PAGE 6 **NATION BJP** claims LOP skipped PM's speech out of guilt



**PAGE 10: MONEY** India goes, India grounded



**PAGE 12 GLOBAL** Ukraine President visits London for peace talks



## 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 economic uncertainties, contributing to the bearish market sentiment. Trading saw 3,348 stocks decline.



#### 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**

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



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

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

wrote to Netaji Subhash to take out processions Vande Mataram. against the decision of the

> 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,"

## 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** 

Naidu said adding that the dis-

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.

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. "IndiGo is "profusely apologetic" and

season, adverse weather conditions and

increased congestion in the aviation system

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 four-member probe panel set up by the DGCA as part of the inves-

New Delhi: The

issued an advisory urging

Indian citizens to exercise

travelling to or transiting

through China, following

an incident in which an

Arunachal Pradesh was

detained at Shanghai's

more than two weeks

allegedly refused to

during a transit stop

acknowledge the

in her temporary

detention.

The advisory comes

after Chinese authorities

woman's Indian passport

on November 21, resulting

Pudong Airport.

Indian national from

"due discretion" when

## **UP** govt forms SIT to probe illegal trade of codeine-based cough syrup

PRESS TRSUT OF INDIA Lucknow

The Uttar Pradesh government on Monday announced the formation of a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to investigate the illegal storage and distribution of codeinebased cough syrups and other pharmaceutical drugs across five districts of the state. The government also stated that not a single casualty has been reported in the state due to codeine-based cough syrups.

Principal Secretary (Home)

Sanjay Prasad said the government was taking the matter "very seriously", and an SIT headed by an Inspector General (IG) rank officer — is being constituted to probe into the trafficking network. "On the directions of the chief minister, an SIT under an IG-level officer is being constituted to probe the illegal diversion and trade spread across five districts. The SIT will also include officials from the Food and Drug Safety Authority (FDSA)," Prasad told reporters.

Not a single casualty has occurred in the state due to codeine-based cough syrups, the top bureaucrat said.

This SIT will regularly review all ongoing probes, connect every lead emerging from the information obtained from the accused, decide further action accordingly, and carry out an indepth probe into all financial transactions involved," he said.

Director General of Police



(DGP) Rajiv Krishna said the investigation so far had exposed a network of major "super stockists" allegedly involved in illegal diversion of highly regulated codeine-based cough syrups, often used as intoxicants He said three of the five key

super-stockists identified in the case have been arrested. These include, Bhola Jaiswal, father of Shubham Jaiswal, from Varanasi; Vibhor Rana from Saharanpur, and Saurabh Tyagi

from Ghaziabad. Two other major hoarders of codeinebased syrups — notified under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act — are under investigation, and action is underway, the DGP said.

According to him, a massive recovery of the contraband has been made from multiple districts of the state.

"So far, around 3.5 lakh bottles, valued at approximately Rs 4.5 crore, have been recovered. We have arrested a total of 32 people associated with this illegal trade," he said.

DGP Krishna said investigators have found evidence of the regulated cough syrups being trafficked across the India-Nepal and India-Bangladesh borders.

"Evidence has emerged of consignments heading towards Nepal and Bangladesh. We are developing these leads, verifying financial transactions through banking channels, and confirming the money trail," he added. The DGP also cautioned against misinformation circulating on social media and other online platforms regarding the

#### China adds online visas to the thaw ASHOKE RAJ ■ New Delhi

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 functional again, ending a five-year freeze imposed following the border tensions in 2020.

spokesperson MEARandhir 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 restric-

The reinstatement of visas is part of a series of people-



FILE PHOTO

oriented confidence-building 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

The case prompted strong concern in New Delhi, particularly over the treatment of Indian

travellers holding valid

documentation.

positive 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 appli-

cation experience for trav-

ellers seeking to visit China.

## STPs in Haridwar overflow years ahead, raising concerns for Ganga

ARUN KASHYAP 
Haridwar

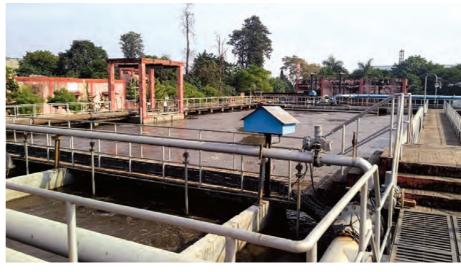
Major Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) built in Haridwar to prevent contamination of the Ganga have started overflowing well before the design year. With the plants receiving more sewage than their capacity, locals are concerned about the holy river being contaminated in Haridwar. However, officials maintain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

treatment Information sought under the Right To Information (RTI) Act by local activist Disha Sharma revealed that there is one 14 MLD capacity and

another 18 MLD capacity STP 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 Act reveals.

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

Meanwhile, observers point out that based on the RTI information, the design year 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.

A better estimation of the projected population growth, resulting increase in sewage and future requirements would have prevented the situation being faced today in Haridwar, they said.



# Woman murders her live-in partner

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

A 46-year-old woman allegedly murdered her 13vear vounger engineer livein partner by slitting his throat in Chinhat on Monday

The couple was living together in a live-in relationship and the woman's two daughters, aged 18 and 14 respectively, also resided with them. After the killing, the woman remained seated in another room with her two daughters for nearly 10

Police arrived at the scene being informed. Interrogation revealed that a fierce argument erupted between the couple around 11 pm on Sunday and after which the murder was committed.

Following the altercation, the woman, along with her two daughters, allegedly murdered her partner.

Shashank Singh.

He said the police was informed about that incident around 9 am on Monday. The incident took place in Green City, Salarganj village, in the BBD police

The deceased was identified as Surva Pratap Singh (33), originally from Deoria, who worked as an executive engineer for a private company. He initially lived his family in Jankipuram.

The accused, Ratna (46), whose husband had passed away, lived near Surya Pratap's family home. Their relationship began when Surya started tutoring her two daughters. As their proximity grew into a full-blown affair, both families strongly opposed the relationship. However, the couple ignored the opposition and when family pressure became too much, Surya Pratap moved

began living with Ratna and her two daughters.

Sources disclosed that Surya and Ratna had been fighting constantly in recent days. The argument on Sunday night was particular-

According to police sources, Ratna and her two daughters allegedly overpowered Surya Pratap inside the room, pinned him down. and then slit his throat with a knife. After the murder, Ratna and her daughters remained in a separate room throughout the night.

Around 9 am on Monday Ratna called the police and confessed to killing her lover. Police immediately arrived at

Surya's father, Narendra Singh, also reached the location on hearing the news and accused Ratna and her two daughters of murder.

Ratna left the body in the room and waited until morning to call the police

After receiving the call, police sent the village head to the house to verify the incident, which was confirmed. The BBD police reached the spot around 10:15 am. The body was sent for postmortem examination and forensic teams collected evi-

The deputy commissioner of police (East) also visited the site and confirmed that an FIR has been registered and all aspects of the case are under investigation.

Neighbours told the police that arguments between Surva and Ratna were frequent. "They were fighting last night too and we heard the noises. Since they fought often, we didn't pay much attention. It was only when the police arrived this morning that we learned about the murder," one neighbour stated.

Narendra Singh, Surya Pratap's father, revealed that his son had met Ratna when

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

A drug trafficker carrying a

reward of Rs 50,000 was

injured in a late-night

encounter with the Anti-

Narcotics Task Force (ANTF)

in Mohanlalganj on Sunday.

Tripathi, sustained a

gunshot wound to his right

leg during the exchange of

His accomplice, Narendra

Tripathi, who was attempt-

fire with the police.

The fugitive, Pankaj

Wanted drug smuggler

injured in encounter

he began tutoring her daughters. Ratna's husband, an alcoholic, had died about six years ago. Narendra mentioned speaking to his son just the day before, noting that everything seemed fine at the time. "Ratna had begged my son for help, calling him 'brother.' He helped her. For about two years, Ratna and her two daughters had been living with my son," the father

He added that his son had denied having an affair with Ratna, which is why the family was looking for a suitable marriage match for him.

