflecting a structural underinvestment in innovation. This structural weakness is compounded by a profound imbalance: only about 5 per cent of India's R&D spending comes from the private sector, compared to approximately 70 per cent in the US.

While the 2025-26 Union Budget increased national R&D allocations to ₹61,028 crore, representing only 1.28 per cent of the Central Budget, the scale is still insufficient to trigger the kind of innovation acceleration India needs. The government's announcement of a ₹1 lakh crore Research Development and Innovation (RDI) Fund in 2025 could be transformative, but its impact will hinge on execution discipline and meaningful alignment with private-sector investment. For the fund to succeed, execution discipline must include transparent governance, mandated industry cofunding, and a focus on measurable outcomes tied to national priorities.

This chronic underinvestment depresses innovation output, technological absorption, and productivity growth. OECD studies show that a 1 per cent rise in business R&D increases productivity by approximately 0.13 per cent, and an equivalent increase in public R&D yields about 0.17 per cent productivity growth. If India does not correct its R&D deficit, it cannot realistically close its productivity gap with peer economies

India's innovation output has improved. Patent grants have grown fourfold, from 7,509 (2010-11) to 28,391 (2020-21), and patent applications have risen from approximately 39,400 to 58,500 (Economic Survey 2022). In 2023, India was among the fastest-growing patent origins globally (WIPO). The gap, though, remains large. India's patent portfolio is still only a small fraction of of high-quality publications come from fewer than 200 institutions, signalling an ecosystem that remains narrow, institutionally shallow, and highly concentrated. Yet India has proven that strategic investments

programme, built on modest budgets and indige-partnerships. nous capabilities, has delivered world-class missions such as Chandrayaan and Mangalyaan at a The Pioneer fraction of global costs. India's digital

public infrastructure (DPI) has revolutionised financial inclusion and service delivery and now serves as a model for developing nations worldwide. These successes demonstrate that when India invests in knowledge systems with clarity and commitment, the results can leapfrog conventional development paths. Talent

is not the constraint. Institutional depth is. A successful knowledge ecosystem requires more than isolated R&D labs; it needs the systemic translation of research into actionable policy and practice. Strong, independent domestic think tanks, policy centres, and data institutions are crit-

ical for: Contextualisation: Bridging the gap between academic research and on-the-ground implementation, generating timely, governance, which global firms often lack.

 Diffusion: Ensuring technology and best practices are adapted and diffused to MSMEs and lagging regions, mitigating the concentration of innovation within a few large firms or urban

 Intellectual sovereignty: Protecting India's development agenda from being shaped by foreign-funded or non-contextual research, and offering a cost-efficient alternative to large, protracted global consulting engagements for struc-

India's current policy research landscape remains fragmented. While NITI Aayog plays an important role in policy formulation, the broader ecosystem of independent think tanks and research institutions operates at a limited scale with constrained resources. Many rely heavily on external grants, limiting their ability to pursue long-term, strategic research agendas.

Global studies show that a 1 per cent increase in R&D intensity typically delivers a 0.13-0.17 per cent annual boost in productivity growth (OECD). Raising R&D spending could help India break into upper-middle-income bracket, strengthen industrial competitiveness, and power high-skill job creation in digital technology, biotechnology, artificial intelligence, and clean technology

To realise this vision, policymakers must act with long-term focus. Key steps should include: Raising R&D investment to globally compet-China's or the United States', and over 70 per cent itive levels. Set a clear national target for R&D

intensity; for example, gradually increasing from approximately 0.65 per cent to at least 2 per cent of GDP by 2047, with an increasing share from the private sector. This will require not only higher government outlays but also incentives yield transformative outcomes. ISRO's space such as tax credits, grants, and public-private

> Institutionalising long-term funding for domestic think tanks and policy research bodies. Create a dedicated Viksit Bharat Knowledge Fund or similar endowment, allowing multi-

year grants, seed funding for new institutions, and stable operating resources.

 Building a National Knowledge Ecosystem. Link universities, research institutes, think tanks, industry, and government into a network that facilitates research, innovation, technology transfer, policy formulation, and diffusion of knowledge, especially to MSMEs and lagging regions. Promoting technology diffusion beyond large firms. Provide support for smaller firms and regional enterprises to adopt or adapt technologies through subsidies, incubation, outreach, and technical assistance.

• Expanding the notion of a "domestic Big Four" beyond consulting firms. Encourage the emergence of large, credible, Indian-owned knowledge institutions and think tanks that can compete granular, India-focused participal foundation globally in consultancy, policy research, data for evidence-based Putting India First to Make India First data analytics, design, and technology transfer.

> India's CSR spending has grown sharply, from ₹26,278 crore in FY22 to ₹34,909 crore in FY24 (Bharat CSR Performance Report, 2024), yet less than 3 per cent of this pool supports research, policy, or knowledge infrastructure. Redirecting even 5-10 per cent of CSR funding towards knowledge creation-such as think tanks, public data systems, applied research labs, and digital public goods-would significantly strengthen India's intellectual capacity. In parallel, industry must deepen its own R&D investment by leveraging fiscal incentives, building in-house research capabilities, and expanding industry-academia collaboration. Together, these shifts would reduce dependence on imported technologies and external consulting, while building the longterm competitiveness required for India's inno-

> For India to become a developed nation, it must invest as much in brains, ideas, and institutions as in roads, ports, and industrial parks. Countries that mastered the knowledge game-South Korea, Germany, and Japan-used it to leapfrog into highgrowth, high-productivity, high-innovation economies. India's story must now follow that path. Viksit Bharat requires Viksit Buddhi; a developed nation needs developed minds. The time to build is now.

Director at Pahle India Foundation & Kuntala at Pahle India Foundation

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KUMAR SINGH

Understanding the Yogi factor

The figure of Yogi Adityanath, Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, invariably triggers a familiar, polarised debate. To his supporters, he is the 'Hindu Hriday Samrat', a decisive administrator who has restored order and pride. To his detractors, he is a deeply divisive communalist and a symbol of majoritarian assertion that undermines India's secular fabric. This binary, however, is a lazy and inadequate framework — a relic of an older political vocabulary that fails to capture the complexity of his political project. To understand Yogi Adityanath's enduring influence, one must look beyond the simplistic communal-versus-secular

His politics represents a far more sophisticated and potent synthesis: a unique blend of spiritual authority from the Gorakhnath Peeth, a strategic project of "subaltern Hindutva", and a governance model framed around "Lok Kalyan" (public welfare). This model is rooted in a politics of labharthi (beneficiary) and a law-and-order situation unimaginable in Uttar Pradesh before 2017. It fulfils a public craving not just for a normal life but for a quality of life that many felt was sacrificed under the previous guise of social justice. These elements converge into a powerful form of identity politics that is fundamentally reshaping the

At the core of Yogi Adityanath's identity is his role as the Mahant, or head priest, of the Gorakhnath Peeth.

This is not merely a religious title; it is the bedrock of his philosophical outlook and an autonomous source of political legitimacy. The Peeth, belonging to the Nath Panth tradition, carries a legacy of spiritual and temporal influence that predates modern political parties by centuries. This role grants him an authority insulated from the whims of party politics, setting him apart from career politicians. Crucially, the Peeth's ideology provides a philosophical bridge connecting the spiritual to the material.

The principle of 'Lok Kalyan' is central here. Adityanath articulates a vision in which spiritual values are not antithetical to material progress but are its very foundation. He has often stated that India's spiritual traditions provide a "moral compass to humanity", rooted in compassion and the principle of 'live and let live'. He argues that "spirituality, cultural advancement, and material development all require a safe, civilised, and clean environment". This philosophy allows him to seamlessly frame the construction of a temple and the building of an expressway as complementary, not contradictory, acts-both presented as sacred duties in the larger project of national reju-

venation. This refutes the Western-inspired dichotomy that separates the sacred from the profane, offering a holistic vision in which development is imbued with cultural and spiritual

Perhaps the most politically astute element of the Yogi model is its project of 'subaltern Hindutva'-a conscious effort to broaden the social base of Hindu nationalism beyond its traditional upper-caste anchor. This is a strategic move to dismantle the caste-based political fortresses of parties such as the Samajwadi Party and the Bahujan Samaj Party, whose politics of social justice gradually converted into fiefdoms of specific families and castes. This re-engineering operates on multiple fronts. First, there is the radical inclusivity historically associated with the Gorakhnath Peeth itself, an unorthodox institu-

tion known for its openness to lower castes. Second, and more crucially, was the founding of the Hindu Yuva Vahini, an organisation that gave prominent positions and a sense of agency to youth from OBC and Dalit communities, alongside their mobilisation in the Ram Janmabhumi Andolan by his guru, Mahant Avaidyanath. This created a populist, often aggressive, form of 'non-Brahmin Hindutva'. It empowered non-dominant castes by tapping into their "anxieties and aspirations" — their desire for recognition and a share of power that they felt was denied to them by established 'social justice' parties. By offering a platform within a pan-Hindu identity, the Yogi model convinced a significant section of the subaltern electorate that their interests were better served by aligning with a majoritarian project than by remaining within caste-specific silos. This strategic inclusion is not about erasing

The Pioneer SINCE 1865

caste but about subsuming it within a larger religious-political identity positioned against a perceived

common 'other'. This leads to the third pillar of his strategy: a distinct form of identity politics that constructs a pan-Hindu social coalition while positioning itself as a corrective to the "politics of appeasement", a term used to critique policies aimed at Muslim minorities. His discourse consistently contrasts this alleged appearement with his government's commitment to 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas', reflected in his labharthi politics. The implicit-and often explicit-message is the dawn of a new era in which the majority community receives its due. This is identity politics on a grand scale, appealing to a sense of historical grievance and majoritarian entitlement. The success of this strategy is starkly evident in electoral outcomes. The BIP, under his leadership, secured a massive majority in the 2022 State Assembly elections without fielding a single Muslim candidate.

Please read the complete article online at https://www.dailypioneer.com

Mahendra Kumar Singh is political com- dailypioneer Political Science at DDU Gorakhpur





FROM THE

Coup leader missing

The apparent leader of a failed coup in Benin was on the run and the fate of hostages remained unclear a day after a group of soldiers attempted to overthrow the Government of the West African nation. The soldiers calling themselves the Committee for Refoundation stormed the national television station early Sunday morning.

BANK OF INDIA

Zelenskyy hasn't read US peace proposal: Trump

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Kyiv

President Donald Trump on Sunday claimed Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy "hasn't read" a US-authored peace proposal aimed at ending the Russia-Ukraine war.

Trump was critical of Zelenskyy after US and Ukrainian negotiators completed three days of talks on Saturday aimed at trying to narrow differences on the US administration's pro-

posal. But in an exchange with reporters on Sunday night, Trump suggested that the Ukrainian leader is holding up the talks from moving forward.

"I'm a little bit disappointed that President Zelenskyy hasn't yet read the proposal, that was as of a few hours ago. His people love it. But he hasn't -Russia's fine with it," Trump told reporters on the red carpet at the Kennedy Center Honors. "Russia is, I believe, fine with it, but I'm not sure that Zelenskyy's fine with it. His people love it, but he hasn't read it."

Russian President Vladimir Putin also hasn't publicly expressed approval for the White House plan. In fact, Putin last week had said that aspects of Trump's proposal were unworkable, even though the original draft heavily favoured

Trump has had a hot-andcold relationship with Zelenskyy since riding into a second White House term insisting that the war was a waste of US taxpayer money. Trump has also repeatedly urged the Ukrainians to cede land to Russia to bring an end to a now nearly fouryear conflict he says has cost far too many lives.

Zelenskyy said Saturdav he had a "substantive phone call" with the American officials engaged in the talks with a Ukrainian delegation in Florida. He said he had been given an update over the phone by US and Ukrainian officials at the

"Ukraine is determined to keep working in good faith with the American side to genuinely achieve peace," Zelenskyy wrote on social media.

Zelenskyy came as Russia on Sunday welcomed the Trump administration's new national security strategy in comments by the Kremlin spokesman published by Russia's Tass news agency.

Dmitry Peskov said the updated strategic document, which spells out the administration's core foreign policy interests, was largely in line with Moscow's vision.

"There are statements there against confrontation and in favour of dialogue and building good relations," he Trump's criticism of said, adding that Russia

hopes this would lead to "further constructive cooperation with Washington on the Ukrainian settlement."

The document released Friday by the White House said the US wants to improve its relationship with Russia after years of Moscow being treated as a global pariah and that ending the war is a core US interest to "reestablish strategic stability with Russia." Speaking on Saturday at the Reagan National Defense Forum, Trump's outgoing Ukraine envoy, Keith Kellogg, said

efforts to end the war were in "the last 10 meters." He said a deal depended on the two outstanding issues of "terrain, primarily the Donbas," Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant. Russia controls most of Donbas, its name for the Donetsk and neighbouring Luhansk regions, which, along with two southern regions, it illegally annexed three years ago. The

Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power

Plant is in an area that has

been under Russian control

since early in Moscow's inva-

sion of Ukraine and is not in service. It needs reliable power to cool its six shutdown reactors and spent to any catastrophic nuclear incidents. Kellogg, who is due to leave his post in January, was not present at the talks in Florida. Separately, officials said the leaders of the United Kingdom, France and Germany would participate in a meeting with Zelenskyy in London on Monday.

As the three days of talks wrapped up, Russian missile, drone and shelling attacks overnight and Sunday killed at least four people in Ukraine. A man was killed in a drone attack on Ukraine's northern Chernihiv region Saturday night, local officials said, while a combined missile and drone attack on infrastructure in the central city of Kremenchuk caused power and water outages.

Kremenchuk is home to one of Ukraine's biggest oil refineries and is an industrial hub. Kyiv and its Western allies say Russia is trying to cripple the Ukrainian power grid and deny civilians access to heat, light and running water for a fourth consecutive winter, in what Ukrainian officials call "weaponising" the cold.

E-AUCTION (SALE NOTICE) (Under Sarfaesi Act 2002)

Tel.: 0755-2556770 / 2555169 E-mail: bhopal.assetrecovery@bankofindia.co.in Annendix-IV-A [See provisio to rule 8(6) SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF MOVABLE / IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES

E-auction Sale Notice For Sale of movable/ Immovable Assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with provision to Rules 8(6) of The Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.