He alleged, "Ratna and her two daughters were living a life of luxury with my son's money. I spoke to my son on Sunday. He even sent me money when I went to get my bike repaired. Everything was fine until then. On Monday, the police informed me that my son had been murdered and I

### with fake online payment PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Two youths duped a garment shop owner of Rs 7,500 by making a fake online payment in Ghazipur police station area. The incident came to light on Monday. The shop owner Ashish

Kumar runs his shop near Polytechnic Crossing. He said two youths reached his shop two days back and did shopping worth Rs 7,500. They made payment through QR code and left. The shop owner realised that the accused had made a fake payment because when he checked no money was credited to his bank account. The shop owner then lodged a complaint and a case was registered at Ghazipur police station in this connection.

Initial investigation revealed that the fraudsters move on a motorcycle and the victim identified the

accused on being shown the Lucknow. Police are further CCTV footage. The police sources said the accused vouth have been identified and the police were conducting raids in their search.

#### **GIRL MISSING**

Youths dupe shop owner

A minor girl was reported missing in Kakori on Monday. The police started a search for the girl. Initial investigation revealed that the girl left the home with Rs 10,000 which she had taken from an On disclosure of the same

by the family, the police suspect she was lured to run away from her house by some youth. The police have obtained the call detail records of her mobile phone and now are searching for the youth in whose contact she was with for the past few months. The family members had apprehended the role of a youth from a village where their relatives live in

working in the case.

#### MAN DEFRAUDED Prem Narayan Pandey, a resi-

dent of Anand Nagar in the Alambagh area, was defrauded of Rs 81,625 from his Bank of Baroda, Patel Nagar branch account. The cyber fraudster withdrew this amount multiple times via UPI between October 12 and 30. According to the victim, he neither received any messages nor an OTP for these transactions. He became aware of the fraud on December 1 when he got his passbook updated at his bank branch. Upon learning of the fraud, the victim immediately filed a written complaint with the Alambagh police station, providing the transaction details. Alambagh Inspector Subhash Chandra Saroi stated that a case has been registered under relevant sections of the IT Act based on the victim account

both the suspects and

searched them. The police

officers recovered a yellow

sack containing numerous

bats (2 alive, 20 dead), a

hunting net, and a coil of

rope. The duo disclosed that

they were hunting the birds

Thieves made off with

ornaments and other valu-

able items worth several lakh

from a closed house in

Madiaon in the wee hours of

Monday. The incident took

place near the Mazar Wali

Masjid in the Madiaon police

area. The burglars broke the

lock to gain entry into the

house and stole the valu-

According to reports, the

family residing in the house

had gone out to attend a

wedding ceremony. They

came to know about the

theft on their return. The

ables kept inside.

for a long time.

THIEVES TARGET

LOCKED HOUSE

## Three arrested for breach of peace

out and rented a house in

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow

The Kaiserbagh police arrested three persons for breach of peace after they indulged in a brawl immediately after they came out of the police station on Monday after medical examination of their supporters. The accused have been challaned for breach of peace. As per reports, two groups of people clashed over a petty issue in Kaiserbagh and a police team reached the spot. Following the brawl, the police registered a cross-FIR on the com-

**NOTICE** 

I have changed my name from

Meena to Meena Verma W/o

Kuldeep Verma R/o B10,

Yashoda Nagar Kidwai Nagar Kanpur for all future purposes.

**NOTICE** 

I have changed my daughter's

name from Alshifa Ameer to

Alshifa Ameer Ali for future

purposes, Afsar Jahan W/o Ameer Ali R/o 97/326, Talaq

**NOTICE** 

I have changed my daughter's

name from Alisha Ameer to

Alisha Ameer Ali for future purposes, Afsar Jahan W/o Ameer Ali R/o 97/326, Talaq

**NOTICE** 

I have changed my name from

SUAHIL AHMED to SUHAIL

AHMAD ALVI S/o HASAN

MOHAMMAD ALVI R/o H

NO. 70A Gadiyana New PAC

Lines, Kanpur Nagar for all

**NOTICE** 

I have changed my name from

Ramkishor Rajaram Kuril to

Ramkishor for all future

purposes, Ramkishor S/o Rajaram R/o Vill, Auserikheda

**NOTICE** 

Jayanti Devi D/o Lal Ji and

Jayanti are both my names. In

future, I shall be known as

Javanti Devi W/o Ram Pal

apartment, Flat no D2, plot no.

77 W2 block, Juhi kalan, Kanpur- U.P. 208027

सूचना

सूचित हो कि प्रार्थी बीशवजीत गांगोर

M/s Rajasthan Safety and

Security Systems का प्रोपराइटर है

प्रार्थी की फर्म का फार्म-38 (फार्म नं0.-

EE-3066951, EE-3066952 &

EE-3066954) कुल 3 फार्म एवं फार्म

C (फार्म संख्या 0149420, 0149421

0149422, 0149423, 0149424, 0149425

0149426, 0149427, 0149428 एव 0149429) कुल 10 फार्म एवं कुछ नकव

के साथ आवश्यक दस्तावेज थाना कृष्ण

नगर क्षेत्र लखनऊ में गिर गये है। जिसकी

20250000891167 से दर्ज है। इसका

प्रयोग अवैध माना जाये तथा मिलने पर

एल०ए०आर०

मो०. 9648388886 पर सूचित करे।

Bindki,

Aashiyana

Post Bhaisauli

Fatehpur- 212657

residing

future purposes.

Mahal, Kanpur Nagar

Mahal, Kanpur Nagar

for house trespass, use of abusive language, causing grievous injury and other counts. After taking the complaint and registering the case, the police sent the injured to a hospital for medical test as under the procedure of investigation of the case. It was alleged that as soon as they were handed over to their supporters, both the parties came out of the police station and fought with one another on the road. The police intervened again and challaned three persons from both the parties

The Pioneer LASSIFIED

**NOTICE** 

I have changed my name from

IRAM MASOOD to ERAM

MASOOD W/o MASOOD

Chamanganj, Kanpur Nagar

**NOTICE** 

I have changed my name from

Mini Swaroop to Mini Swarup

15/96, Čivil Lines Kanpur

**NOTICE** 

I have changed my name from MOHAMMAD AYYAN to MOHAMMAD AYAN S/o

MOHAMMAD SAMRAN R/o

93/210, Rajbi Road, Kanpur

**NOTICE** 

I, Hina Singh, aged about 31

years, daughter of Vijay Bahadur, resident of Village

and Post- Bhatgaon, Banthra

District-

Sikandarpur, District-Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh-

227101, hereby inform that I

have changed my name to

Ketaki Devi, in future I should

be known and recognised by

this name and this name will be

**NOTICE** 

My daughter's name is incorrectly recorded as Charu

on her Aadhaar card due to an

error, whereas her correct

name is Charul Rathore, as per

her records and birth certificate. Therefore, her Aadhaar card should be amended to reflect her correct

name, Charul Rathore. Charul

Rathore D/o Chandrbhan

Singh R/o-Mata ka Mandir,

Vijoli, Bah, Agra, Uttar Pradesh, 283104

mentioned in all my records.

Nagar for all future purposes.

Nagar for all future purposes.

for all future purposes.

plaint from both the parties for breach of peace. The accused arrested were identified as Mohammed Sikander and Abdulla of Ghasiyari Mandi in Kaiserbagh and Atharv Krishna Saxena of

#### Thakurganj. **ARRESTED**

The Government Railway Police personnel on Monday arrested a miscreant, a member of a drug-and-rob gang, targeting passengers on trains, from Charbagh.

The accused, identified as Amit of Rae Bareli, was arrested from outside the Lucknow

**NOTICE** 

Notify that I have changed my

name from Zehrabi to Zahra

Begum. From now on I will be

known and recognised by this

name. Zahra Begum W/o

Shaukat Ali R/o 130 AB

**NOTICE** 

Nagar, unnao. U.P. 209801.

ing to flee from the spot, was apprehended by the police. According to officials, the encounter took place around 2:30 am, when an

ANTF team led by Sub-Inspector Manish Kumar of Lucknow ANTF was conducting patrol in the Kankaha area Mohanlalganj.