Zonal Office: Bank of India Bhawan, Arera Hills, Jail Road, Bhopal-462004

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the borrower(s) & guarantor (s) that the below described novable property mortgaged / charged to the secured creditor, the Physical/Symbolic possession of which has been

Name of Borrower/Guarantor Demand	Description of Martnaged Properties 8	Reserve Price	
Notice Date, Notice Amount & Possession Date	Description of Mortgaged Properties & Name of Property Owner	Bid Increment Amt.	
	nch, Bhopal Tel.: 9340868085, 9009704215 le proceeds- 900190200000033, IFSC- BKID0009001		
Borrower: Mr. Shiv Kumar Soni and Mrs. Sangeeta Soni W/o Mr. Shiv Kumar Soni	Flat No. 507 situated at Fifth floor of PARKE SERENE ORION-1, Navaakar Parke Serene, Near	₹ 17,45,000/-	
Demand Notice Amount: ₹ 20.60 Lakhs +interest w.e.f. 04.08.2022 & other charges	Siddhi Saffron, Kh. No. 27 & 44, Village-Sunkhe- di, Behind Danish Kunj, Kolar Road, Bhopal (M.P.) Belonging to: Mr. Shiv Kumar Soni & Mrs.	1,74,500/-	
Demand notice Date : 04.08.2022	Sangeeta Soni Area : 71.29 Sq. Mt. Boundaries as	₹ 10,000/-	
Possession Date : 20.10.2022 (Symbolic)	per deed : North :Flat No 508, South: Flat No. 506, East: Corridor, West: Road and M.O.S.		
Borrower: Mr. Chandra Kumar Kuree S/o Mr. Vishnu Prasad Kurre	Flat No. 303, situated at Third Floor of Block-B, Shashi Hi-Tech City,Near Kemfort School, Village Nayapura , Kolar Road Dist- Bhopal (M.P.)	9,50,000/-	
Present Outstanding Amount: ₹ 18.33 Lakhs +interest & other charges	Belonging to: Mr. Chandra Kumar Kuree, Area: 59.47.00 Sq. Mtr. Boundaries: North: Other Land,	95,000/-	
Demand notice Date : 31.10.2019	South: Passage, East: Flat No 304/B, West: Flat No	₹ 10,000/-	
Possession Date : 04.02.2020 (Symbolic)	302/B	1.7.3	
	Bhopal Tel.: 9835355090, 7566969202 le proceeds- 903490200000033, IFSC- BKID0009034		
Borrower: Mr. Dheeraj Jha S/o Mr. Ramesh Chandra Jha Ms. Preeti Jha D/o Mr. Laxminarayan Jha	Flat No F-04 Situated at First Floor of Nirmal Maya Apartment A-2 Plot No 147, Mahaveer Nagar, Phase -1.Mandideep, Distt. Raisen,	8,88,000/- ₹	
Demand Notice Amount: ₹ 10.89 Lakhs +interest w.e.f. 31.10.2019 & other charges	Bhopal (M.P.) Belonging to: Mr. Dheeraj Jha & Ms. Preeti Jha Area: 67.27 Sq. Mt. Boundaries as per deed: North: Plot No 146, South: Plot No 148 (Flat	89,000/- ₹ 10,000/-	
Symbolic Possession	No. F-01), East: Flat No F-01, West: Colony Road	37.121.22	

Residential Flat No. F-4 Situated at First Floor of Mr. Karan Yadav & Mrs. Anju Yadav Demand Notice Amount: ₹ 4.97 Lakhs Road, Mandideep Dist-Raisen (M.P.) Area: 37.17 interest & other charges Sq.Mt. Boundaries : North :Flat No. F-3, South:Flat Demand notice Date: 19.01.2024 No. F-5, East: 30' wide road, West :Flat No F-22 & Possession Date: 04.09.2024 (Physical)

Vaishno Avenue, Plot No. 55 & 62 Near CLRR | 6,01,000/International School, Udhyogpuri Colony, Dahod 60,000/-

A/c to Deposit Auction Sale Proceeds 906290200000033 IFSC Code: BKID0009062 Residential Flat No. SF-04, Sixth Floor, MIG Block No. 1 - A, Sheetal Mega Heights Apartment Part of Mr. Amit Bhati S/o Mr. Anil Bhati 7,70,000/-Khasra No. 177/3/1, 178/2 situated at Sheetal Mega City Phase-III, VIII- Pipliya Gajju Tehsil Goharganj, Demand Notice Amount -₹ 9,81,484,40 plus PH-01, (M.P.), Plot size of property is 51.30 Sq.Mt. property Owner- Mr. Amit Bhati, BOUNDRIES:- East -Demand notice Date: 02-08-2024 Possession Date: 13-12-2024 (Symbolic) olony Road, West - Corridor & Flat No. S.F. 03, North-Flat No. S.F.-05, South - Flat No. S.F.-01

77,000/-₹ 10,000/-Chanderi Branch Chanderi, Mobile : 9131912829

Triple storeyed building situated at Survey No. 21/1/Min1and Survey No 21, Ph no. 14 Village M/s Krishna Traders, Prop: Mr. Umesh 50,96,000/ Kumar Jain S/o Shri Lalchand Jain Pranpur, Tehsil Chanderi, Dist. Ashoknagar MP owned by Mr. Umesh Kumar Jain S/o Mr. Lal Chand Demand Notice Amount: ₹ 25,45,705.78 5,10,000/ Jain Area: 1095 Sq. Ft. Boundaries; North: Property +interest w. e. f. 05.09.2024 & other charges ₹ 25,000/of Ram Sewak Sumar (mali), South: Property of Demand notice Date: 23.10.2024 Nirpat Singh, East: Lalitpur Chanderi Road, West: Balance part of owner House

Possession Date: 17.01.2025 (Symbolic) ceeds- 900790200000033, IFSC- BKID0009007 Flat No. SF-11, Second Floor, Sheetal City Mr. Bharat Chandel S/o Mr. Rekhram Apartment, Ward No. 23, Mandideep, Station 8,42,000/ Road, Tehsil Goharganj, Distt Raisen (M.P) Chandel & Mrs. Minal Chandel W/o Mr. Belonging to: Mr. Bharat Chandel, Area: 450 Sq.ft. **Bharat Chandel** 84,200/-Boundaries as per deed : North : Gajju Pipaliya Demand Notice Amount: ₹ 6.83 Lakhs Road Below, South: Sheetal City colony East: Flat ₹ 10,000/interest w.e.f. 27.06.2024 & other charges No. SF-10, West: Sheetal City colony Gate Demand notice Date: 27,06,2024

Possession Date: 27.08.2024 (Physical) Berasia Branch, Berasia Tel.: 07565-282234, 9424727991 A/c to Deposit Auction Sale Proceeds 901690200000033 IFSC Code : BKID0009016 Borrower: Mr. Rajmal Nagar S/o Mr. EQM of two Story Commercial Shop cum residential building situated at Vill- Harrakheda, Berasia 21.50,000/ Road, Patwari Halka No. 38, Harrakheda Tehsil-Berasia, Dist-Bhopal (M.P.) Area- 600 Sq.ft, Mr. Subhash Nagar S/o Mr. Devakaran 2,15,000/ Property Owner- Mr. Rajmal Nagar S/o Mr. Daryab Demand Notice Amount - ₹ 36,97,745.87 plus Singh Nagar, Boundaries: North: 2 Ft. wide Gali, ₹ 10,000/

Account to deposit auction sale proceeds- 900390

Borrower: Mrs. Sheetal Sharma W/o Mr. Ramkrishna Sharma

Demand Notice Amount: ₹ 21,38,050.63/interest w.e.f. 28.02.2025 & other charges Demand notice Date: 14.05.2025

nterest & other expenses

Demand notice Date: 12-12-2018

Possession Date: 28-03-2019 (Symbolic)

Residential Flat HIG 101 situated at First Floor Block-C, Abhishek Apartment-2, Plot no. D, Vinayak Parisar, Gulmohar, Village Bawadia Kalan, Bhopa (M.P.) Area 102.23 Sq.Mt. Boundaries: North - Block -B. South- Flat No. 102, East- Duplex. West- Road

South: 2 Ft. wide Gali, East: Berasia Road, West: Land

25,76,000/ 2,57,600/ ₹ 10,000/-

Possession Date: 04.08.2025 (Symbolic) Date and Time of e-auction: 24.12.2025, 11.00 A.M. to 5.00 P.M

Auction Sale/bidding would be only through "Online Electronic Bidding" on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS" and " AS IS WHAT IS BASIS" and "WHATEVER THERE IS BASIS" through the website: http://BAANKNET.com Bidders are advised to go through the website for detailed ten and conditions before taking in the e-auction sale proceeding.

The property can be inspected on or before 22.12.2025 between 10 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. with prior permission from Bank Manager of Conce

Branch.

The Successful tenderer shall deposit 25% of the sale price (inclusive of EMD already paid), immediately on the allotment of tender in his/ her favour and balance within 15 days from the date of confirmation of sale in above mentioned branch's account number. If the tenderer falls to pay the sale price as stated above, the deposit made by him/her shall be forfeited without any notice.

The bidding will start at a price higher than that of fixed reserve price. For sale proceeds of Rs. 50 Lacs (Rupees Fifty lacs) and above, the successful bidder will have to deduct TDS at the rate 1% on the Sale proceeds and submit the original receipt of TDS certificate to the Bank.

All statutory dues/non-statutory dues/applicable stamp duty/additional stamp duty/transfer charges/all fees/assessment charges/oth dues including registration charges, stamp duty, taxes, applicable TOS etc. shall have to be borrie by the purchaser.

Authorised Officer reserve the right to postpone/cancel or vary the terms and condition of the e-auction without assigning any reason.

For further details contact Concern branch Manager at above Phone No. or Zonal Office Bhopal, Bhopal Phone: 0755-2556770/2555168
 Note: This publication is also 15 days notice to Borrower/Guarantors/Mortgagors as required under Proviso of rule 8(6) of Security Interest

ment) Rules, 2002. Place: Bhopal, Date: 08.12.2025 Authorised Office, Bank of India

Ukraine President visits London for peace talks control of its eastern

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ London

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy was meeting the French, German and British leaders in London on Monday as Kyiv's European allies try to strengthen Ukraine's hand in thorny talks on a US-backed plan to end the Russia-Ukraine war.

Prime Minister Keir Starmer was due to gather with Zelenskyy, President Emmanuel Macron and Chancellor Friedrich Merz at the British leader's 10 Downing St. Residence. Zelenskyy said late

Sunday that his talks with European leaders this week in London and Brussels will focus on security, air defence and long-term funding for Ukraine's war The leaders are working

to ensure that any ceasefire is backed by solid security guarantees, both from Russia from attacking again. peace proposal.



British Prime Minister Keir Starmer (left), Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy (centre) and French President Emmanuel Macron (right) meeting at 10 Downing Street in London

US and Ukrainian negotiators completed three days of on Telegram that talks had talks on Saturday aimed at been "substantive" and that trying to narrow differences National Security and Europe and the US, to deter on the US administration's Defence Council Secretary

Zelenskyy said in a post

the General Staff Andrii Hnatov were travelling back to Europe to brief him.

A major sticking point in the proposal is the sugges-Rustem Umerov and Chief of tion that Ukraine must cede

Donbas region to Russia, which illegally occupies most but not all of the territory. Ukraine and its European allies have baulked at the idea of handing over land. Starmer said he "won't be

putting pressure" on Zelenskyy to accept a peace settlement. "The most important thing is to ensure that if there is a cessation of hostilities, and I hope there is, it has to be just and it has to be lasting, which is what we will be focused on this afternoon," he told broadcaster ITV. In an exchange with reporters on Sunday night, US President Donald Trump appeared frustrated with Zelenskyy, claiming the Ukrainian leader "hasn't yet read the proposal." 'Russia is, I believe, fine

with it, but I'm not sure that Zelenskyy's fine with it," Trump said before taking part in the Kennedy Centre Honours in Washington.

114 people were killed, including 63 children, in last week's drone strikes in Sudan: WHO

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Cairo

The head of the World Health Organisation said on Monday that the death toll from drone strikes on a kindergarten and other sites in Sudan's Kordofan state last week is now at 114 people killed, including 63 children.

WHO said there were three separate drone strikes on Kagoli last Thursday. The first targeted the kindergarten, and the subsequent strikes targeted paramedics as they were transporting the survivors to a hospital. The death toll was not immediately clear at the time, in part due to communications outages.

Dr Tedros Ghebreyesus, the director of the WHO, said on X that the organisation "deplores these senseless attacks on civilians and



health facilities, and calls again for an end to the violence, and increased access to humanitarian aid, including health."

The Sudan Doctors' Network and Emergency Lawyers, groups that track violence against civilians in Sudan, blamed the Rapid Support Forces paramilitary, also known as the RSF, for the strikes.

In a statement Saturday, **Emergency Lawyers called**

the attack "a flagrant violation of international humanitarian law, including the protection of civilians, especially children, and vital civilian infrastructure."

The strikes come amid a two-year war between the RSF and the Sudanese military. More than 40,000 people have been killed to date, according to the World Health Organisation, and 12 million displaced. However, aid groups warn that the

true death toll is likely far higher. The battle is now concentrating on the oilrich Kordofan region, after the RSF took over the last military stronghold, el-Fasher, in Darfur, in western Sudan. The takeover of el-Fasher by the RSF has been marred by violence. There have been reports of executions of civilians, rapes and sexual assaults, and other atrocities. Over 100,000 people have fled since the takeover, according to the UN Migration agency.

The UN human rights chief, Volker Turk, warned last week that Kordofan could face new atrocities like those in el-Fasher.

The humanitarian situation in the Kordofan region is worsening as famine is also spreading after more than two years of the devastating war.

Greenland holds Annual talks with US after takeover buzz

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Nuuk (Greenland)

Greenland is hosting annual meetings with US officials to discuss bilateral ties at the end of a year in which US President Donald Trump ramped up talk of a US takeover of the mineral-rich island that is a semiautonomous territory of

Denmark. The meeetings starting Monday will include a bilateral "joint committee" meeting between Greenland and US officials that will discuss cooperation "in a number of important areas," according to a statement from Greenland's Ministry of

Foreign Affairs and Science. A separate "permanent committee" meeting will involve the Danish Government.



Israeli Police forced entry into refugee compound: UN agency

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Jerusalem

Israeli police forcibly entered the compound of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees in East Jerusalem early on Monday, escalating a campaign against an organisation that has been banned from operating The UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near

East, or UNRWA, said in a statement that "sizeable numbers" of Israeli forces, including police, trucks and forklifts, entered the compound in the Palestinian neighbourhood of Sheikh Jarrah and cut communications to the compound. "The unauthorised and forceful entry by Israeli security forces is an unacceptable violation of UNRWA's privileges and immunities as a UN agency," the agency said. Police said in a statement they entered for a "debt-collection procedure" spearheaded by Jerusalem's municipal Government, which did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Corío Deepwater Port: India's strategic gateway to South America



JAVIER PAULINICH

As India accelerates its global economic expansion, the need for diversified and resilient supply chains has become central to long-term national planning. With nearly 90 per cent of global trade dependent on maritime routes, India's future industrial growth, food security, and energy transition hinge on access to strategic ports around the world.

In this context, the Corío Deepwater Port in southern Peru emerges as a rare geoeconomic opportunity-an asset capable of shaping India's commercial and strategic trajectory for the next 30

Its 28-metre natural depth and scalable capacity of over 100 million tonnes position it as one of the deepest and most future-ready ports on the Pacific coast of South America, offering India an unprecedented gateway into a resource-

Peru's importance to India is rooted in both mineral security and agricultural diversification. As the world's third-

UK care home

PRESS TRUST OIF INDIA

A director of a care home agency based in

south-east England has

been jailed for two-and-

a-half years after being

found guilty of repeat-

edly employing immi-

grants from India with

no right to work in the

UK. Benoy Thomas was

convicted after a trial at

July and sentenced on

Friday, the UK's Crown

Prosecution Service

(CPS) said.

agency boss jailed for hiring **Indian migrants**

illegally

London

largest copper producer, Peru holds the minerals essential for renewable energy, electric mobility, data centers, and advanced electronics.

With India projected to import more than 90 per cent of its copper needs by 2047, securing steady access to Peru's southern mining corridor becomes strategically indispensable. At the same time, Peru's \$24 billion agricultural transformation has positioned it as a global powerhouse for high-value agroexports such as avocados, blueberries. quinoa, grapes, and speciality grains.

By 2040, Peru's agro-exports are expected to triple to \$40 billion, creating new avenues for India to diversify food imports and build integrated coldchain and logistics networks.

What makes Corío uniquely valuable is its ability to serve as a continental gateway. The port connects India not only to Peru but to four additional South American economies-Bolivia, Brazil, Argentina, and Chile-each with substantial reserves of minerals, lithium, agricultural commodities, and industrial products

This single-entry platform allows Indian companies to access the broader Andean, Amazonian, and Southern Cone markets through interconnected overland routes. For example, Bolivia and Argentina provide strategic lithium

Old Word No.13, New Word No.10-Plot No 01/76/1

The online auction will be conducted on website (URL Link- https://BidDeal.in) of our auction agency ValueTrust Capital Services Private Limited. The Prospective Bidder(s) must submit the Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) RTGS/ Demand Draft (DD) (Refer Column E) at ICICI Home Finance Company Limited. Branch Office Address mentioned on top of the article on or before December 24, 2025 before 04:00 PM. The Prospective Bidder(s) must also submit a signed copy of the Registration Form & Bid Terms and Conditions form at ICICI Home Finance Company Limited, Branch Office Address mentioned on top of the article on or before December 24, 2025 before 05:00 PM. Earnest Money Deposit Demand Draft (DD) should be from a Nationalized/Scheduled Bank in favor of "ICICI Home Finance Company Ltd. – Auction" payable at the branch office address mentioned on top of the article.

The general public is requested to submit their bids higher than the amount being offered by the interested buyer mentioned above. It is hereby informed that in case no bids higher than the amount being offered by the aforementioned interested buyer is received by ICICI HFC, the mortgaged property shall be sold to the said interested buyer as per Rule 8(8) r/w Rule 9 (1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

For any further clarifications with regards to inspection, terms and conditions of the sale or submission of bids, kindly



access, Brazil's western states offer soy and protein exports, and northern Chile adds further copper and mineral capacity. Corío thus becomes India's multicountry springboard into South America.

A dedicated Corío-Visakhapatnam (Vizag) maritime axis can further transform trade flows between India and South America. Vizag, one of India's leading deepwater ports, is already a major industrial and export hub on the eastern coast.

A direct corridor linking Vizag with

(H)

Decembe 24, 2025 before

04:00 PM

December 19, 2025 11:00 AM

Authorized Officer, "ICICI Home Finance Company Limited" CIN Number:- U65922MH1999PLC120106

inbound shipments of Indian pharmaceuticals, fertilizers, heavy machinery, engineering goods, and digital infrastructure solutions. Such balanced cargo flows reduce empty return voyages and improve shipping economics, making the corridor attractive for private investment, Indian shipping lines, and long-term logistics planning. Realising this opportunity requires

proactive strategy. India should consider forming a public-private investment consortium, initiating government-level engagement with Peru, and commissioning an Indian-led pre-feasibility and ESG baseline study tailored to India's long-term needs.

Aligning Corío with India's critical mineral plan and maritime strategy would ensure sustained national benefits. Ultimately, Corío is far more than a port-it is a strategic bridge to South

grains, and fresh produce outbound America's natural resources, agricultural strength, and industrial potential.

For long-term investors, it represents a rare infrastructure platform capable of delivering commercial viability, supply-chain resilience, and geopolitical value for decades to come.

The Corío Deepwater Port is a rare, next-generation infrastructure asset. Situated in Peru's Arequipa region, it offers a natural depth of 28 metresamong the deepest on South America's Pacific coast-making it capable of accommodating Very Large Bulk Carriers (VLBCs). This depth, coupled with a scalable capacity exceeding 100 million tonnes per year, positions Corío as a long-term maritime platform that can evolve in tandem with India's expanding industrial and logistical requirements.

This article has been written by Amb. Javier Paulinich, the Ambassador of the Republic of Peru presently stationed in New Delhi

Aadhar Housing Finance Ltd.

Sagar Branch: 1st Floor, Sakhi Baba Matrix, Makronia Road, Sagar - 470004 (Madhya Pradesh)

Corío would create predictable, high-

volume trade routes for copper, lithium,

Corporate Office: Unit No.802, Natraj Rustomjee, Western Express Highway and M.V.Road, Andherl (East), Mumbal-400069 Damoh Branch: 1st Floor, Matra Chaya, Killai Naka Chouraha, Balakot road, Damoh - 470661 (Madhya Pradesh)

E-AUCTION — SALE NOTICE

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of immovable Properties under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Asset and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortizaged, possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Aadhar Housing Finance Limited will be sold on "As Is where is", "As is what Is", and " Whatever there is" with no known

S. N.	Borrower(s) / Co-Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s)	Demand Notice Date and Amount	Description of the Immovable property	Reserve Price (RP)	Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) (10% of RP)	Nature of possession
1	(Loan Code No. 13100000190 / Damoh Branch) Harishanker Ravat (Borrower) Mamta Bai Ravat (Co-Borrower)	10-04-2024 & ₹ 8,18,941/-	All that part & parcel of property bearing, House No. 1 130 P H No. 12 33 Ward No. 1 Indra Gandhi Ward Jabalpur Road Near Taradehi Tiggda, Narsimhapur, Madhya Pradesh, 470880 Boundaries:- East - House of Dwarka Rawat, West - Land of Seller, North - Common Way, South - Seth Gulabchand	Rs. 16,55,000/-	Rs. 1,65,500/-	Physical
2	(Loan Code No. 02310000558 / Sagar Branch) Pradeep Jatav (Borrower) Khushbu Jatav (Co-Borrower)	11-08-2025 & ₹ 7,78,506/-	All that piece and parcel of the property bearing, Khasra Number 234/4/2(S), Mauja Devri, Patwari Halka Number 71, Tehsil Sagar, Dist Sagar, Madhya Pradesh Boundaries: - East - Plot of Bhupendra Jatav, West - House of Santosh Mali, North - Land of Radhe Maharaj, South - Way Left By Seller	Rs. 7,75,120/-	Rs. 77,512/-	Physical

accordingly be rejected. No interest shall be paid on the EMD.

Date of Opening of the Bid/Offer (Auction Date) for Property is 13.01.2026 on https://bankeauctions.com at 03:00 PM to 04:00 PM. AHFL is not responsible for any liabilities whatsoever pending upon the property as mentioned above. The Property shall be auctioned on "As Is Where Is Basis", "As Is What Is Basis"

The Demand Draft Should be made in favorof 'Aadhar Housing Finance Limited' Only. Auction/bidding shall be only through "Online Electronic Bidding" through the website https://bankeauctions.com. Bidders are advised to go through the webs

before taking part in the e-auction sale proceedings. The intending bidders should register their names at portal M/s C 1 INDIA PVT LTD through the link https://bankeauctions.com/registration/ sign

password free of cost. Prospective bidder may avail online training on E-auction from the service provider M/s C 1 INDIA PVT LTD through the website https://ba For further details contact Authorised Officer of Aadhar Housing Finance Limited, Lokendra Rathore Contact: 9977783890 OR the service provider M/s C 1 INDIA PVT LTD. Mr

Prabhakaran, Mobile No: +91-74182-81709, E-mail: tn@c1india.com & support@bankeauctions.com, Phone No. +917291981124 /25 /26 As on date, there is no order restraining and/or court injunction AHFL/the authorized Officer of AHFL from selling, allenating and/or disposing of the above immovable properties/secured assets

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in Aadhar Housing Finance Limited (AHFL), secured creditor's website i.e. www.sadharhousing The Bid incremental amount for auction is Rs.10,000/-.

whole or in part, in any form or by any means, whether print, digital, electronic publication in any form, e-mail or web publications, or otherwise through any mode is strictly prohibited

rized use of the above content through any mode may result in appropriate legal action by AHFL. (Authorised Officer) Place: Madhya Pradesh, Date: 09.12.2025

BANK OF INDIA

Zonal Office: Bhopal Zone, Arera Hills, Bhopal Tel.: 0755-2556770, 2555169

Notice issued under section 13(2) of Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of

Bhopal Hoshangabad Road Tehsil Huzur Bhopa builtup area-55.76 somt in name of Mr Gaurishanka

sharma s/o puranmal sharma & Mrs Maina Devi w/o

Gauri Shankar sharma Boundaries of the property

North: Open & Plot no 23, South: Flat no F -2, East Flat no F-4, West: Open & Road

EQM of Flat no T 01 Third floor "Rekha Hights "P.H.

No 26, Ward No 84, Indus Town Campus, Ratanpur Bhopal Hoshangabad Raod Tehisl Huzur Bhopal builtup Area- 55,76 sqmt in name of Mr Krishna Kumar s/o Ram Kumar & Mrs Sandhya Rani

Goswami, Boundaries of the property: North: Open

& plot no 23, South: Flat no T-02, East: Flat no T-04

as the undersigned has issued notice on dates mentioned below in table (sent by regd. Post) under section 13(2) of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 r.w. Aule 3(1) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 to you and to repay the dues mentioned therein within 60 days from the receipt of the said notice, which were returned undelivered and I have reason to believe that you are avoiding service of demand notice on you. Now, therefore, notice is hereby given to you to repay the banks dues within 60 days from this Notice failing which the recovery shall be made as per rules and we, the secured creditor, shall be entitled to exercise all or any of the rights under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, r.w. Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. The content of

Name of Borrower(s)/ Co Borrowers/ Guarantors/ Legal Heirs. Loan Account No.

Yogendra Badani

Date: December 09, 2025

Your attention is invited to provisions available, to redeem the secured assets		Section 13 of the SARFAESI Act, in respect of time
Name of Account / Borrower/ Guarantor	Amount outstanding as per Notice	Description of Property
Bhopal Main Bra	nch : Marwari Road	Bhopal Tel.: 0755-4931126
Applicant - Mr Gaurishankar sharma s/o puranmal sharma	₹ 590979.38	EQM of Flat No. F-01, First floor "Rekha Hights "Ph No 26 Ward No 84, Indus Town Campus, Ratanpur

+ interest @10 35%

& other charges

Demand Notice Date

06-11-2025

NPA Date 08.10.2025

₹1018019.30

+ interest @9.45% & other charges

Demand Notice Date

11-11-2025

Co Applicant -Mrs Maina Devi w/o Gauri Shankar sharma Flat no F 01 First Floor "Rekha Hights ", PH No 26, Ward No 84, Indus Town Campus,

Ratanpur, Ratanpur Hoshangabad Road. Tehsil Huzur Bhopal Mr Krishna Kumar s/o Ram Kumar

Mrs Sandhya Rani Goswami

Fiat no T 01 Third floor "Rekha Hights " Ph No 26 Ward No 84, Indus Town Campus, Ratanpur Bhopal, Hoshangabad Road Tehisl Huzur Bhopal Date: 09-12-2025, Place: Bhopal

केनरा बैंक Canara Bank 🖈

ी सिडिकेट Syndicate

NPA Date 28.08.2025 West: open & Road Authorised Officer, Bank of India Canara Bank, Specialised ARM Branch,

E-AUCTION

SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF MOVABLE & IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES

Plot no. 4, PSP Area, Near AllMS. Saket Nagar Bhopal Tel.: 8989014648

of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with provision to Rules 8(6) & 6(2) of The Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002. Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) & Guarantor (s) that the below describ immovable properties mortgaged / charged to the secured creditor, the Possession of which has been taken by the authorised

Name and address	Description of Property	Demand Notice Dt.	Reserve Price
of the Borrower &		Possession Dt.	EMD Amt.
Guarantors		Outstanding Amt.	Bid Increment Am
Borrower: M/s Shree Harihar Warehouse Address: Khasra No.503/2/2 Berchha Datar Kalapipal Shajapur Bhopal MP-465337 Proprietor/ Mortgagor: Mrs. Maya Singh Bais W/o Mr. Sanjay Bais Address: LiG 595 Pride City Katara Hills Near Hanuman Mandir Bhopal MP 462043	situated at Village Berchha, Datar, P. H. No. 37, R. N. M. 02, Halka Berchha, Datar, Tehsil Kalapipal, Disti. Shajapur (M.P.)Total Area 0.607 Heclare Boundaries- North: Land of Kumer Singh Khichi, South: Land of Mahipal Singh, East: Berchha Datar to Kothdi Road, West: Land of Mahipal Singh	01.10.2025 as on 08/12/2025 ₹ 70,62,360.63/- + Intt. & other charges	₹ 1,51,65,000/- ₹ 15,16,500/- ₹ 10000/-

Last date for submission of online bids is on or before 15/01/2026 upto 5.00 p.m. Date and Time of e-auction: 16/01/2026, 12:00 PM to 2:00 PM (With unit

The intending bidders shall deposit above mentioned Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) being 10% of the Reserve Price in E-Wallet or M/s PSB Alliance Private Limited (baanknet.com) portal directly or by generating the Challan therein to deposit the EMD through RTGS/NEFT in the account details as mentioned in the said challan, on above mentioned date of bid submission.