#### **FORGERY IN LAND RECORDS REVEALED**

In a major land scam, prime land worth crores of rupees, belonging to two brothers who migrated to Pakistan during the Partition, was fraudulently registered in the name of a deceased woman in Kewali village of Mohanlalganj.

The forgery was carried out by tampering with in collusion with revenue officials. Despite the fraud being exposed eight months ago, villagers claim no action has been taken so far.

According to records, the land was registered in the names of Mohammad Zubair and Mohammad Baish, both of whom left for Pakistan after Independence. Villagers said neither the brothers nor

their heirs ever returned. Taking advantage of this, fraudsters allegedly forged a correction order and, with the help of complicit officials, transferred the land to a deceased woman on February 13, 2024. The fraud came to light when villagers raised suspicion and Sandeep Kumar from the village filed a complaint with the district administration through the

Following this, a probe by tehsildar confirmed the manipulation of records.

IGRS portal.

The patwari and revenue inspector also verified the fraud in their reports, leading to the initiation of proceedings to cancel the forged order. However, villagers allege that the network of the accused is so strong that the inquiry has stalled. While hearings began for cancelling the fraudulent order they remained stuck in tehsildar's files. Despite clear findings in the investigation report, no action has been taken against the accused or the officials involved.

Sub-Divisional Magistrate Pawan Patel said that he recently came to know about the matter. He assured that the matter will be resolved soon and the disputed land will be secured.

### Man held for forcing woman to convert PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

The Mahanagar police, On Monday, arrested the miscreant who allegedly pressured a woman employee of the Secretariat to adopt Muslim faith and wear a hijab after trapping her in love.

The accused also promised the woman a financial fortune through investment of money and raped her.

The accused, Wali Mohammed Qureshi, a resi-Siyana in Bulandshahr, was arrested from Sarita Vihar locality in Delhi. He confessed to his crime. He was named in the case on December 4 after the woman lodged a complaint, accusing him of rape, blackmail, threats and pressuring

her for religious conversion. A police spokesman said the police did a technical analysis of the location of the accused, who was traced in Delhi. "After having traced his location, a police team was dispatched to Delhi and the accused was arrested," the spokesman said.

The accused had initially contacted the victim and enticed her with the prospect of doubling her money by investing in the share market and managed to obtain her address.

Following this, he came to Lucknow and took lakhs of rupees from the woman in the name of investment. He allegedly extorted Rs 6 lakh from her. He later began pressuring her for marriage with him and started forcing her to convert to Islam.

The victim alleged that the accused made her obscene video and then blackmailed her by threatening to make it viral, and took her to a hotel several times. The victim disclosed that she endured all this from 2023 due to his threats and fear of losing dignity in society.

#### **HUNTERS ARRESTED**

The Rahimabad police, on Monday, apprehended two criminals involved in illegal hunting of protected wildlife. Those arrested were iden-

tified as Rahul and Vishal Kumar, both of Rahimabad in Lucknow. The police recovered 22 bats (two alive and 20 dead),

one hunting net, and a motorcycle used in the crime from the accused who confessed to their crime. A case has been registered under the Wildlife Protection

Act, and further legal action is underway. As per reports, an informer

tipped-off the police about the miscreants riding a motorcycle, who hunted prohibited birds and sold them. The police rounded up

victim, Ansar, stated that the family had gone for a relative's wedding and on return found the house lock broken.

A detailed list of the stolen items is being prepared to submit to the police.

## SBFC

SBFC FINANCE LIMITED

Registered Office: Unit No. 103, C&B Square, Sangam Complex, Andheri Kurla Road, Telephone: +91 22 67875300 | www.sbfc.com | CIN : L67190MH2008PLC178270

**PUBLIC NOTICE** Dear Customers This is to inform you that SBFC Finance Ltd. Intends to close our Kanpur branch situated at 1st Floor, H.No - 15/165, Ward No. 15, Ayodhya Nagar, Tehsil - Akbarpur, Kanpur Dehat, Ultar Pradesh - 209101 w.e.f. 15.03.2026.

You can reach out to our nearby branch for servicing related requests

IDFC FIRST

IDFC FIRST Bank

**BRANCH NAME** 

### JDU leader flays opn over SIR versy over the SIR process, even

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

Bihar minister Shravan Kumar said in Lucknow that the Janata Dal United party organisation would be strengthened in Uttar Pradesh and in-charges

have changed my name from Mohammad Ayaz Ansari to Mohd Ayaz Ansari S/o MOHD Yaqoob Ansari R/o 131/3-B-2 Begum Purwa Nai Basti Kanpur Nagar for future purposes.

#### **NOTICE**

#### **NOTICE**

It is hereby informed to the general public that in my marksheet my father's name is mentioned as Gulam Hasnain, whereas my father's correct name is Syed Gulam Hasnain Naqvi, which is also mentioned in the Aadhaar card. Gulam Hasnain and Syed Gulam Hasnain Naqvi both refer to the same person. KUMAIL HAIDER S/o Syed Gulam Hasnain Naqvi, R/o 546/229, Hardoi Road, N. Era Rauja, Maula Ali Sarfrajganj, Lucknow

#### revenue records, allegedly

It is hereby informed that I have changed my name from Simran Kaur Sandhu to Simran Kaur D/o Harjeet Singh R/o 101/6, Shastri Nagar Kanpur Nagar for all future purposes

#### **NOTICE**

It is hereby informed that I have changed my name from Ahmad Mahmood Mahmood Ahmad Khan S/o Shareef Ahmad R/o 67, Rajpur Kasba Bandipur, Fatehpur for all future purposes

#### **NOTICE**

It is hereby informed that I

RANJANA, is Wife of Name, SATYA PRAKASH SINGH YADAV ,presently residing at Vill- KAYAMPUR, Po- BASUDEVPUR, Dist-GHAZIPUR, State- Uttar Pradesh, Pin - 233222, have changed my name from RANJANA to RANJANA YADAV, vide affidavit no IN-UP82376318137289X, dated 06/12/25, before notary Jhansi.

### **NOTICE**

The original sale deeds (two registries), possession letter, and allotment letter dated 25/11/2001 of my house L.I.G.-14, Dayanand Vihar, Indira Nagar, Kanpur, have been lost somewhere on the way. If any person uses these documents, it will be completely illegal. Dharmendra Singh Pundeer S/o Jasveer Singh Pundeer R/o LIG-14, Dayanand Vihar, Indira Nagar, Kanpur Nagar

#### ent and technically robust system. He said that the public mandate was clear, but instead of accepting it, the opposition was casting doubt on

though it was a completely transpar-

would be appointed in all districts. the electoral process by questioning Bihar cabinet minister and JDU's Uttar Pradesh in-charge Shravan Kumar launched a scathing attack on the opposition over the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of voter list.

He said that the people of the country had understood the opposition's attitude and their political ground was rapidly slipping. Speaking to the media in Lucknow,

Shravan Kumar said that the opposi-

tion was unnecessarily raising contro-

the EVMs. He said, "They say there was a hole in the EVM, that the EVM was overturned.' Shravan Kumar, who arrived in Lucknow for the first time after the

formation of the NDA government in Bihar, conducted a comprehensive review of the JDU's organisation. He pointed out that the party

holds meetings on the 8th of every month, and organisational expansion in Uttar Pradesh was a key agenda.

#### **IDFC FIRST Bank Limited** (erstwhile Capital First Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited)

CIN: L65110TN2014PLC097792

Registered Office: KRM Towers, 8 Floor, Harrington Road, Chetpet, Chennai - 600031 TEL: +91 44 4564 4000 | FAX: +91 44 4564 4022.

#### **PUBLIC NOTICE**

**GOLD AUCTION CUM INVITATION NOTICE** The Below mentioned borrower has been issued notices to pay the outstanding amount towards the credit facility against Gold ornament savailed by him from IDFC FIRST Bank Limited. Since the borrower has failed to repay the dues under the facility. We are constrained to conduct an auction of the pledged Gold ornaments on 17/12/2025. In the event any surplus amount is realized from this auction, the same will be returned to the concerned borrower and if there is any deficit post the auction, the balance amount shall be recovered from the borrower through appropriate legal proceedings. IDFC FIRST Bank has the authority to remove the following account from the auction without prior intimation. Further IDFC FIRST Bank reserves the right to change the Auction Date without any prior notice.