The successful bidder shall deposit 25% of the sale price (inclusive of EMD already paid), immediately on the sale being knocked down
in his/her favour and the balance within 15 days from the date of confirmation of sale. If the successful bidder falls to pay the sale price
as stated above, the deposit made by him shall be forfeited.
 All charges for conveyance, stamp duty/GST registration charges etc, as applicable and any taxes, revenue/dues to any local authority

etc shall be borne by the successful bidder only 4) For sale proceeds of Rs. 50.00.000 (Rupees Fifty lacs) and above, the successful bidder will have to deduct TDS at the rate 1% on the

proceeds and submit the original receipt of TDS certificate to the Bank.

detailed terms and conditions of the sale please refer web portal : http://BAANKNET.com or may contact - Chief Ma

SPLSD ARM Bhopal, Canara Bank, Plot no. 4, PSP Area, Near AllMS, Saket Nagar Bhopal, Contact no. 8989014648 8057766078, 9755569030 9691096410, 9123403299 (BHOPAL), 7905027805 (JABALPUR AND BILASPUR), 7683068902 (RAIPUR), 9140476074 (GWALIOR), 9830130770 (INDORE), 8073562754 (BHOPAL) during office hours on any working day. **AUTHORISED OFFICER, CANARA BANK** बैंक ऑफ इंडिया **BO**

Zonal Office: MIG 15, Rajeshwar Building, Shivnagar, Damoh Road, Jabalpur- 482002 Email: jabalpur.ard@bankofindia.co.in

E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrowers(s) and Guarantors(s) that immovable properties as described in column 3 in table hereunder mortgaged/charged to Bank of India (Secured Creditor), the constructive/physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Bank of India, (Secured Creditor), will be sold on "As is where is" "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" on 24.12.2025 for recovery of the amount(s), as stated in column 4 of the table hereunder, due to Bank of India (the secured creditor) from the Borrowers and Guarantors as mentioned in column 2 of the following table. The reserve price and earnest money deposit will also be applicable as stated in the following table in column 6 & 7 respectively

		luction - 24/12/2025, Time : 11.00 AM				
Name of Branch (1)	Name of Borrower/ Guarantors (2)	Description of Property & Owner Name (3)	Dates of Demand Notice U/s 13(2) & Amount (4)	Date of Possession/Type of Possession (5)	Reserve Price (6)	Earnest Money Deposit (7)
Branch : Ashirwad Market	Borrower/Mortgagor 1. M/S Shiv Dal Mill Through its Prop. Mr. Satya Prakash Choubey, Village Somakhurd, Tehsil- Majhouli, Jabalpur 483225 2. Mr. Satya Prakash Choubey S/o Shiv Prasad Choubey, Village Somakhurd, Tehsil-Majhouli, Jabalpur-483225	Industrial Shed property situated at Mouza Soma Khurd, PH. No. 04. KH. No. 253/2. RNM & Tehsil Majholi, Post- Bichaiya, District Jabalpur (M.P.). in the name of Shri Satya Prakash Choubey S/o Shri Shiv Prasad Choubey. Bounded As per Deed: North Owners Property, South- Bichaiya Road, East-Owners Property, West-Owners Property	04.12.2023 ₹ 22,51,312.98 Interest + Other Charges	01.03.2024 Symbolic	₹ 10.40/- Lacs	₹ 1.04/- Lacs
Branch : Kamla Nehru Nagar	Borrower- 1. Mrs. Nalini Rajpoot W/o Mr. Amit Rajpoot, Add- House No. 946, Sanjeevani Nagar Lodhi Mohalia, Jabalpur (M.P.)-482002. Guarantor & Mortgager 2. Mr. Ankit Singh Rajput Sio Mr. Hem Singh Rajput, 228, Sanjevani Nagar, Garha, Jabalpur (M.P.)-482002	EQM of Diverted Land consisting of building & any other structure situated at Khass No. 148/2, PH No. 03, Nill No. 371, Mouza Murgawan, RNM Katangi Murgwa Tiraha, Kakruta Road, Teh. Patan, Distt Jabalpur (M.P.) admeasuring 50,000 sq.ft. in the name of Mr. Ankit Singh Rajput S/o Mr. Hem Singh Rajput. Bounded-East- Open Land of Mr. Sarpat Sing, West Road (Murgwa Tiraha to Kerketa Road), North Property of Property of Amit Rajput, South-Open Land of Mr. Rajan Rajput	26.12.2024 ₹ 12,69,359.96 Interest + Other Charges	06.03.2025 Symbolic	₹ 177.65/- Lacs	₹ 17.765/- Lacs
Branch : Khamaria	Borrower- M/s M.J. Poultry, Add. Village Kashi, Post Padariya, Panagar, Jabalpur Proprietor: Mr. Malkit Singh S/o Mr. Balkar Singh, Village- Matamar, Khamaria, Post Sonpur, Jabalpur	All that 477, All that part and parcel of Diverted Plot, Poultry Shed & Structures situ situated at Mouza: Kashi, Part of Khasra No. Seti. No. 559, PH No. 15, Total Area: 20,000 Sq.ft. (Built-up-Arsa-6000 Sq. ft.) RNM- Maharajpur, Tehsil-Panagar, District-Jabalpur, in the name of Mr. Malkit Singh Sio Mr. Balkar Singh (Proprietor), Vide Registered Sale Deed No. 458/8, Granth No. A1/209, Dated: 26.06.2009, Page No. 70 to 76 in the office of Sub- Registrar of Jabalpur. Bounded East- Open Land of Mr. Malkit Singh, North Open Land of Mrs. Chanda Rajak, South-Open Land of Mr. Maikit Singh	29.05.2018 ₹ 26,28,359.00 Interest + Other Charges	14.08.2018 Symbolic	₹ 11.50/- Lacs	₹ 1.15/- Lacs

DETAILS OF ENCOMPRANCE KNOWN TO THE SECORED CREDITOR: NOT KNOWN

TERMS OF CONDITIONS- 1. Auction Sale / Bidding would be only through "Online Electronic Bidding Process" through the website https://baanknet.com 2. If required, there shall be unlimited extension of 10 minutes each. Auction would commence on reserve price and bidders shall improve their offers in multiples of

Rs. 10,000/- for all above property(ies). The sale shall not take place at or below reserve price.

3. The sale shall be subject to the Terms & Conditions prescribed in the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 and to the following further conditions. 4. The intending bidders should get themselves registered on the above mentioned website. The should make their own inquiries regarding any statutory liabilities arrears of property tax, electricity dues etc. relating to the above property(ies) before participating in the auction sale process. The properties are being sold along with all

existing and future encumbrances, whether known or unknown to the Bank. The Authorized Officer shall not be responsible in any way for any third party claims / rights.

5. The particulars of Secured Assets specified in the Schedule here in above have been stated to the best of the information of the Authorized Officer, but the Authorized

Officer shall not be answerable for any error. misstatement or omission in this proclamation. 6. The Authorized Officer is not bound to accept the highest bid or any bids or any or all bids and reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the bids without assigning

any reason thereof, and very, modify and waive any condition of sale in his absolute discretion. The Authorised Officer reserves the right to withdraw the above e-Auction without assigning any reason.

 For detailed term and conditions of the sale, please refer https://baanknet.com, www.bankofindia.co.in_or Contact: Shri Rajesh Maurya, Chief Manager ARD, Jabalpur Zone (Mob. No. 7376391515).

This publication is also a 15/30 days notice to the above mentioned borrower(s) / Guarantor(s)/ Mortgagor(s).

9. It shall be the3 responsibility of the successful bidder to remit the TDS @ 1% as applicable u/s 194-IA of Income Tax Act if the aggregate of the sums credited or paid for such consideration is Rs. 50 Lakhs or more. TDS should be filed online b filling form 26QB & TDS Certificate to be issued in form 16 B. The purchaser has to produce the proof of having deposited the income tax into the government account.

Date: 09.12.2025 Place: Jabalpur

Authorized Officer, BANK OF INDIA



India begin official T201 WC build-up against South Africa



India's Shubman Gill during a practice session on the eve of the first T20 cricket match of a series between India and South Africa at Barabati Stadium in Cuttack, Odisha

TAPAN MOHANTA Cuttack

The return of Shubman Gill and Hardik Pandya will lend fresh sheen and muchneeded completeness to reigning world champions India when they begin their official march towards the home T20 World Cup with the opening match of a fivegame series against South Africa on Tuesday.

This series marks the start of India's formal build-up to the February showpiece, where they will play 10 T20Is – five against South Africa followed by another five against New Zealand before opening their title defence against the USA at the Wankhede on

The defending champions will look to enter this phase with clarity of intent as they refine roles, streamline combinations and settle the XI that will carry the weight of expectations in front of home crowds.

India have been a formidable T20I unit post their World Cup triumph in the format last year, where they won eight matches in a row to lift the title.

Since then, they have extended their tally to 26 wins with only four losses, including a seven-match streak during their Asia Cup victory in Dubai.

They have not lost a T20I series in this period, and with only minor tweaks back is equally significant.

needed, they will be hoping to sharpen the edges against the side they defeated in the T20 World Cup

Gill's return comes after he missed almost a month of cricket owing to a neck spasm suffered while attempting a slog sweep during the opening Test against the Proteas.

Having played non-stop cricket since the last IPL and with India facing a packed season ahead, his workload management will be closely monitored.

But for Gill, who has 837 runs from 33 T20Is at an average of 29.89, this series also doubles up as vital preparation heading into the ICC event.

His reunion with Abhishek Sharma brings back a high-impact opening pair that marries brute force with clean, classical stroke-

Abhishek, fresh from a standout tour of Australia where he topped India's scoring charts with 163 runs in the 2-1 victory, has been in monstrous domestic

In the Syed Mushtaq Ali T20s, the Punjab left-hander hammered 304 runs at an average of 50.66 and a staggering strike rate of 249plus, including a breathtak-ing 52-ball 148 against Bengal as Punjab posted

Hardik Pandya's come-

The wicketkeeper-batter debate — Sanju Samson or Jitesh Sharma — remains equally tantalising.

India's handling of the pair during the Australia series raised eyebrows, with Samson batting only once, promoted to No. 3, before litesh was backed for the last three T20Is.

Since India's World Cup triumph, Samson has been the team's third-highest run-getter, flourishing as an opener with three centuries, including two in South Africa. But Gill's return as vice-captain pushed Samson down the order into a role he rarely occupies in T20 cricket. In the recent SMAT, Samson looked in excellent touch with two fifties, two 40s and a 56-ball 73 not out against Andhra, while Jitesh managed modest returns for Baroda with a top score of 41 from six outings.

Out for more than two

months after a quadricep

injury during the Asia Cup,

the all-rounder marked his

return in style with a 42-ball

77 not out for Baroda in the

SMAT before bowling four

He arrived here a day

ahead of the squad, trained

solo at the Barabati

Stadium, bowled for 20

minutes and went through

an extended physical

His presence not only

deepens India's batting but

restores the balance of a

bowling attack built heavily

on flexibility. One of the

central conversations ahead

of the series has been

skipper Suryakumar Yadav's

The contrast between his

dazzling IPL 2025, where he

amassed 717 runs for Mumbai Indians, and his

underwhelming T201

returns have been striking.

time T201 captain in July

last year, his form has

dipped to an average of

15.33 with 184 runs in 15

innings, he has not scored a

fifty in the last 20 games,

and his strike rate has

reduced to 127.77 from the

187-plus he clocked in 2022.

Even in the SMAT this

season, he failed to reach a

fifty, scoring 165 runs from

five matches. Any drastic

move before the World Cup

looks unlikely, but the next

10 T20Is will add fodder to

Since taking over as full-

prolonged lean patch.

routine.

overs at full tilt for 1/52.

South Africa, for their part, welcome back tearaway pacer Anrich Nortje for his first international appearance since last year's T20 World Cup final.Marco Jansen's evolution as a genuine all-rounder adds heft to the visitors; his blistering 93 in the Guwahati Test and 70 off 39 balls in Ranchi underscored a renewed authority with the bat to go with his established potency with the ball.

Teams (from):

Chakravarthy.

Donnovan Jansen, George Linde, Keshav Maharaj, Kwena Lungi Ngidi, Anrich Nortje,

India: Suryakumar Yadav (c), Shubman Gill (vc), Abhishek Sharma, Tilak Varma, Sanju Samson (wk), Jitesh Sharma (wk), Hardik Pandya, Axar Patel, Shivam Dube, Washington Sundar, Jasprit Bumrah, Arshdeep Singh, Harshit Rana, Kuldeep Yadav and Varun

South Africa: Aiden Markram (captain), Ottineil Baartman, Corbin Bosch, Dewald Brevis, Quinton de Kock, Tony de Zorzi, Ferreria, Reeza Hendricks, Marco Maphaka, David Miller,

Hardik gives us lot of options: Suryakumar

TAPAN MOHANTA Cuttack

India captain Suryakumar Yadav believes Hardik Pandya's return will restore the tactical depth and balance that shaped the team's Asia Cup surge when the world champions take on South Africa in a five-

The ace India seambowling all-rounder, who sustained a left quadriceps injury and missed the Asia Cup final, is fully fit and in fine form after making his comeback in the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy.

match T20I series starting

here on Tuesday.

His timely return ahead of next year's T20 World Cup has brought back the muchneeded flexibility and balance, with his new-ball spells offering India the cushion to field three, even four spinners.

"I think what you saw in the Asia Cup also, when he was bowling the new ball, he opened a lot of options, lot of combinations for us with respect to playing XI," Suryakumar said on the eve of the seriesopening T20I.

That's what he brings to the table. His experience, the way he has done really well in all the matches, all good games also, all bigger games



in ICC events. "I think that experience will count a lot. His presence will definitely give a good balance to the side." Incidentally, Pandya, who landed a day early in Cuttack and trained solo at Barabati Stadium, skipped the optional session on Monday, but the skipper confirmed that both he and Shubman Gill — returning from a neck spasm - are

"Right now, both of them look healthy and fit," he said. For India, this series is the start of a 10-match run into the home T20 World Cup in February, but Suryakumar said the groundwork was laid long

"Our 2026 T20 World Cup preparation began right after we won the T20 World Cup in 2024... Our preparation is similar. The preparation started after the T20 World Cup 2024 got over. Since then, we have been trying new things and everything is working for us."