LOAN ACCOUNT NUMBER	CUSTOMER NAME	BRANCH NAME		
172573548	MOHAMMAD WASEEM	BAREILLY CIVIL LINES		

Auction will be conducted online through https://idfcegold.auctiontiger.net on 17/12/2025 from 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm. / http://gold.samil.in on 17/12/2025 from 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm. By way of this publication the concerned borrower are hereby given final notice and last opportunity to pay the facility recalled amount, with all interest and charges before the schedule auction date failing which the jewellery will be auctioned. Please note that, if the auction does not get completed on the same day due to time limit the bank will re auction the pledged gold ornaments within next 7 days on the same terms and conditions. If the customer is deceased all the conditions pertaining to auction will be applicable to his legal heirs. Date: 09-12-2025 Place: UTTAR PRADESH

## **IDFC FIRST Bank Limited**

LOAN ACCOUNT NUMBER

Registered Office: KRM Towers, 8 Floor, Harrington Road, Chetpet, Chennal - 600031 TEL: +91 44 4564 4000 | FAX: +91 44 4564 4022.

CIN : L65110TN2014PLC097792

#### **PUBLIC NOTICE GOLD AUCTION CUM INVITATION NOTICE**

The Below mentioned borrower has been issued notices to pay the outstanding amount towards the credit facility against Gold ornament savailed by him from IDFC FIRST Bank Limited. Since the borrower has failed to repay the dues under the facility. We are constrained to conduct an auction of the pledged Gold ornaments on 17/12/2025. In the event any surplus amount is realized from this auction, the same will be returned to the concerned borrower and if there is any deficit post the auction, the balance amount shall be recovered from the borrower through appropriate legal proceedings. IDFC FIRST Bank has the authority to remove the following account from the auction without prior intimation. Further IDFC FIRST Bank reserves the right to change the Auction Date without any prior notice.

160769828	MANISH SAHANI	MAUNATH BHANJAN RURAL		
160333274	MANISH KUMAR	PT DD U NAGAR RURAL		
167204172	MOHAMMAD JUNAID	MAUNATH BHANJAN RURAL		
tion will be conducted onlin	e through https://idfcegold.auctiontiger.net	on 17/12/2025 from 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm.		

CUSTOMER NAME

http://gold.samil.in on 17/12/2025 from 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm. By way of this publication the concerned borrower are hereby given final notice and last opportunity to pay the facility recalled amount, with all interest and charges before the schedule auction date failing which the jewellery will be auctioned. Please note that, if the auction does not get completed on the same day due to time limit the bank will re auction the pledged gold ornaments within next 7 days on the same terms and conditions. If the customer is deceased all the conditions pertaining to auction will be applicable to his legal heirs. Date: 09-12-2025 Place: UTTAR PRADESH

### CLASSIFIEDS NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that Sri Jeevan Lal Gugnani S/o Late Sohan Lal has informed that the Original allotment letter no. 9526/21D.Bhu/31 dated 22.12.1978, Original agreement dated 12.11. 1982 registered at Sr. No. 2157/2158 on 27.12.1982 and Original possession letter dated 13.3.1992 of the property i.e. House No. 25/MIG Block No. Z-1, Scheme No. 2, Barra-2 situated at Mohalla Barra-2, Kanpur Nagar had been lost somewhere and not in the custody of present owner. He is intended to sell the said property to Smt Kshama Shukla and Sri Nishant Shukla and they will mortgage the said property in favour of PNB Land Mark Branch. As the PNB Land Mark Branch is going to Grant they will mortgage the said property in favour of PNB Land Mark Branch. As the PNB Land Mark Branch is going to grant finance facility to said Smt Kshama Shukla and Sri Nishant Shukla collaterally securing this finance by creation of Equitable Mortgage over property. The Punjab National Bank Land Mark Branch Kanpur Nagar intending to create Equitable Mortgage in respect of the above mentioned property, details which is given in the notice. Any person claiming any interest or title in the property or otherwise having any objection can make representation to the Bank within Seven days of such notice.

Vivek Awasthi Advocate, Chamber Opposite New Hanuman

Chamber Opposite New Hanuman Temple, Gate No. 4 Near Registrar Office, Civil Court Compound, Kanpur Nagar-208001Mobile: 7007568625

#### Mahaparinirvan **Diwas observed** at RDSO

LUCKNOW Mahaparinirvan Diwas of

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Bharat Ratna Dr Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar was organised at RDSO by the personnel directorate on Monday. A large number of RDSO officers and staff were present on the occasion. Additional Director General Qazi Mairaj Ahmad, who was the chief guest, in his address highlighted the multifaceted personality and contributions of Dr Ambedkar.

transformed education into a tool of empowerment and liberation. "His vision was of a nation where every individual could live with dignity, which is the true identity of a developed nation," Ahmad said.

He said that Dr Ambedkar

## **Ensure identity verification to** keep 'intruders' out: CM Yogi

Lucknow

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, on Monday, urged citizens to remain alert and get identity verification done before employing someone, asserting that Uttar Pradesh has launched strict and decisive action against illegal immigrants to safeguard security and social balance. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's appeal comes amid an ongoing crackdown against infiltrators across the state following his instructions to the authorities last week.

In a post on X, the chief minister said, "The honourable Supreme Court has made an extremely important remark during a hearing that a red carpet cannot be laid out for infiltrators. This makes it clear that infiltrators are not acceptable at any cost."

He said resources belong to citizens and not to illegal immigrants, underlining that maintaining security, social

equilibrium and a strong law and order ance of a few from the custody of system in the state remains his government's top priority.

The Supreme Court on December 2 sharply questioned the legal status of



Rohingyas living in India and asked whether "intruders" should be given a "red carpet welcome" while the country's own citizens grapple with

A bench comprising Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi made the observations while hearing a habeas corpus petition filed by a rights activist alleging disappearauthorities in New Delhi.

The chief minister urged people to remain vigilant and ensure proper identity verification before hiring anyone. The security of the state is our collective responsibility because security is the foundation of prosperity," he said.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath pointed out that a stringent drive has been initiated against Rohingya and Bangladeshi nationals residing illegally in the state.

All urban local bodies have been directed to identify suspected foreign nationals and prepare lists, he added. Benefits meant for the deprived under

welfare schemes cannot be allowed to be diverted, the chief minister asserted. "For this purpose, a special document

verification drive is being conducted and infiltrators are being identified and sent to detention centres for further action," he said. adding "Detention centres are being set up in each division to facilitate the process.'

## Yogi personally reviews SIR progress

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

With the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party intensifying campaign, urging people to actively participate in the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of voter lists, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has hit the ground to personally review the progress of the exercise.

The BJP has already galvanised its cadre at the grassroots level to actively participate in the SIR process.

Chief Minister Yogi, on Sunday, held SIR-related review meetings at the divisional level of the party in Aligarh on Sunday. On Monday, he visited Moradabad, Ghaziabad and Agra. Sources said the chief minister would be covering at least three more divisions on Tuesday.

Monday also issued an open letter to the people, 'Yogi Ki Pati', cautioning them about zero tolerance for infiltrators and advocating for citizen vigilance.

The move comes less than a week after BJP's national general secretary (organization) BL Santosh, as well as Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh senior functionaries held a meeting with the chief minister and the two deputy chief ministers at Yogi Adityanath's official residence in Lucknow and discussed various issues.

minister personally monitoring the exercise, it would help in finding a solution on the spot for issues raised by the cadre.

Sources said with the chief

At each of these meetings at the divisional level, MPs, MLAs, MLCs as well as BIP

office-bearers and divisional in-charges were called for a review with the chief minister himself. He asked them about last minute hitches, if any, and directed that no eligible person is left out and no fake entries are allowed into

BJP's Aligarh district president Rajeev Sharma said public representatives of the party and office-bearers from Aligarh, Hathras, Etah and Kasganj were called for a meeting with the chief minister on Sunday. A senior BJP leader involved

with the SIR process said "the chief minister asked if we were facing any issues and directed us to ensure that no eligible person is left out and the party cadre are working accordingly".

He said almost 98 per cent of the SIR work in Aligarh was complete. He said the biggest

identification and inclusion of those currently residing outside the area who were

left out of the exercise. A party leader, who was part of the review meeting with the chief minister in Moradabad, said special focus was on Vidhan Sabha constituencies where the victory or loss margin was less than

10,000. Sources said the slow progress in some constituencies, like in Sambhal, was pointed out to the chief minister and he gave directions to deploy more workers to ensure those eligible are included in the voter list.

While the chief minister's review is limited to party representatives and officebearers, sources said his ground visit has also put the administration on alert in the districts he is visiting.

structural reforms continue

to be essential for ensuring

the DISCOMS do not face

operational inefficiencies

again. By demonstrating that

UDAY has played a significant

role in stabilising DISCOM

finances and reducing

interest burdens, the study

acts as a roadmap to address

persistent financial stress in

India's power distribution

## **AKTU V-C's emphasis on** cybersecurity awareness

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Technical University JP Pandey Vice-Chancellor stated that cybersecurity awareness should not only reach urban residents but also farmers living in rural areas, because in the future cyberattacks and cyber warfare will become more frequent.

He expressed these views during the inauguration of a six-day bootcamp on cryptography organised by the Innovation Hub on Monday.

He stated that AKTU has been using cryptography in examinations for quite some time. This technology has not only ensured transparen-

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

The staff of an ambulance from

a private hospital in

Krishnanagar allegedly fled

after abandoning the body of a

man at Lokbandhu Hospital on

Monday morning. The incident

was captured on CCTV cameras

installed at the hospital.

Following information from

Lokbandhu Hospital, the

Krishnanagar police arrived at

I ucknow

ing examination-related expenses. He added that we should put this knowledge into practice.

The six-day workshop will be particularly beneficial for youth. On the first day, Dr Puneet Mishra and Vijay Kumar from Lucknow University shared their experiences with students. Associate Dean Dr Anui Kumar Sharma, Vandana Sharma and others were

Meanwhile Director General of Technical Education, Selva Kumari J, visited Dr API Abdul Kalam Technical University on Monday. During her visit, she held a meeting with Vice-

Ambulance staff abandon body, flee

According to the police, the

ambulance brought a man

from a private hospital to

Lokbandhu Hospital. It was

alleged that the man had died

before reaching the hospital

and ambulance staff left the

body in the emergency ward

When Lokbandhu Hospital

authorities found the man dead

and his body abandoned, they

informed the police. Police

and fled immediately.

mortem examination.

cy but also helped in reduc- Chancellor Prof JP Pandey, Registrar Reena Singh and Finance Officer Keshav Singh to review the university's progress.

She discussed the activities of the Innovation Hub and gathered information about the initiatives being taken for innovation and entrepreneurship across the state. After the meeting, she also visited the state's first Infosys Makers Lab established at AKTU. She examined the advanced lab carefully and learned about the training process provided to students.

Pro-Vice-Chancellor Prof Rajeev Kumar, Director of the Centre for Advanced Studies Prof Rajeev Kumar, and others were present.

phone, the deceased was iden-

tified as Karamveer Singh (37) of

Daroga Kheda, Sarojini Nagar.

deceased's family about the

incident.

Police informed the

The police have sent the

body for postmortem examina-

## **LU V-C reviews**

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Under the inspection of the Kautilya Bhavan.

During the inspection, the vice-chancellor reviewed the work and provided necesensuring quality, confidenevaluation process. The vice-

All superintendents and teachers in charge of examination and evaluation were present. They briefed the vice-chancellor on the functioning of the evaluation centre, security arrangements, scanning procedures and measures adopted to ensure confidentiality of answer sheets. The vice-chancellor appreciated modern infrastructure of evaluation centre. well-organised documentation and promptness of staff. She instructed that all evaluation work should be completed within the stipulated timeframe and that every effort

tion and initiated further proceedings. Police stated that the cause of the death of the youth will only be clear once the postmortem examination report is received. Police are the spot, took possession of the found a mobile phone on the also looking for the ambulance body and sent it for post-victim. Based on the mobile staff.

IDFC FIRST

बैंक ऑफ़ बड़ौदा Bank of Baroda

Civil Lines Branch: 15/291, Onkar Chamber, Civil Lines, Kanpur

POSSESSION NOTICE

(As per Appendix IV read with rule 8(1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002) Whereas, The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the Bank of Baroda under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand Notice dated 2nd September 2025 and also published on 12th September 2025, calling upon the Borrower Shri Tushar Tripathi S/o Shri Rajesh Tripathi, R/o ; K.B. 199, Nai Basti Road, Barra-2, Barra, Kanpur Nagar to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs. 17,07,256.52 (Rs. Seventeen lakhs Sever thousand Two hundred Fifty Six and Fifty Two paisa only) together with further interest thereon at the contractual rate plus costs, charges and expenses within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The Borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower and the Public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under sub-section (4) of section 13 of the Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002 on this the 4th day of December of the year 2025.

The Borrowers/Guarantors/Mortgagors in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to dea with the property and any dealings with the property/ies will be subject to the charge of Bank of Baroda, Civil Lines Branch, Kanpur aggregating dues as on Dated 31-08-2025 of Rs. 17,07,256.52 (Rs. Seventeen lakhs Seven thousand Two hundred Fifty Six and Fifty Two paisa only) plus further interest and charges/expenses

The Borrower's attention is invited to provision of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Description of Immoveable Property:

Property: Freehold Plot/House No. E-1/217, Block EWS, (Mirzapur) Scheme Ratanpur Extension Part-1, Kanpur Nagar in the name of Shri Tushar Tripathi S/o Shri Rajesh Tripathi Area: 30 Sq. Mtr., Bounded-North: 7.50 Mtr. Road, South: Plot No. E /1/256, East: Plot No.

Date: 04-12-2025 Place : Kanpur **Authorised Officer** 

#### IDFC FIRST Bank Limited

(erstwhile Capital First Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited) CIN : L65110TN2014PLC097792

Registered Office: KRM Towers, 8 Floor, Harrington Road, Chetpet, Chennai - 600031. TEL: +91 44 4564 4000 | FAX: +91 44 4564 4022.

**PUBLIC NOTICE** 

#### **GOLD AUCTION CUM INVITATION NOTICE** The Below mentioned borrower has been issued notices to pay the outstanding amount towards the credit facility again:

Gold ornament savalled by him from IDFC FIRST Bank Limited. Since the borrower has failed to repay the dues under the facility. We are constrained to conduct an auction of the pledged Gold ornaments on 17/12/2025. In the event any surplus amount is realized from this auction, the same will be returned to the concerned borrower and if there is any deficit post the auction, the balance amount shall be recovered from the borrower through appropriate legal proceedings. IDFC FIRST Bank has the authority to remove the following account from the auction without prior intimation. Further IDFC FIRST Bank reserves the right to change the Auction Dale without any prior notice. LOAN ACCOUNT NUMBER CUSTOMER NAME **BRANCH NAME** 

160346255	SAUD ALI ANSARI	PADRAUNA RURAL		
159447140	MITHILESH SHUKLA	GORAKHPUR BRANCH		
174185859	DEVENDRA MISHRA	BASTI RURAL		
161057932	SANTOSH NARAYAN	PADRAUNA RURAL		
170471740	PRAMOD KUMAR SINGH	AYODHYA MBL		
159454912	GAJENDRA KUMAR NAGRE	CHHINDWARA RURAL		

Auction will be conducted online through https://idfcegold.auctiontiger.net on 17/12/2025 from 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm. http://gold.samil.in on 17/12/2025 from 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm. By way of this publication the concerned borrower are hereby given final notice and last opportunity to pay the facility recalled amount, with all interest and charges before the schedule auction date failing which the jewellery will be auctioned. Please note that, if the auction does not get completed on the same day due to time limit the bank will re auction the pledged gold ornaments within next 7 days on the same terms and conditions. If the customer is deceased all the conditions pertaining to auction will be applicable to his legal heirs. Date: 09-12-2025 Place: UTTAR PRADESH

## evaluation work

Lucknow

odd-semester examination arrangements for the academic session 2025-26, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Lucknow, Prof Manuka Khanna on Monday inspected the newly-constructed evaluation centre located at

progress of the evaluation sary directions to the officials present. She emphasised tiality and timeliness in the chancellor stated that strengthening the evaluation system is essential for maintaining academic credibility of the university

should be made to avoid any

#### MC reviews 'rain basera' **facilities**

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE Lucknow

In view of increasing cold the Municipal Corporation has accelerated relief and preparedness efforts.