He underlined that India's recent success stems from consistency of selection.

"I feel in the last 5-6 series which we have played, we have tried and played with a similar combination. We have not changed too much... Everything is going well. We wanted to contin-

ue the same way." On the conversation around Sanju Samson and Jitesh Sharma, Suryakumar reiterated that flexibility is key. "In terms of Sanju, yes, when he came into the circuit, he batted higher up the order. Now, the thing is, other than the openers, I feel everyone has to be very

at any number." He insisted India will not indulge in needless tinkering.

"We won't be changing a lot of combinations. We won't be trying too many things because things are going really well. So, we

want to stick to the process...' Asked whether Rinku Singh is still in the scheme of things, with the rise of Shivam Dube, Suryakumar said: "Dube is an all-rounder. So, him and Hardik are the all-rounders. So, you can't

compare an all-rounder. "The thing is all the batters from 3 to 7 are capable of batting at any position." On the series, Suryakumar kept the goals simple. "The plan for the series is to play good cricket... There are some things that we are doing right. So, why should we change that?"

Barabati's red-soil pitch will be used for the first time. Suryakumar said he hasn't inspected it yet.

"...But we will see. If it is fast, then it is a good thing." Asked about the dew and whether the toss could again be decisive, Suryakumar grinned as he recalled KL Rahul's quirky change of fortune with a left-handed flip that finally snapped India's run of 20 consecutive lost tosses in ODIs.

Haryana beat Bengal to enter Super 8s, Punjab also qualify

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hyderabad

Mohammed Shami's impressive figures of 4 for 30 went in vain as Haryana comfortably beat Bengal by 24 runs in a group C game to enter the Super 8s of the Syed Mushtaq Ali T20 tournament here on Monday.

Haryana (+0.409) finished the group league engagements with 20 points and qualified as the second team

from the group behind Punjab (+2.716), who logged the same number of points but had a better net run rate.

Shami finished the tournament with 16 wickets and on the day, was once again instrumental in polishing off the Haryana tail, restricting them to 191 for 9.

This was after Haryana were 170 for 4 in 17 overs. In this edition of SMAT. Shami has been very effective at

Abhishek Sharma took him to

In reply, Bengal managed only 167 in 20 overs and that too after requiring 69 runs from eight overs with six wickets in hand. The match changed once Yuvraj Keswani (25 off 14 balls), who looked in good touch having hit two sixes, was dismissed. Anshul Kamboj, Ishant Bhardwaj and Sumit Kumar got two wickets apiece while Abhishek Porel (47 off 24 balls) death barring the Punjab game when didn't convert a dazzling start.



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BLASÉ CAPITAL

SENSEX-ED



Yesterday, the Sensex, or the Bombay Stock Exchange index fell by 600 points. It was kind of unexpected since it had turned around its southward movement over the past few sessions. Once, the pundits began to explain the reasons behind the fall, there was a feeling of hollowness, and inexplicability about them. For example, one of the factors was the two-day meeting of the US Federal Reserve Board, which was expected to announce another minor rate cut. But then this was expected for weeks, and one thought that the stock markets, like it does with future expected events, had discounted it. Indeed, one of the reasons for the earlier rises was that the minor rate cut was unlikely to change things materially in the form of foreign outflows, which are turbo-charged when the US interest rates seem attractive, and the money flies to a safer less-risky

Another factor that the experts harped on was the fall of the rupee, and it having crossed the ₹90 mark against the dollar. One can partially accept it. But then again, the rupee breached ₹90 days ago, and has firmed up since then, or at least has not gone down further, as the Reserve Bank of India stepped in to support the currency. One thought that the investors would be enthused by the intervention. No one can say. Maybe they believe the doomsayers, who contend that it is a matter of when, and not if, for the rupee to fall to ₹100 a dollar. Maybe the investors were more concerned by the central bank's opinion, which chimed with that of the finance minister, rather than the former's actions. In the recent past, both maintained that they have no target for the rupee, and the currency needs to find its stable, steady, and appropriate level.

The stock markets are uncertain about the India-US trade deal, which has been delayed. Thus, they reacted to the growing apprehensions. One can flip this argument, and contend that an American delegation is on its way to New Delhi to discuss the tariffs. This is good news as it shows an urgency among the two nations. Indian ministers have repeatedly claimed that an agreement will be in place by December 2025 since most of the issues are finalised, and the two sides need to dot the i's, and cross the t's. Of course, the investors are peeved that the earlier deadline was November 2025. But that one passed more than a week ago. Why should the Sensex and Nifty crash on December 8? This factor seems to be a non-factor that was cooked up by some of the experts as a reasonable factor to provide some logic to the market madness on Monday.

Several analysts reiterated a view that the Indian valuations were overstretched. For several months, in fact this entire year, valuations were raised as a worry. This is one of the major reasons why the markets behaved so erratically during 2025, and Indian equities were among the worst performers among Asian peers, and emerging markets. Hence, a concern about a persistent past concern, which has shaken up investors for more than 11 months, cannot be a legitimate one to explain a one-day fall of 600 points. Another twisted logic: Same analysts say in the same breath that steady (domestic) inflows, and long-term retail participation suggest continued optimism. In addition, high valuations may persist, supported by investor confidence, and consistent domestic equity inflows. Please explain clearly whether valuations are stretched or not, whether investors will sell to book profits or not, or whether the high valuations do not matter because of the steady inflows. We are suitably confused.

To add to the confusion and uncertainty, the stock markets went down on Monday because of the steady outflows by foreign investors. For months, and throughout this year, the foreigners have proved to be net sellers in the secondary market. Yet, they have aggressively participated in the IPOs (Initial Public Offerings), which provides clear hints that they feel the listed stocks are overvalued, and there are chances to earn higher returns on new stocks. But again, this trend is evident for the past several months, and is nothing new. It is not that on Monday the foreigners dumped the stocks. One can add this as a factor if the Indian equities had consistently gone down due to this regularly-occurring trend. But stocks went up in the past few sessions, and the same analysts remarked that this was the great turnaround, which would push the Sensex past 1,00,000 points by December 2026. Moreover, one is unsure which section is more important, foreigners or domestic investors.

At one level, the net selling by the foreigners pulls down the market indices. At another, there is a feeling that valuations will remain stretched because of huge domestic inflows. There is a tussle between the two, and one is not sure who will win. Both cannot, or maybe they can. The foreigners will book profits, and the locals will take valuations to higher levels to book profits later. A clear win-win.



Marathon, steeplechase & sprint

In the third global business race, India is fast losing to China

It was a manufacturing marathon. While India and China were the favourites, South Korea, \$1.25 billion to a Chinese biotech firm for the Taiwan, and Brazil were the dark horses. India lost, China won, and the smaller Asian nations stood on the podium. In the steeplechase in the software and hardware space, India and China are the joint winners. The former vaulted over the oceans to emerge as the world's IT leader, and China overcame the obstacles to directly compete with the US in chips, and Artificial Intelligence. In the ongoing healthcare sprint, while China is about to touch the tape, India has not even left the blocks.

Until a few years ago, 'Big Pharma' in the West focused on the discovery and launches of billion-dollar blockbuster drugs, India became the global supplier of generics (off-patent medicines), and China mastered the science of Active Pharma Ingredients (APIs). Today, after America, China is the world's largest developer of new molecules and drugs. According to a recent article in 'The Economist,' Chinese firms conducted a third of the global clinical trials last year and, in the first six months of 2025, they were responsible for a third of the licensing deals signed by 'Big Pharma.'

Over the next decade, the battles in areas such as biosciences, medical research, and discovery of life-saving medicines (cancer) will be aggressively fought between China and America. India is more likely to pursue its generics journey, and take advantage of the steep 'patent cliffs,' "as drugs expected to generate more than \$300 billion in total revenues over the next six years will lose their patent protection by 2030. Yet again, India will be left behind in this third global race. Americans and Europeans, who will intensify their global searches for new molecules, will

rights to make-and-sell a new cancer drug. GlaxoSmithKline of Britain paid \$500 million to another Chinese firm for lung-disease treatment, and unbelievably committed a further \$12 billion for 11 drugs in the pipeline. China's share in global licensing has gone up four times in four years. In comparison, except for a small oasis of new discoveries, India is way behind despite a slew of ongoing clinical trials.
Like the Indian market, the

Chinese one is rugged, and difficult. Both are price-sensitive, with political and social pressures to enable the poor to access the medicines. In SINCE 1865 China, "state insurance covers most

purchases," which forces private firms into "bidding wars." Drugmakers need to "slash prices by half or more to reach a wide patient pool." Hence, it made sense for the Chinese, as well as Indians, to work with generics, which are cheaper. India extended the business model in the overseas markets, either by exporting, or setting up generics' plants in the West. China chose differently.

The Pioneer

In conjunction with the policy-makers, Chinese firms looked at America and Europe as "big prizes," or markets where they could sell new drugs, rather than continue to export generics or APIs. They decided to boost research, and ink licensing agreements with 'Big Pharma' to boost profits, and margins. According to the article in The Economist,' "A growing model is the 'New-Co,' under which a biotech company sets up a legally distinct company in America, often backed by foreign investors, and spins off promising assets into it." Since 'Big Pharma' and tempting.

Governance models make a huge difference. In the recent past, India has struggled with clinical trials due to irregularities, even illegality, which were highlighted by the judiciary, and activists. These rightfully delayed, and derailed them. In China, the period to secure human trials shrank from more than 500 days to less than 90. Unlike India, the workforce at China's regulator quadrupled, and cleared a backlog of 20,000 drug applications within two years. Despite reforms, Indian drugmakers continue to complain about

red tape. In a sense, China has reinvented regulation. One is not sure if it is for better or worse, but it has speeded up the approval processes. Of course, given the existing secu-

rity, economic, energy, business, defence, and trade tensions between China and the West, China's regulatory framework is being questioned and scrutinised. The US drug regulator is stricter when it deals with medicines based on clinical trials only in China. There are concerns about data security, and data privacy. The US halted trials that exported American genetic data to China. The US policy-makers, states the piece in 'The Economist,' "fret about the security risks at the junction of pharmaceuticals and biotechnology." India faces some of

This explains the Indians' penchant to make generics in America through the inorganic M&A route. China innovated to produce "fast followers," which enhance the safety and/or delivery of the existing drugs. The next step was to move on to the "first-in-class" medicines, which have proteins or genes, or mechanisms to boost functions. The first, according to experts, provided the firms with the courage to do the second. This led to the making of new drugs. For example, according to a media report, of the 160 obesity drugs in development across the world, a third

are being made in China.

these challenges as the US questions its drug-effi-

India has the potential for drug discoveries. The skills, management, and research were evident during the pandemic, when India emerged as a leading drugmaker, and a low-cost exporter. But this was due to the help from the Government, which cajoled and pushed the private sector. Similar impetus lacks in other cases, and Indian firms are generally happy with their march in the generics segment. They are low-hanging fruits, with ample margins, especially when they are sold in the US and Europe. In most cases, Indian firms lack the risk-taking abilities to spend billions on a new discovery.

However, as of now, China, which won the manufacturing race comfortably, and raced ahead in chips and AI, is comfortably placed in healthcare and biosciences. India needs to build an efficient ecosystem to achieve similar results. It has the right ingredients such as scientific temper, cheap manpower, research and manufacturing units, and government support. What it requires is access to foreign capital, and a change in entrepreneurial mindset so that producers switch from off-patent mentality to new-patent one.



The Cynical Optimist

Even as IndiGo Airline grounds flights, passen gers go crazy, regulators take refuge behind inquiries, pilots blame managers, and the country's civil aviation sector goes for a six, the central minister, K Rammohan Naidu claims that this is the best "time to start an airline in India." He adds that the country needs "five big airlines," and the ministry encourages competition, and wants "more airlines to join the industry" with the Government's support. He predicts that the demand is likely to grow at a rapid pace in the future. While the desires are noble, the in-air realities are turbulent.

Of course, there is a difference between a need, desire, or wish, and what the market dynamics can accommodate. In the past three decades, each time, the Indian skies became competitive, airlines either nosedived, and crashed, or found it difficult to take off, and were forced into a competitor's lap. Despite the growing demand, competition curtailed ticket prices, and profitability which, in turn, ended up killing competition. Thus, closures, mergers, and acquisitions became the regular norms in the aviation sector. Higher the number of airlines, the more the pressures that grounded them.

Not just this but each time an airline attained a dominant position vis-à-vis domestic market share, the cost structures ate into its financials, which bankrupted it, or forced it on the auction block. Look at Jet Airways, which ruled the skies, and was sold under the insolvency laws. Sahara and Deccan aimed big, and flew into competitor's hangars. The state-owned Indian Airlines, and Air India were prisoners of their monopolistic successes, until they were merged, and then sold to the Tata Group. Today, the largest airline, IndiGo, faces a similar situation, and critics blame its seemingly-successful business model as the reason for its problems.

Globally, airlines grapple with volumes, costs, market shares, apart from the impact of policies and regulations on them. Volumes are obviously critical but they cannot be universal, national, or international. The trick is to acquire passengers on select, highly-profitable, and fast-churning routes. For example, domestically, Delhi-Mumbai, Bangalore-Delhi, and local regional routes are more coveted given the number of passengers who travel to these cities. Internationally, Delhi-London, Delhi-Hong Kong, and India-US journeys are crowded, and desired by the airlines. Getting overall volumes, as national share is irrele-

However, volumes imply huge one-time investments, and capital costs to buy and

India goes, India grounded

Why does competition invariably crash in the aviation sector?



acquire aircraft. In most cases, the planes are purchased before the demand increases, which create a lag time before the investments pay off. Despite the lucrative financeand-lease deals offered by the manufacturers, airlines can find themselves in a tailspin, and get stuck in financial air-pockets. Several airlines are in trouble because either they buy too many planes, and are forced to operate them on low-profit routes, or buy too less, and lose volumes, and market shares on highprofit ones. It is a delicate balance that keeps changing, and needs to be tweaked.