**Municipal Commissioner** Gaurav Kumar on Monday inspected various 'rain baseras' (shelter homes) in the city to review the arrangements.

During the inspection, he assessed the progress of repair and renovation works and issued necessary directions to the officials con-

Additional Municipal Commissioner Dr Arvind Kumar Rao, Chief Engineer Mahesh Verma, and officers of the concerned zones were also present. The inspection began at

the Jiamau shelter home in Zone 1 where the municipal commissioner reviewed the painting and cleaning work. He instructed that all shelter homes complete cleanliness and painting tasks at the earliest. He then visited the Laxman Mela rain basera and the Chakbast rain basera as well. During the inspection,

Gaurav Kumar directed that clear signage boards be installed at every shelter home so that people do not face any difficulty in locating them. He instructed that arrangements for quilts, mattresses and blankets be strengthened and old items be replaced.

The chief engineer was directed to ensure that all essential work is completed at the earliest.

#### **IIML studies impact of Ujwal DISCOM Yojana** THE DETAILED ASSESSMENT OF POST-UDAY emphasises that deeper

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE Lucknow

The faculty of Indian Institute of Management Lucknow have conducted a research study exploring the effectiveness of Ujwal DISCOM Assurance Yoiana (UDAY), one of India's major policy interventions in the power sector. The study specifically assesses whether the debt restructuring through the UDAY Programme, which included transferring a major portion of power distributing companies' (DISCOMs) debt to state governments and issuing state-backed bonds, helped in reducing financial stress, enhancing operational efficiency and overall profitability of power distributing companies in India. The study also provides insights on implications of such a debt transfer mechanism on long-term

financial discipline. The findings of this

FINANCIAL METRICS CONDUCTED BY THE RESEARCH TEAM HIGHLIGHTS THE SUCCESS OF DEBT RESTRUCTURING IN REVITALISING THE POWER SECTOR. research have been pub-

lished in a prestigious journal, in a paper co-authored by Senior Professor, Prof D Tripati Rao, along with Assistant Professor, Prof Himadri Shekhar Chakrabarty, and research scholar from IIM Lucknow Pratik Biswas.

The research study conducted by IIM Lucknow faculty significantly contributes to ongoing national debate around nature of power-sector reforms in India. The detailed assessment of post-UDAY financial metrics conducted by the research team highlights the success of debt restructuring in revitalising the power sector. Additionally, it under-

scores need to build on current gains to ensure continued financial sustainability and operational effectiveness across the sector. While UDAY addressed immediate

OSBI

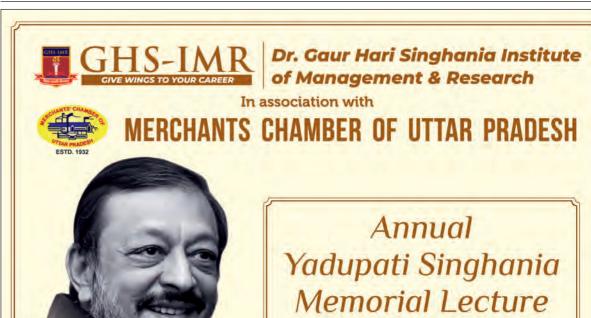
financial pressures, the study क्षेत्रीय व्यवसायिक कार्यालय – 1 माल रोड, कानपुर। पिन कोड–208001

भारतीय स्टेट बैंक किराये/पट्टे हेतु परिसर की आवश्यकता

भारतीय रटेट बैंक. क्षेत्रीय व्यवसायिक कार्यालय-।, मालरोड कानपुर द्वारा भारतीय स्टेट बैंक की निम्न शाखा / कार्यालय हेतु किराये पर परिसर लेने के लिए जिला कानपुर में वाणिज्यिक उपयोगार्थ आवेदन आमंत्रित हैं: कल्यानपुर, फ्लोर एरिया लगभग 186 वर्ग मीटर (2000 वर्ग फुट)। पूर्ण दस्तावेज बैंक की वेबसाइट https://bank.sbi->SBI in the news->Procurement news से डाउनलोड किए जा सकते हैं। कोई भी शुद्धिकरण / परिवर्तन हुआ तो वह हमारी बैंक की वेबसाइट पर उपलब्ध होगा। आवेदन जमा करने के अंतिम तिथि 04.01.

दिनांक - 08.12.2025

क्षेत्रीय प्रबंधक



Shri Yadupati Singhania Industrialist. Visionary. Nation Builder



Chief Orator & Chief Guest Prof. S. Somanath

Professor & Former Chairman, Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) Advisor Space, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh

Understanding Science for the Greater Good

Topic : Space Technology, Applications and Business Opportunities

Tuesday, December 09, 2025 at 5:30 PM

Venue: Merchants Chamber of Uttar Pradesh Civil Lines, Kanpur-208001













## CM promises financial support for medical treatment at Janata Darshan

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Assuring financial support to those seeking help for medical treatment, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Monday directed officials to ensure that no patient suffers due to lack of funds.

During 'Janata Darshan', the chief minister met citizens who had approached him with grievances and issued instructions for their time-bound resolution, according to an official statement issued here.

It said 42 people attended the programme, including five who submitted applications seeking financial assistance for treatment.

Directing officials to obtain cost estimates from hospitals in such cases. Aditvanath said the government has been extending financial assistance for medical treatment from day one of its



'No treatment will be affected due to a shortage of money. The government will always stand by any needy person who requires financial help for treatment," he said.

People also raised complaints related to police functioning and illegal encroachments. The chief minister

accepted all applications and instructed officials to resolve issues concerning the public on a priority basis and subsequently seek feedback from the complainants.

The government is fully committed to addressing the problems of every aggrieved person, the statement said.

safer experience.

He added that awareness efforts on environmental conservation are also being

Bird Sanctuary in Agra at a cost of Rs 167.85 lakh, making the site even more appealing for nature lovers and bird

Parking areas, pathways, nature trails, a souvenir shop, watchtowers, signage, toilets and RO water coolers have been added to ensure a more enriching experience for visitors.

Similarly, tourist amenities at Haiderpur Wetland in Muzaffarnagar have been significantly enhanced at a cost of Rs 165.71 lakh.

Visitors now benefit from a newly-developed entrance gate, nature trail, nature camp, comfortable benches, signage, a watchtower for elevated viewing, as well as this state-of-the-art dome

Ramsar sites in UP come alive with migratory birds

a canteen, reception, round will allow visitors to explore hut and RO water cooler. the sanctuary's biodiversity,

These additions have transformed Haiderpur Wetland into a more organised, visitor-friendly and attrac-

tive eco-tourism destination. immersive experience.

Being developed at an estimated cost of Rs 280.44 lakh, migratory bird species and the entire wetland ecosystem through an interactive

Uttar Pradesh is gaining international recognition for its rich biodiversity. The state is home to ten Ramsar sites: Nawabganj Bird Sanctuary (Unnao), Parvati Arga Bird Sanctuary (Gonda), Saman Bird Sanctuary (Mainpuri), Samaspur Bird Sanctuary (Raebareli), Sandi Bird Nawar Jheel (Etawah), Sur Sarovar Bird Sanctuary (Agra), Upper Ganga River (Brijghat to Narora stretch), Bakhira Wildlife Sanctuary (Sant Kabir Nagar) and Haiderpur

"These wetlands attract nature enthusiasts and tourists alike. The rare migratory bird species that nest here give these sites high value under international conservation standards. The state government's continued efforts in wetland conservation, development of visitor facilities and promotion of eco-tourism are offering tourists an excellent opportunity to connect with nature," said a tourism offi-

with the objective of conserving wetlands.

#### **IDFC FIRST Bank Limited**

CIN : L65110TN2014PLC097792

(erstwhile Capital First Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited)

Registered Office: KRM Towers, 8 Floor, Harrington Road, Chetpet, Chennal - 600031 TEL: +91 44 4564 4000 | FAX: +91 44 4564 4022.

#### **PUBLIC NOTICE GOLD AUCTION CUM INVITATION NOTICE**

The Below mentioned borrower has been issued notices to pay the outstanding amount towards the credit facility again Gold ornament savailed by him from IDFC FIRST Bank Limited. Since the borrower has failed to repay the dues under the facility. We are constrained to conduct an auction of the pledged Gold ornaments on 17/12/2025. In the event any surpluamount is realized from this auction, the same will be returned to the concerned borrower and if there is any deficit post the auction, the balance amount shall be recovered from the borrower through appropriate legal proceedings. IDFC FIRST Bank has the authority to remove the following account from the auction without prior intimation. Further IDFC FIRST Bank reserves the right to change the Auction Date without any prior notice.

LOAN ACCOUNT NUMBER	CUSTOMER NAME	BRANCH NAME		
169043705	DOLLY PAL	ALIGANJ LUCKNOW BRANCH		
159731961	RAVI SHANKER MISHRA	SARSAWAN RURAL		
171467875	SONU MITHAILAL	JANKIPURAM BRANCH		
173433640	ANIL KUMAR	SARSAWAN RURAL		
173266116	PANKAJ SINGH	ASHIYANA LUCKNOW		
168828190	SHOBHA DEVI	ASHOK MARG LUCKNOW		
166264911	SATYAPAL YADAV	ASHIYANA LUCKNOW		
168576511	RACHIT RAJ JAISWAL	AYODHYA RURAL		
170625553	PRANJAL SINGH	LUCKNOW VIBHUTI KHAND		
159091481	RICHA MISHRA	ALIGANJ LUCKNOW BRANCH		
174181752	HARSHITA YADAV	ASHOK MARG LUCKNOW		
160282281	DILIP KUMAR	BELA PRATAPGARH RURAL		
160304594	MOHAMMAD IRFAN	SITAPUR RURAL		

http://gold.samil.in on 17/12/2025 from 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm. By way of this publication the concerned borrower are hereby given final notice and last opportunity to pay the facility recalled amount, with all interest and charges before the schedule auction date failing which the jewellery will be auctioned. Please note that, if the auction does not get completed on the same day due to time limit the bank will re auction the pledged gold ornaments within next 7 days on the same terms and conditions. If the customer is deceased all the conditions pertaining to auction will be applicable to his legal heirs Date: 09-12-2025 Place: UTTAR PRADESH

#### **IDFC FIRST Bank Limited**

CIN: L65110TN2014PLC097792 Registered Office: KRM Towers, 8th Floor, Harrington Road, Chetpet, Chennai - 600031. TEL: +91 44 4564 4000 | FAX: +91 44 4564 4022.



APPENDIX IV [Rule 8(1)] POSSESSION NOTICE (For immovable property)

Whereas the undersigned being the authorized officer of IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Limited and amalgamat with IDFC Bank Limited) under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002, and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) of the said Act read with [rule 3] of the Security Interest (Enforcement Rules, 2002 issued a demand notices calling upon the Borrower/ Co-borrowers and Guarantors to repay the amount mentioned in the demand notice appended below within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice together with further interest and other charges

from the date of demand notice till payment/realization. The Borrower/ Co-Borrowers/ Guarantors having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower/ Co-Borrowers Guarantors and public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under sub-section (4) of Section 13 of the Act read with rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules

LOAN ACCOUNT NUMBER BORROWER/S/ & GUARANTORS NAME	and the second section of the second second	DEMAND NOTICE		DATE AND	
	DESCRIPTION OF THE MORTGAGED PROPERTIES	DATE	OUTSTANDING AMOUNT (RS.)	TYPE OF POSSESSION TAKEN	
32086608	1.SUBHASH CHANDRA DWIVEDI, 2. NEETU DWIVEDI	ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL OF ENTIRE FIRST FLOOR WITH HALF ROOF RIGHTS COVERED AREA OF FIRST FLOOR 147.897 SQ. METER WITH UNDIVIDED SHARE IN THE LAND - 79.00 SQ. METER, AT NEW HOUSE NO. 8/207-A-1 (OLD NO. 8/20A), OVER PLOT NO. 28 (PART), BLOCK-M, SCHEME-7, GUTAIYA, SITUATED AT ARYA NAGAR, KANPUR NAGAR, UTTAR PRADESH-208002, AND BOUNDED AS: EAST: HOUSE NO. 8/207, NORTH: 12.09 WIDE ROAD, S O U T H: 3.048 MTR. WIDE STREET	13.09.2025	Rs. 59,62,660.58/-	Possession 05-12-2025
140831227	1.VIKAS KUMAR VERMA, 2. SARITA VERMA, 3. AJAY KUMAR VERMA, 4. SARITA ENTERPRISES	ALL THE PIECE AND PARCEL OF SHOP NO.35 MEASURING 19.95 SQ. MTRS., SITUATED ON THE UPPER GROUND FLOOR IN COMMERCIAL COMPLEX AT EXPRESS PLAZA, RAKSHA KHAND (UDYAN-II,) SHARDA NAGAR YOGNA, RAEBARELI ROAD, PARGANA / TEHSIL & DISTRICT: LUCKNOW, UTTAR PRADESH 226014, AND BOUNDED AS: NORTH: CORRIDOR, SOUTH: PARKING, EAST: SHOP NO. 34 WEST: SHOP NO. 36	19.07.2025	Rs. 18,45,728,99/-	Possession 05-12-2025
13531486	1.ABHISHEK MISHRA, 2. PUSHPA MISHRA	ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL OF A HOUSE WITH PLOT AREA 950 SQ. FT, PART OF PLOT NO. 20, 21, & 22, KHASRA NO. 111SA, SITUATED AT TAKROHI, WARD SHAHEED BHAGAT SINGH, DISTRICT: LUCKNOW, UTTAR PRADESH-226016, NORTH: REST PART PLOT OF SELLER, SOUTH: PLOT DEEGAR, WEST: PLOT DEEGAR EAST: ROAD 20 FT. WIDE	30.06.2025	Rs. 4,44,515.44/-	Possession 05-12-2025

The Borrower/ Co-borrowers/ Guarantors in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited) for an amount mentioned in the demand notice together with further interest and other charge: from the date of demand notice till payment/realization

Date: 05-12-2025

**Authorised Office** IDFC FIRST Bank Limited Place: UTTAR PRADESH (erstwhile Capital First Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited)

#### all 10 internationally recogcarried out regularly. nised Ramsar sites in Uttar So far, two development Pradesh have come alive projects at Agra and with the chirping of migrato-Haiderpur have been suc-Wetland (Muzaffarnagar). cessfully completed. These rare species travel The minister said that thousands of kilometres tourist facilities had been every year and find safe and developed at Sur Sarovar suitable habitats in these

An advanced AR-VR (Augmented Reality Virtual Reality) dome is under construction at Nawabganj Bird Sanctuary in Unnao to offer tourists a modern and

and immersive format.

Ramsar sites are wetlands of international importance designated under the convention signed in 1971 in the city of Ramsar in Iran. This treaty is an intergovernmental environmental convention established by UNESCO

## **KVT** priests welcome guests

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

With the arrival of December,

wetlands, which are now

fully prepared to welcome

The Uttar Pradesh Eco-

Tourism Development Board

is consistently upgrading

visitor facilities, strengthen-

ing conservation measures

and promoting sustainable

tourism. These efforts are

helping the state's rich bio-

diversity reach new heights.