Thus, the levers to control and manage costs fall on manpower since most other expenses are necessary, and continuous. This

forces even the dominant and successful airlines, or rather only these ones, to short-circuit salaries and benefits. This implies that they understaff certain areas,

overwork others, and underpay most. This creates a vice-like cycle of safety concerns combined with apathy and unhappiness among the employees. Morale is down, even as the senior management claims profitability over a few years. The medium-term for another nine per cent of the revenues.

impact is quite like what happened to IndiGo. Policies, regulations, and external non-controllable factors play a part. For instance, the global prices of crude oil and, hence, aviation fuel fluctuates, and eats into profits. In several quarters, IndiGo went from profits to losses, largely because of the prices of aviation fuel. Sudden policy changes impact operational and business models, especially for low-cost airlines. Regulations can create havoc, and force the planes to fly off the radar. The flight-schedule rules imposed by the regulator after the recent crash in Ahmedabad apparently forced Indigo's delays, and cancellations. The low-cost structure spun out of control, which was blamed

on management errors. According to experts, aviation fuel accounts for 20-30 per cent of the total costs, and the prices can be highly-volatile. Leased engines, and aircraft result in "significant

fixed monthly rent payment," which is around 16 per cent of the revenues. Add the various taxes such as landing fees, gate

charges, and navigation fees, which account

Under such a rigid structure, regular socalled fixed expenses can account for almost 60-70 per cent of the costs, not revenues. There is little leeway for the airlines

to immediately counter shifting changes. Profit margins are wafer-thin despite high volumes, or market shares. During competition, there are downward pressures on ticket prices. This happens even when there is minimal competition as the airlines scamper to sell more seats on relatively-low traffic routes. Unexpected events like wars and pandemics, policy and regulation changes, and economic slowdowns can rapidly change things. "This pushes down profit margins to low levels, typically 2-5 per cent globally, which makes it different to absorb financial shocks, or support high capital investments." It is a typical catch-22 situation. You need to spend more to grab volumes. This creates cost pressures.

Consider the case of Southwest Airlines, which faced a huge crisis during the winter holiday season in the US in 2022. While other airlines recovered from the severe winter effect within days, Southwest went south for days and weeks. It was its unique and, till then, highly successful business and operational model that was unable to react to the new unusual challenges. According to a case study (2024), the IndiGo-like crisis, which led to the cancellations of thousands of flights, "provides an opportunity to dig deeply into the need for scalability, challenges of risk management... and the wide variety of challenges of managing airline supply chains.'

Concludes the same case study, "Airlines are not easy businesses to run. They are capital and labour intensive, they are subject to impact from weather, politics, public health, and other unexpected issues. And they are competitive, seeking not only to provide good price and performance for customers but also an appropriate yield for every seat on the plane, and to keep planes in the air, and generate revenues." Thus, competition, and five airlines, as the civil aviation minister desires, may be the wrong solution for the wrong pinpointed problems. IndiGo did not crash because of lack of competition. It could not take off because of its straitjacketed business model.



The real AI revolution in banking: Decision packs, not algorithms



SUNDAR SUNDARARAJAN

Rethinking the race in banking

For nearly a decade, the financial industry has been obsessed with the wrong race. Banks have focused on who can deploy the smartest models, the fastest algorithms, or the most advanced AI platforms. Yet the real transformation underway is not about faster predictions or more complex math. It is about making better decisions.

The competitive frontier is shifting. Success is no longer determined by model accuracy alone. Predictions only hold value when paired with context and alerts only matter when they contribute to decisions that are consistent, defensible and trusted. In banking today, AI is no longer a race for speed-it is a race to prevent breakdowns before they occur.

The limits of model-only thinking

Banking operates in deeply interconnected environments. Every customer interaction, exception case and transaction activates a web of operational decisions that must work seamlessly. Models can detect anomalies at scale, but without institutional context, they rest on assumptions that can quickly unravel under real-world pressures

The risk is rarely a single bad decision. It is the gaps between systems, where incomplete or contradictory information can slip through unnoticed. A customer's cash flow in the core system may suggest stability, while transaction history hints at stress. Branch notes, call-center transcripts and chat interactions add further fragments, rarely reconciled. When AI is applied on top of unchanged processes, it magnifies inconsistencies rather than correcting them, making operational cracks increasingly costly as pilots

Al works-but only with context

Modern AI excels at pattern recognition, anomaly detection, document interpretation, and structured data triage. McKinsey estimates generative AI could unlock between 200 and 340 billion dollars annually for global banking-but only where context already exists. Early successes are seen where structured data is available, single-customer views are real and workflows are intentionally redesigned to integrate AI inputs, rather than patched superficially.

A striking example comes from HSBC. Their Alpowered transaction-screening engine now



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iexceedItd

per month, identifying more suspicious activity while reducing false positives. The real breakthrough was not the algorithm itself, but pairing detection with structured decision packs and audit-ready trails. By consolidating history, evidence, exceptions and reason codes into a sequenced context pack, analysts can focus on informed decision-making instead of unraveling contradictions. This approach also addresses regulatory concerns over undocumented overrides a systemic weakness that decision packs directly resolve.

The enduring role of human judgment

processes more than 900 million transactions

Even the most sophisticated AI models stumble when faced with intent, ethical considerations, rare events, market shocks or adversarial behavior. Humans, however, excel at interpreting nuance and cross-domain context. Yet humans alone cannot sustain consistent. auditable decisions at scale. Judgment becomes operational controls-the very artifacts AI can provide at speed and volume.

The emerging hybrid model blends both capabilities. Al aggregates, alerts, summarises, and contextualises information, while humans are routed to the right decision at the right moment, applying ethics, accountability and experience. Automation does not replace judgment; it restores the conditions for good judgment to prevail.

Decision packs: engineering context into workflows

Leading banks are moving beyond delivering raw alerts to analysts. They are creating decision packs-structured, sequenced bundles of information delivered precisely when a decision is required. These packs weave together customer history, channel behavior, transaction patterns, risk flags, documents, prior actions and reason codes into a coherent, actionable view.

In trade finance, for example, AI might flag reliable only when supported by structured irregular document signatures, sanctions-list hits, evidence, transparent lineage and clear or routing anomalies. The human officer adds at the right moment.

trends, geopolitical insights and country risk into the decision-making process. The resulting decision is informed, defensible, timely and aligned with policy. Context-aware banking transforms the question from "What does the model say?" to "What does the model say within the full context the institution can recover and verify?" This shift closes the gaps that historically caused inconsistency, omission and operational fragility.

Operating models matter more than models

Across the industry, there is growing consensus: the operating model-how decisions are designed, governed, and executed-delivers far more value than the model architecture itself. Banks that extract the most value from AI maintain auditable override controls, human-inloop workflows, strong data lineage cross-channel decision rights and scalable accountability. In practice, a model contributes perhaps ten to twenty percent of value, while the remaining eighty to ninety percent comes from how decisions are operationalized. Al cannot fix broken workflows, but effective workflows make Al meaningful.

Fewer contextless decisions, not faster decisions

Banks do not simply need faster decision-making. They need fewer decisions made in the absence of context. The purpose of Al is not to replace bankers but to remove the breakdowns that force decisions to be made using incomplete fragments.

Forward-looking institutions are designing systems where ledgers record not only the model output, but also the decision pack, the human override and the governance trail. This creates a future where decisions are explainable, repeatable and trusted at scale.

The future: Al-assisted, context-rich, human-governed banking

The real revolution is subtle but profound. It is not AI replacing bankers; it is AI replacing the conditions that constrained them for decades. Banks that embrace decision packs will achieve consistent decision-making at scale, strengthen regulatory defensibility, reduce operational fragility, unlock deeper predictive intelligence, and build enduring trust with customers and regulators.

The path ahead is clear. The banks that will thrive in the AI era will not be those with the fastest algorithms. They will be the ones capable of making the best decisions, armed with context, evidence and human judgment

Labour codes: Legally accurate, socially transformative, and politically defining. A landmark reform of the Modi era To replace outdated inspec-



ASEERVATHAM **ACHARY**

India, that is Bharat had long been burdened by laws created during the British regime, shaped by a colonial mentality that openly viewed Bharatiyas as their slaves and servants. Those laws were never meant to empower the people of this land.

They were crafted only to safeguard the interests of foreign rulers and to keep the native population dependent, restricted and voiceless. For decades, Bharat waited for a Government with the conviction to break free from these outdated colonial structures. This long pending transformation became possible only under the Modi Government, which has consistently delivered bold decisions, structural reforms and governance that truly serves the nation.

In the past decade, the Modi Government has brought a historic reform package that has reshaped the governance landscape of India, making it simpler, transparent and friendly for innovation and growth. More than 40000 unnecessary compliances have been abolished, around 1500 obsolete laws have been repealed and several existing regulations have been streamlined to reduce the burden on citizens, businesses and startups.

Through legislative action, more than a dozen laws have been simplified. Around 280 provisions have been removed to make governance more accessible and citizen centric. These reforms are fully aligned with the vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat and the goal of making India a developed nation by 2047.

Taking this reform journey to the next level, the Modi Government has now implemented the four Labour Codes from 21 November 2025. These Codes replace 29 scattered and confusing laws with one modern, clear and worker friendly framework. For the first time, India has a labour system that supports today's economy, today's workforce and tomorrow's aspirations. It gives workers better protection, ensures fair wages, improves safety and strengthens industries so India can compete globally.

This change was long overdue. Most of our old labour laws were written even before Independence viz., Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923, Indian Trade Unions Act, 1926, Trade Disputes Act, 1929, Industrial

Act, 1946, etc. The economy changed, industries changed, technology changed, but those laws remained frozen in the past. Workers suffered. Employers struggled. Compliance became a maze. The new Labour Codes finally break

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this cycle and bring India into a new era of simple rules and honest governance.

A broad range of benefits across sectors

The new Labour Codes bring clear, future ready protections for workers across every sector of the economy. Fixed term employees now receive the same benefits as permanent staff including leave, medical cover and social security, with gratuity eligibility reduced from five years to one. Gig and platform workers get formal recognition for the first time, with aggregators contributing to their social security and Aadhaar linked UAN ensuring portable benefits across states.

Contract workers gain transparent protection, social security and health coverage from principal employers, along with annual free health check-ups. Women workers are assured equal pay, protection from discrimination and the freedom to work night shifts and in all sectors with full safety and consent. Youth workers benefit from guaranteed

minimum wages, mandatory appointment letters and wages during leave.

The Labour Codes mark a historic step in modernising India's workforce by aligning with international standards on wages, gender equality and occupational safety. Over 2.78 million workers die globally each year from occupational accidents and diseases, highlighting the relevance of OSH

provisions in the Codes. MSME workers receive minimum wages, safe working conditions, double overtime wages and timely salary payments. Beedi and cigar workers are protected with fixed working hours, double overtime rates and bonus eligibility after thirty days. Plantation workers receive mandatory safety training, medical facilities for families and

education support for children. Audio visual and digital media workers including journalists and artists get clear wage structures, appointment letters and social security. Mining workers are protected under national safety standards, receive free annual health including transgender persons.

check-ups and regulated working hours. In hazardous industries. annual medical tests and safety committees are mandatory. Women are empowered to work safely even high-risk environments.

Textile and migrant workers receive equal wages, PDS portability and protection for pending dues. IT and ITES workers get timely salaries, equal pay, social security and strong grievance redressal. Dock workers gain formal recognition along with provident fund, pension, insurand workplace facilities.

Additional transformative reforms under the labour

A national floor wage now guarantees that every worker receives a dignified minimum earning ensuring uniform protection across the country. Gender neutral job opportunities and wages have been emphasised extending equal rights and safeguards to all workers

facilitator model has been introduced focusing on guidance and compliance support rather than fear and harassment. Disputes will now be resolved in a time bound workers and employers faster and predictable outcomes. Paperwork has been simpli-

fied through single registration, single licence and single return replacing the earlier system of multiple overlapping filings. Workplace safety has also been strengthened with the creation of a National OSH Board to ensure uniform safety standards across sectors. Mandatory safety committees in major establishments further enhance accountability and on site protection.

Higher factory applicability limits ensure that smaller units are not overburdened by excessive regulations while core safeguards for workers remain fully intact. These reforms collectively reflect a clear commitment to worker dignity, workplace safety and smoother industrial operations.

Labour codes: modernising workplaces and empowering MSMEs

The new Labour Codes bring clarity, transparency and digitisation to India's labour framework. Clear rules on contract labour, retrenchment and fixed-term employment will reduce disputes and help MSMEs formalise previously informal arrangements. Mandatory appointment letters, wage linkages to the national floor and timely payments encourage proper records and digital payroll adoption.

Recognition of fixed-term employment provides flexibility for project or seasonal work while ensuring wage and benefit parity, including gratuity after one year. Expanded ESIC, EPF and insurance coverage for casual, fixed-term, gig, platform and hazardous sector workers strengthens social security for all.

Provisions on safety, welfare and timely wages are expected to improve workplace conditions, raise morale and create a more motivated workforce. Experts note that these reforms will lead to structured, predictable and cooperative labour management, benefiting both workers and businesses.

Global backing for India's tion systems an inspector cum labour codes

The Director General of the International Labour Organisation praised India's decision to implement the four Labour Codes, manner through two member calling it an important Industrial Tribunals giving step toward stronger social protection and fair wage systems. He emphasised that social dialogue between the Government, employers and workers will play a key role in ensuring positive outcomes for both labour and industry.

The International Social Security Association also welcomed the reforms, stating that India's Labour Codes add powerful momentum to global efforts for building stronger and more inclusive social security systems. ISSA highlighted that India's initiative strengthens global progress toward wider coverage, better protection and stronger institutional capacity.

Opposing for the sake of opposing

The Opposition's stand against these reforms is baseless and unjustified. Their poster marches and dramatic protests are nothing more than political theatrics designed to manufacture issues where none exist. These reforms have been thoughtfully drafted to protect workers' interests and to strengthen Bharat's workforce. It is difficult to comprehend why the Opposition is resisting measures that clearly benefit the nation.

Do they not want Bharat's workers to have stable and secure employment? Do they not want gig workers, platform workers and contract workers to receive the protections they deserve?

Do they not want women and youth to receive equal pay for equal work? Do they not want workers to access gratuity, health support and social security?

Do they not want our labour force to become more skilled and our economy to grow faster? What exactly are they protesting? Only they can answer, because their objections clearly do not align with national interest.

Despite the opposition raised by the Left supported Trade Unions, Modi Government has delivered reforms that will protect workers, will formalise jobs and will strengthen the workforce while enabling businesses to grow, proving its commitment to a modern and prosperous India.

▼ PROSPECT



Nandil Biswa Sarma from Assam participates in the 'Ironman 70.3' in Baharain. Nandil is son of Assam Chief Minister

15 CRORE PM JAN DHAN ACCOUNTS ARE INOPERATIVE



As many as 15 crore, or 26 per cent of the total 57.07 crore Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) accounts, are inoperative, Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary said on Monday. "The data regarding number of inoperative accounts vis-a-vis women, rural and semi-urban areas that are closed under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY), is not centrally maintained. However, there are about 15.09 crore inoperative PMJDY accounts out of the total 57.07 crore PMJDY accounts in the country," he said in a written reply in the Lok Sabha.

Replying to another question, Chaudhary said as on September 30, 2025, banks have a total of 7.81 crore KCC accounts with an outstanding amount of ₹10.39 lakh crore, of which public sector banks (PSBs) have a total of 2.22 crore KCC accounts with an outstanding amount of ₹4.19 lakh crore.

Under Stand-up India Scheme, he said, banks have sanctioned 2.75 lakh loans amounting to ₹62,791 crore, of which PSBs have sanctioned 2.28 lakh loans amounting to ₹51,191 crore.

Further, under Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana, banks have disbursed ₹2.54 lakh crore till October, 2025 during the current FY 2025-26, out of which PSBs have disbursed ₹1.03 lakh crore.

Replying to another question, he said the International Monetary Fund (IMF) report on 'Growing Retail Digital Payments (The Value of Interoperability) dated June 2025 had recognised Unified Payments Interface (UPI) as the world's largest retail fast-payment system (FPS) by transaction volume.

Further, as per ACI Worldwide report on 'Prime Time for Real-Time' 2024, UPI has around 49 per cent share in the global real-time payment system

PSU banks write off ₹6.15 lakh cr over 5.5 years

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Public sector banks have written off loans worth ₹6.15 lakh crore in the last five and a half years, Parliament was informed on Monday. "As per Reserve Bank of India (RBI) data, PSBs have writtenoff an aggregate loan amount of ₹6,15,647 crore, during the last five financial years and the current financial year till September 30, 2025 (provisional data)," Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary said in a written reply in the

There has been no capital infusion in Public Sector Banks (PSBs) by the Government since FY2022-23, he said, adding, PSBs have significantly improved their financial performance,

strengthening their capital position. PSBs now rely on market sources and internal accruals to meet their capital requirements and they have raised ₹1.79 lakh crore capital from market through equity and bonds since April 1, 2022 till September 30, 2025, he said. He further said, banks

write-off NPAs, including those in respect of which full provisioning has been made on completion of four years, as per RBI guidelines and policy approved by banks' board. Such write-off does not result in waiver of liabilities of borrowers to repay, he said. Further, he said, recovery in written-off loans is an ongoing process and banks continue pursuing their recovery actions initiat-

OSBI सेन्ट्रल बैंक ऑफ़ इंडिया

> ed against borrowers under the various recovery mechanism available to them, such as filing of a suit in civil courts or in Debts Recovery Tribunals (DRT), action under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (SARFAESI) cash outflow, the bank's liq-

Act 2002, filing of cases in the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016 etc.

As provisioning for bad loans has already been done and the write-off process does not entail any actual

uidity position remains intact, he said. Moreover, banks evaluate/consider the impact of write-offs as part of their regular exercise to clean up their balance-sheet, avail tax benefit, optimise capital base, enhance lending capacity

and boost investor senti-

ments, he added. Replying to

said, banks and financial Institutions have traditionally been the primary source of export finance in India. The total export credit disbursed by Public Sector Banks, SIDBI and Exim Bank in the last five years (FY 20-21 to FY 24-25) stood at ₹21.71 lakh crore, he said.

In another Chaudhary said, 5,83,291 fraud cases were registered in the last four and a half years till September 2025 amounting to ₹3,588.22 crore. Of this, he said, ₹238.83 crore have been recovered.

With increasing digital payment transactions in the country, incidence of cyber frauds including digital payment frauds have also gone up in the last few years,

Attorney General inaugurates State-of-the-art Club House in Noida

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Noida

The newly constructed Club Housecum-Community Centre at Heart Beat City, Sector-107, Noida, was inaugurated on Monday, marking a significant step in delivering fully serviced residential ecosystems to the residents. The facility was officially opened by the Chief Guest, R. Venkataramani, Attorney General for India and Learned Court Receiver for Amrapali projects.

He was present alongside Ravi Bhatia and DK Mishra, Court Committee Members, KP Mahadevaswamy, CMD, NBCC and Suman Kumar, Director

(Commercial), NBCC, as well as officer bearers of the Apartment Owner's Association and residents. The Club House stands as a

testament to NBCC's (National Buildings Construction Corporation) commitment to completing and upgrading amenities for the erstwhile Amrapali projects, which it took over under the guidance of the Learned Court Receiver and Committee members. NBCC has successfully completed all residential units in Heart Beat City.

Spread across 5,200 square metres of built-up area, the Club House is a ground plus two-storey structure equipped with three lifts. It is designed to be a vibrant social



Dignitaries present during the inauguration of Club House-cum-Community Centre at Heart Beat City, Sector-107, Noida

comprehensive suite of amenities experience.

and recreational hub, offering a to enhance the residents' living

Key features include a 400-sqm Community Hall capable of accommodating 350-400 persons, a squash court, crèche, kitchen and multi-purpose hall. The first floor houses a well-equipped gymnasium along with yoga and aerobics rooms, while the second floor features six guest rooms, a library, an indoor games area, a reception, a kitchen-cum-restaurant and an open terrace. During the occasion, residents acknowledged the efforts of the Learned Court Receiver Committee and the NBCC team in bringing the Club House into service, which will significantly foster community engagement and offer high-quality lifestyle amenities.

Under the divine presence of Pujya Dwarkeshlalji Maharajshree and the esteemed inauguration by Home Minister Amit Shah, the iconic Narsinh Mehta Lake

Assam Govt to hand over 992 acres to AAI for Silchar greenfield airport

TONY DAS Guwahati

The Assam Government decided to hand over 3,000 bighas (nearly 992 acres) of land at Doloo Tea EState in Cachar district to the Airports Authority of India (AAI) for the construction of a greenfield airport, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said. Addressing a press conference after a cabinet meeting on Sunday, Sarma said the panel approved an increase of 500 bighas from the earlier decision to allocate 2,500 bighas (826.45 acres) for the proposed airport near Silchar.

'The cabinet approved the transfer of 3,000 bighas at Doloo Tea EState in Silchar to the AAI for the construction of a greenfield airport," Sarma said, adding that the decision will pave the way for obtaining the Union Cabinet's nod for the project. The State Government had proposed a new airport in Silchar spread over 2,500 bighas as the existing facility at Kumbhirgram is a defence



media after Cabinet meeting

accommodate the increasing demands of air traffic is not possible.

airport and expansion of the facility to had distributed financial assistance to 1,296 ment of land to 1,200 families under flagship

families living at Doloo Tea EState "as a good-will gesture". Earlier that year, a controver-sy had arisen over the State Government's efforts to acquire land for setting a greenfield airport with the then Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia claiming that no such proposal was received for the facility from the BIP-led State. It was later clarified that the land was being acquired at AAI's request.

Because of the confusion, land acquisition at the tea eState for the airport had led to protests by the garden workers, but the Government assured that no worker would be evicted from their homes and there would be no job loss.

The State Government had previously announced a compensation of ₹50 crore for the acquisition of land at Doloo, Lalbagh and Mainagarh tea gardens for setting up the greenfield airport.

Talking about other cabinet decisions, the In November 2022, the Assam Government CM said the Government has approved allot-

scheme Mission Basundhara. The cabinet also approved a joint project to be set up at Staterun Assam Engineering College and Dassault

Systems India Pvt Ltd. "The project, to be established over 5,000 sq ft at a cost of ₹243 crore, will offer courses related to aerospace and defence, automotive and electric vehicles." Sarma said. Of the total cost, the Assam Government will contribute ₹43 crore, while Dassault Systems will

invest Rs 200 crore, he added. Sarma further said the cabinet granted administrative approval for the construction of Assam's second Sainik School at Longvaku

in Karbi Anglong district. "The school will be built at a cost of ₹335 crore, of which 80 per cent will be borne by the Ministry of Defence and the remaining 20 per cent by the Assam Government," he added. Besides, the cabinet approved compensation to 884 families for land acquired during the construction of the four-lane National Highway in Dima Hasao district.

RInfra setting up integrated solar manufacturing ecosystem

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE New Delhi

Anil Ambani-led Reliance Group on Monday said its arm Reliance Infrastructure is setting up one of India's most advanced, fully integrated solar manufacturing ecosystems spanning ingots, wafers, cells and modules.

According to an investors presentation of Reliance Infrastructure, the manufacturing facility will have nextgen technology.

The facility will bridge large demand-supply gap as India will need 55–60 GW of solar modules annually by 2030, while upstream capacity remains significantly short.

It will be a high-value, ver-

to reduce import dependence and strengthen India's clean energy security. It is establishing an endto-end battery manufacturing ecosystem covering cell manufacturing, pack assembly and grid-scale containerised BESS (battery energy storage system)

As per the presentation, India's installed stationary storage base is less than 1 GWh today and will rise to 250 GWh by 2032. Domestic manufacturing currently meets less than 10 per cent

of expected demand. Reliance Group's another firm Reliance Power said in its investor presentation that Reliance NU Energies is powering the shift from plain-vanilla solar to hybrid and firm, round-the-clock



Trident Group to invest ₹1500 Crore in modernising sustainable paper manufacturing and terry towel production in Punjab

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE New Delhi

Trident Group, one of India's leading agro-based and environmentally responsible paper manufacturers, has announced a ₹1500crore investment to upgrade its sustainable paper operations and Terry Towel production at its Punjab unit. The move strengthens the company's commitment to eco-friendly manufacturing and futureready technologies.

announcement follows Trident's strong presence at PaperEx 2025, where it showcased its expanded range of sustainable, wheat-straw-based paper-produced without ing its portfolio with new



cutting a single tree. The company also highlighted its shift toward automation, digitalisation and circular manufacturing, aimed at improving efficiency, reducing waste and enhancing

production accuracy. Trident is further expand-

copier, maplitho and notebook variants designed to meet evolving consumer and institutional needs. Speaking on the

announcement, Rajnish Kumar Gera, CEO - Paper & Chemicals, Trident Group, said: "This investment marks a new phase of transforma-

tion for Trident. It reinforces our commitment to sustainable, zero-tree paper manufacturing while accelerating our shift toward a technologically advanced, resource-efficient ecosystem. By strengthening automation and expanding our eco-smart product portfolio, we are preparing for the next generation of sustainable solutions for our customers." With this investment and

technology-driven transformation, Trident Group is poised to further strengthen its position as a leader in sustainable manufacturing, delivering high-quality, environmentally responsible products to markets in India and across the world.

Constl, Ciena achieve 1 Tbps transmission across 1,450 km long-haul network

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

Capitalising on India's burgeoning digital economy, digital infrastructure provider Constl has successfully tested and deployed a record-breaking 1 terabit per second (Tbps) line rate on a single optical channel across the 1,450 km

Mumbai-Chennai route. breakthrough, achieved in collaboration with global networking leader Ciena, utilised Ciena's Wave Logic 6 Extreme (WL6e) solution on one of Constl's most critical corridors, without the need for regeneration. Constl is a subsidiary

of the Space World Group. This milestone makes

Constl India's first digital infrastructure provider to achieve a 1 Tbps transmission rate over a long-haul distance. The WL6e upgrade is set to significantly boost Constl's ambition to become the network of choice for hyperscalers operating in India.

The deployment effectively doubles the fibre wavelength capacity from 800 Gb/s to 1.6 Tb/s compared to its earlier WaveLogic 5 Extreme deployment, delivering a strong competitive edge by increasing capacity while simultaneously reducing cost per bit, improving spectral efficiency and low-

ering power consumption. "Since inception in 2023 just two years ago—Constl

has deployed over 12,000 km of fibre and connected around 100 data centres across 13 Indian cities, powered by Ciena's industryleading optical technology," said Ankit Goel, Chairman and Founder, Space World Group. "This milestone positions us to expand our terrestrial fibre network and deliver high capacity 800GbE services for the AI era."Constl's successful trial is also seen as a testament to the high-quality fibre infra-

laying across the country. Amit Malik, Vice President and General Manager, Asia Pacific, Japan and India, Ciena, reinforced the partnership's focus on future-ready connectivity. "Constl is com-

structure the company is

mitted to developing networks tailored to hyperscaler requirements and Ciena's coherent optics are recognised as the best-inclass platform for high-capacity Al services. Together, we are driving next-generation connectivity to support India's digital future and AI ambitions.' Constl specialises in deliv-

ering advanced digital infrastructure solutions purposebuilt for hyperscalers, telcos and OTT/CDN providers, operating a pan-India highspeed network. Ciena is a global leader in

high-speed connectivity, known for building adaptive networks to support exponential growth in bandwidth demand.

▼ BRIEFLY

DORTMUND BEATS HOFFENHEIM 2-0 IN BUNDESLIGA



Former Tottenham defender Mauricio Taricco will resign as assistant coach of South Korean champion Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors after receiving a five-match ban for an alleged racist gesture during a K League game, the club said on Tuesday. On November 8 as Jeonbuk faced Daejeon Hana, the Argentine assistant was sent off by referee Kim Woo-seong for vehemently protesting a penalty decision. Subsequently, Taricco placed his index fingers besides the corner of his eyes – a gesture the referee interpreted as racist and reported to the league's disciplinary committee. On November 19, the committee banned Taricco for five games and fined him 20 million won (\$13,646). The 52-year-old, who featured for Tottenham between 1998 and 2004 and also played for Ipswich Town, West Ham and Brighton in England, denied any racist intent, insisting that he was asking the official if he had seen the incident.

HORNBILL E-SPORTS FESTIVAL KICKS OFF IN KOHIMA



The Hornbill Esports Festival 2025, the second edition of Nagaland's premier competitive gaming showcase, will feature competition in three categories including E-chess. The event that began Monday is being organised by the Esports Association of Nagaland (ESAN) in collaboration with the Department of Youth Resources and Sports.

Speaking at the inaugural session, Abu Metha, advisor to the Chief Minister and Vice President of the Athletics Federation of India (AFI), said, "E-Sports is a modern-day trend and a billion-dollar industry that cannot be ignored." He emphasised that Nagaland does not want its youth to miss opportunities in this fast-growing sector.

India beat Wales in FIH Junior Women's World Cup

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Santiago (Chile)

Out of quarterfinal contention, India defeated Wales 3-1 to remain in the hunt for a ninth-place finish at the FIH Junior Women's World Cup.

Hina Bano (14'), Sunelita Toppo (24'), and Ishika (31') scored for India, while Eloise Moat (52') netted the lone goal for Wales. India had logged two wins and a loss to finish outside the top eight in the pool stage.

In Sunday's match, India began with a penalty corner in the first 30 seconds. They were playing between the lines to carve out opportunities on regular occasions, but couldn't find the opening Wales had the opportuni-



ty to surge ahead with a penalty stroke, but were a sharp stop to keep the towards the end of the first

scores level. India eventually managed denied by Nidhi as she made to break the deadlock

from Hina after some neat work by Sakshi Rana. Looking to double their

quarter, courtesy a tap-in

penalty corner at the start of the second quarter.

They continued to create chances regularly, and were rewarded for their persistence after Rana's initial shot fell in the way of Sunelita, who made no mistake from close range. With 14 circle penetrations in the first half, India held a deserving 2-0 lead at the break.

India extended their lead to 3-0 early in the second half as Ishika found the back of the net after a rebound from the Welsh goalkeeper fell in her way.

Jyoti Šingh's side controlled the tempo of the game, stretching the Welsh defense by playing between the lines and pressing high, while remaining disciplined and

advantage, India maintained compact at the back. India continued to create chances pushing Wales back in their own half to close out the

third quarter. With the lion's share of possession, India remained in pursuit of more goal-scoring

opportunities to further

increase their advantage in the final quarter. Wales had an opening on the other end and Eloise Moat (52nd) made it count, pulling one back for her side. However, that only proved to be a consolation goal as India

held firm to secure a welldeserved 3-1 win. India will next play Uruguay on Tuesday and the winner of this match will progress to the ninth place showdown. The losing team

will fight for the 11th spot in the overall standings.

1191 posts lying vacant in SAI: Sports minister

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi

Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Monday acknowledged that over 1,000 posts are currently lying vacant in the Sports Authority of India (SAI), a concern that was highlighted in a recent Parliamentary Standing Committee report which had described the body as "critically" under-funded and under-staffed.

The minister was responding to a question from Congress MP Adoor Prakash. who represents Kerala's Attingal constituency, in Lok Sabha. Asked whether the government has noted the concerns raised by the Parliamentary Standing Committee over severe shortage of funds and staff in SAI, Mandaviya said, "The Government has taken note of the observations."

"A total of 1,191 posts are lying vacant in the SAI. The recruitment process of certain posts has already been initiated," he added.

In its report in August, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on sports, headed by Congress' Rajya Sabha MP Digvijaya Singh, observed that about 45 per cent of sanctioned posts in the SAI are



Union Minister Mansukh Mandaviya speaks in the Lok Sabha during the Winter session of Parliament in New Delhi

presently vacant.

'The fact that these shortfalls in staff are being managed through contractual appointment may at best be only an ad hoc arrangement," it had pointed out. The Committee. which also includes cricketer and AAP Rajya Sabha MP Harbhajan Singh, and BJP MPs Sambit Patra and Bansuri Swaraj, among others, expressed "grave" concern over the shortage of staff and low funding of SAI.

The panel "heard the views" of Sports Secretary, and SAI representatives in its meeting held on June 6 this year. It commended the recruit-

ment drive to fill up these vacancies but asked the Sports Ministry to complete the process in the next six months and "furnish an Action Taken Report (ATR)."

In its annual budget this year, the government allocated ₹3,794 crore to the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. Of this ₹830 crore were earmarked for SAI.

"The budget allocation to SAI is based on the proposals submitted by them for the respective financial year. Any additional requirements that arise during the year are examined at the RE stage and, where appropriate, considALLOCATED ₹3,794 CRORE TO THE MINISTRY OF YOUTH **AFFAIRS AND** SPORTS. OF THIS ₹830 CRORE WERE EARMARKED FOR SAI

THE GOVERNMENT

ered through supplementary grants," the minister stated in Lok Sabha.

Dealing with sexual harassment

To another question on whether the government has a consolidated record of sexual harassment complaints filed by sportspersons, the minister reiterated that no such dedicated database exists. He, however, listed the measures that have been in place to "ensure a safe and positive environment".

"In order to provide a safe environment in sports, the SAI also runs a 24x7 helpline for the players," he said.

In addition, National Sports Federations have been told to mandatorily have women coaches in contingents that feature female athletes during camps and competition exposures. They have also been asked to increase the strength of women Coaches and Support Staff in camps.

Santos stuns Cruzeiro

ASSOCIATED PRESS Sao Paulo

Nevmar's Santos secured its survival in Brazil's Serie A on Sunday with a 3-0 win over Cruzeiro, and the 33-yearold soccer star later confirmed he will undergo surgery on his left knee.

Playing its last league match of the season, Santos which achieved a global following with all-time great Pelé - avoided what would have been the club's second relegation in its history. Santos was relegated in 2023 for the first time almost a year after the death of Pelé.

Neymar struggled to recover from a torn ACL in October 2023 during a World Cup qualifier against Uruguay. But he proved key for Santos in its successful fight to avoid relegation in the Brazilian championship after its promotion last year.

Neymar, who returned to Santos in January, was decisive for the club where he started his professional career. In the last three rounds of the league, Neymar scored a goal against Sport Recife in a 3-0 win, netted a hat trick against Juventude on Wednesday in another 3-0 victory, and on Sunday was an effective playmaker.

NEYMAR, WHO RETURNED TO SANTOS IN JANUARY, WAS DECISIVE FOR THE CLUB WHERE HE STARTED HIS **PROFESSIONAL CAREER**

Thaciano (26th and 28th minutes) and Ioão Schmidt (60th) scored against Cruzeiro at Vila Belmiro Stadium as Santos finished 12th with 47 points. Neymar played only 19 of the 38 rounds of the league, which started in April. He scored eight goals. "I came for this, to try to help the best way I can. These

have been tough weeks for me," Neymar said after the game. "I thank those who were with me to lift me up. If it weren't for them, I wouldn't have played these matches because of these injuries, this knee problem. I need to rest and then we will have this knee surgery."

Neymar did not give more details about the knee injury and surgery. He still hopes to be included in Brazil's final squad for the 2026 World Cup, though coach Carlo Ancelotti is yet to pick the former captain since he took over in May.

Napoli beat Juventus 2-1 in Serie A

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Luciano Spalletti's return to the team he led to the Serie A title was spoiled by Rasmus Højlund's brace as host Napoli beat Juventus 2-1 on Sunday. The result also lifted Napoli back to the top of the Italian league. The defending champion moved a point above Inter Milan and three points above AC Milan, which visits Torino on Monday.

It was Juventus coach Spalletti's first time at Napoli as opposition manager since he led the southern team to its first scudetto in more than 30 years in 2023.

Napoli coach Antonio Conte was also facing his former team. He steered Juventus to three Serie A titles during his time in charge and also played for the Bianconeri for 13 years,

winning numerous trophies. Adding to the occasion, it was the first time the two coaches had faced each



other. Napoli got off to a great start as the in-form David Neres got away down the right before rolling the ball across for Højlund to tap it in with less than seven minutes on the clock.

Napoli had the better of the chances but Juventus leveled in the 59th minute as the Bianconeri went on the counterattack and Kenan Yildiz played a one-two with Weston McKennie before placing an angled drive into the far bottom corner.

McKennie inadvertently also played a role at the other end in what proved to be the winner for Napoli in

The United States international tried to head away a cross for Neres but his attempt was rather weak and went to Hojlund to head in from four yards (meters).

Roma loses ground Roma lost ground in the title race as it fell to a 1-0 defeat at Cagliari after playing most of the match

Roma remained fourth but slipped four points below Napoli. It was Cagliari's first win since September and lifted the Sardinian team four points above the drop zone.

The match turned in the 49th minute when Roma defender Zeki Çelik brought down Cagliari midfielder Michael Folorunsho right on the edge of the area.

The referee initially awarded a penalty but realized the foul was just outside the area after reviewing the incident. He revoked the spot kick but showed Çelik a straight red card for denying a clear scoring occasion.

Roma goalkeeper Mile Svilar pulled off a number of impressive saves but Cagliari broke the deadlock in the 82nd minute.

Gianluca Gaetano was left completely unmarked to chest down a corner and fire the ball in off the inside of the far post.

Abu Dhabi

La Liga: Real Madrid lose 2-0 to Celta Vigo

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Real Madrid had two players sent off in its 2-0 home defeat to Celta Vigo on Sunday and lost more ground to Spanish league leader Barcelona.

Madrid conceded early in the second half and then saw red cards for Fran García and Álvaro Carreras in its first defeat of the season at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium in all competitions. Unused Madrid substitute Endrick also was shown a red card for complaining.

Williot Swedberg scored for the visitors with a nice flick from near the penalty spot in the 54th.

Madrid lost García with a second yellow card in the 64th and Carreras in stoppage time. Swedberg sealed Celta's victory in a breakaway shortly after Madrid was reduced to nine players.

"We are all upset. It wasn't the game or the result that



Xabi Alonso said. "The referee's decisions threw us off balance. I didn't like the refereeing.

Madrid has won only two of its last seven matches across all tournaments. It next hosts Manchester City in the Champions League on Wednesday.

Madrid's only other league loss this season was a heavy defeat at Atletico Madrid in September. It also lost at we wanted," Madrid coach Liverpool in the league phase

of the Champions League in November.

Sunday's setback left Alonso's team four points behind Barcelona. The Catalan club won 5-3 at Real Betis on Saturday. Madrid is only one point ahead of thirdplaced Villarreal, which has a game in hand.

Vinícius Júnior and Kylian Mbappé both had good chances to equalize for Madrid but couldn't capitalize on their opportunities.

Militão had to leave the game

Celta moved to 10th place with its second win in three league games.

Goalkeeping mistakes

Girona goalkeeper Paulo Gazzaniga had an afternoon to forget in Girona's 3-0 loss to Elche at home.

The Argentine goalkeeper's mistakes led to two Elche goals, including one after he passed the ball straight to an opponent inside the area while trying to send it to a defender. Earlier, he had failed to make a routine save on an angled shot by the

near post. Gazzaniga also had a nightmare game in Girona's opening league match, when his blunders led to a goal and a penalty and his ejection in

Girona, sitting inside the relegation zone in 18th place, has only one win in its last six games in all competitions.

a 3-1 loss to Rayo Vallecano.

Nice fans boo team during 7th loss

ASSOCIATED PRESS Nice (France)

Nice was booed on the field a week after its players were attacked by supporters. The French team's crisis on and off the pitch deepened as it lost 1-0 at home to Angers in Ligue 1 on Sunday for a seventh straight loss across all competitions.

After last week's defeat at Lorient, Nice players were confronted by a large number of their supporters when they returned to the club's training and academy centre.

Players and staff were reportedly assaulted and fans shouted insults and demanded greater commitment from the squad. Jérémie Boga and Terem Moffi took multiple blows,

including to the head and groin. Those two players were absent against Angers and their teammates took the field with the names of either Boga or Moffi on the backs of their jerseys instead of their own.

The jeers rang out right from the start.

Yassin Belkhdim scored for Angers in the 33rd minute and Nice's hopes of ending its losing streak diminished early in the second half when Tom Louchet was sent off for a foul on Jacques Ekomié.

Surprise win Lorient upset fifth-placed

Lyon 1-0 to move up to 13th. Lyon had to play the entire second half with 10 men after Ainsley Maitland-Niles was sent off in the 42nd minute following two quick yellow cards.

Lorient had taken the lead three minutes before the dismissal with a goal from Pablo Pagis.

Off the bottom Auxerre moved off the

bottom of the table with a 3-1 win over Metz, which took its opponent's spot. The result ended a nine-

match winless run for

Auxerre. Lassine Sinayoko's penalty and a goal by Oussama El-Azzouzi three minutes later put Auxerre 2-0 ahead before Gauthier Hein halved the deficit on the stroke of halftime.

But Kévin Danois scored his first Ligue 1 goal late on to secure the win.

Le Havre forward Issa Soumaré failed to convert a penalty as another relegation fight, against Paris FC, ended in a 0-0 draw.

F1 in 2026: Key dates, new title hopefuls and Cadillac's debut **ASSOCIATED PRESS**

Say goodbye to DRS, and hello to a battery power boost. Sunday's Abu Dhabi Grand Prix marked the last time Formula 1 uses the Drag Reduction System overtaking aid, introduced in 2011.

Next year, drivers will have to manage the car's systems more closely than ever with a more visible role for aerodynamic and electrical technology

After a season-long title battle ended with Lando Norris' first title, here's what to expect in 2026: Smaller, lighter, more electric

The biggest regulation changes in years make cars shorter, narrower and lighter, with movable "active aerodynamics" — X-mode for straight-line speed, Z-mode



for cornering — and more more strategic but could lead reliance on electric hybrid

The FIA's target was for electrical power to make up half of total output along with a traditional V6 turbo engine. Instead of DRS, drivers can deploy extra electrical power at key moments. That makes driving even

to drivers lifting off the power and coasting on some straights to allow the electrical systems to harvest energy.

The FIA claims the rules emphasize driver skill but there have been mixed reviews from those who've tried 2026 designs in their teams' simulators.

Smaller, more agile cars could help overtaking but the fastest and slowest cars may be up to four seconds per lap apart on pace, tire supplier Pirelli has reported. In F1 terms, that's an eternity. Expect to see more engine failures as teams balance reliability with performance. Mercedes, Aston Martin aim for more

Could this be the year Lewis Hamilton finds his form again at Ferrari and chases an eighth title? Maybe not.

Even though he never got on with the 2022-25 cars, Hamilton told the BBC he was "not looking forward" to 2026 after the Las Vegas Grand Prix last month, yet another disappointment

Mercedes has designed some of F1's most dominant engines before, but its eye-

since he joined Ferrari.

namic concept was a bust when the last regulation period began in 2022. Get both aspects right this time and George Russell could be a title contender after two wins in 2025. Another team to watch is Aston Martin, which has its

catching "zero-pod" aerody

first car created with design great Adrian Newey in charge, and is hoping it can make two-time champion Fernando Alonso an F1 race winner for the first time in 13 years. Williams too could make a step forward after abandoning its 2025 projects early to focus on 2026. New Cadillac team,

old faces

The F1 grid expands to 22 cars for the first time since 2016 as Cadillac becomes the 11th team with backing from General Motors.