Minister laiveer Singh

pointed out that the Uttar

Pradesh Eco-Tourism

Development Board has

been working continuously

to protect and develop

natural heritage so that vis-

itors can enjoy a better and

Tourism and Culture

On the arrival of the fourth group of the Kashi Tamil Sangamam on Monday, the priests of the Kashi Vishwanath Temple (KVT) welcomed the guests with a shower of flowers, the sound of drums and Vedic

All the guests expressed their devotion at the feet of Sri Vishweshwara with the chants of 'Har Har Mahadev'and 'Vanakkam Following the welcome,

the temple administration conducted a detailed tour of the grand corridors of the Shri Kashi Vishwanath Dham. During the tour, they learned about the Dham's historical form, architecture, newly- constructed facilities and the ever-growing flow of devotees. Upon completion of the tour, lunch was arranged for guests at Annakshetra, run by the

The 'prasad' served at Annakshetra gave everyone a deep experience of Kashi's tradition of service and hospitality. The visit and tour of the fourth group of the Kashi Tamil Sangamam further strengthened the cultural, spiritual and historical ties between the two communities. This day will be remembered as an important symbol of confluence of Kashi and Tamil tradi-

The stream of visitors from Tamil Nadu continues to arrive at Kashi Tamil Sangamam-4.0. The fourth group, comprising a large number of agricultural experts, arrived at Banaras railway station by special train to join the Sangamam.

Upon landing at the station, the guests were given a grand welcome with traditional drum playing, flower showers, and chants of 'Har Har Mahadev' and 'Vanakkam

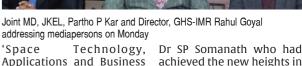
## Yadupati Singhania lecture today PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Kanpur

The Dr Gaur Hari Singhania Institute of Management Research (GHS-IMR) will organise the second edition of Annual Yadupati Singhania Memorial Lecture on December 9 at the Merchants Chamber of Uttar Pradesh auditorium.

Addressing mediapersons, Joint MD, J K Enterprises Limited, Partho P Kar, said, "It's our tribute to the great visionary leader and our founding Chairman Late Yadupati Singhania.'

He said, "Dr Sreedhara Panicker Somanath, who currently holds the position of the Vikram Sarabhai Distinguished Professor at Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and is Advisor Space, Government of Andhra Pradesh, and has been the Chairman, Space Commission and ISRO, the person under whose leadership Mission Chandrayaan-3 was completed successfully. will be the chief guest and the chief orator of the event. He will be speaking on the topic,



'Space Applications and Business Opportunities.'

The topic is interesting not because it introduces us to how Chandrayaan has influenced us, but because it will enlighten us about the new business opportunities that the launch has opened for our country, India, and even for individuals like us -- the common man of India.

Chairman Abhishek Singhania has set the task last vear to host the Annual Yadupati Singhania Memorial Lecture every year, serving a platform for intellectual engagement and scholarly exchange in the field of science and technology.

Last year Dr Priva Abraham. former Director National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune was here from the field of medicine and, this year it's

achieved the new heights in the field of space technology, through Chandrayaan-3.'

He added that these discussions inspires future generations by exposing the young minds to important ideas and issues, making them a better and responsible citizen

GHS-IMR Director Dr Rahul Goyal said a cinematic tribute to Yadupati Singhania depicting the journey of his life and his achievements will be screened in presence of the guests. Dr Goyal invited all industry experts, academicians and eminent personalities from the business world to attend this event.

"The lecture will be an informative and inspirational delight providing deep insights on innovation, business leadership and socialde-

## Two held in Varanasi for selling codeine-based cough syrup

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

■ Varanasi / Sonbhadra

Police in Varanasi have arrested two men for the illegal sale of codeine-based cough syrup, officials said on Monday.

The arrested duo has been identified as Vishal Kumar Jaiswal and Badal Arya, DCP (Kashi zone) Gaurav Banswal said.

The probe revealed that Shubham Jaiswal of Shaili Traders obtained a drug licence using forged documents and then used it to purchase and sell large quantities of codeine-based cough syrup through various medical firms for recreational drug use

Banswal said that during interrogation, Vishal Kumar and Arya revealed that they met Amit Jaiswal, the proprietor of Shrihari Pharma and

Surgical Agency, and worth approximately Rs 7 financial transactions of Shubham Jaiswal through DSA Pharma, Varanasi.

During the meeting, the accused were lured with the promise of making quick money to join the cough syrup business, which they agreed to.

The Jaiswals then helped the duo obtain a drug licence by preparing forged documents, the DCP said.

The accused said Shubham Jaiswal, through Divesh Jaiswal, paid them a monthly commission ranging between Rs 30,000 and Rs 40,000.

The money received in their accounts was quickly transferred to Shaili Traders' account. Divesh Jaiswal had complete access to their bank account details. He would ask for the OTP when transferring the money.

They conducted business

crore within a year, the officer said.

Vishal Kumar's firm Hari Om Pharma purchased 4,18,000 bottles of cough syrup from Shaili Traders, which were then sold for over Rs 5 crore, Banswal

Arya's firm Kal Bhairav Traders purchased 1,23,000 bottles of cough syrup from Shaili Traders, which were then sold for over Rs 2 crore, he added.

Meanwhile, the Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing into an alleged interstate network involved in illicit trade of regulated cough syrup has found irregularities to the tune of Rs 425 crore in transactions of a Jharkhand-based pharmaceutical firm, an official said in Sonbhadra.

A preliminary scrutiny of

Shaili Traders, which came under the SIT's scanner during the probe, has revealed gross inconsistencies during the past twoyear period, Superintendent of Police (SP) Abhishek Verma said late on Sunday night.

The firm's chartered accountant, Vishnu Agarwal, has been directed to submit all financial transactions, ledgers, and GST-related documents of the company by December 10, he said.

The SP said notices have been issued to the firm's owners, and proprietors of Sonbhadra-based Maa Kripa Medical Store and Shiviksha Firm, and Bhadohi-based Dilip Medical Agency, Ayush Enterprise, and Rajendra & Sons — allegedly involved in the illegal trade network — to appear before the SIT with relevant documents.

The SP further said approximately 30 bank accounts found involved in the illegal cough syrup trade have been

frozen. So far. Rs 60 lakh has been frozen in bank accounts, and the SIT is conducting a thorough investigation of the entire network, including other individuals and firms associated with this illegal

trade, he added. The SIT is investigating a registered at case Robertsganj police station in Uttar Pradesh's Sonbhadra district regarding the illegal trade of the codeine-based

cough syrup. Earlier, large quantities of codeine-based cough syrup seized from Sonbhadra, among other Uttar Pradesh districts, prompting a probe into the

larger interstate network and money trail.

## Police file chargesheet against cleric Tauqeer Raza, 37 others

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Bareilly

Police have filed a chargesheet against cleric Tauqeer Raza, the prime accused in the September 26 violence in Bareilly in wake of the poster row, and 37 others in a local court, officials said on Monday.

Baradari police station filed the chargesheet against Raza, president of the Ittehad-e-Millat Council, his close aide Nafees and others, while investigations are continuing in nine other related cases in which Raza has also been named, they said. The violence had allegedly erupted on

dispute linked to "I Love Muhammad" posters.

According to police, mobs gathered at several locations in the city, hurled petrol bombs at police personnel, resorted to stonepelting and firing, and looted weapons including a riot-control gun.

More than two dozen police personnel were injured in the unrest. That night, 10 cases were

registered across Kotwali. Baradari, Premnagar, Cantt and Qila police stations. Investigations in two key cases registered at Kotwali and Baradari were later transferred to the crime branch.

Senior Superintendent of

Police Anurag Arya said 38 accused, including Raza, were sent to jail following their arrests in the Baradari case, and the chargesheet was filed in court on Saturday after completion of the investigation.

"Investigations in the remaining cases are being expedited. Efforts are on to identify unnamed accused. All identified accused will be sent to jail and no innocent person will be harassed," Arya said. Police said 19 accused were initially named in the case, while 55 more names surfaced during the probe. Of these, a chargesheet has been filed against 38 accused

along with evidence.

## Fire breaks out in tannery

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE Kanpur

A fire broke out in a tannery

in Jajmau on Sunday evening. Six employees jumped out to saved their lives. However, a teenager, who had come to serve tea, sustained burns. Three fire tenders arrived at the scene and after a lot of effort brought the flames under control in two hours. Leather and machinery worth lakhs of rupees were destroyed in the fire.

Mohammad Shariq, a resident of Chamanganj, owns Universal Tannery at Old Toll Plaza in Jajmau. Shariq said that work was underway at

a short circuit suddenly caused a fire in the spray department on the first floor. The fire engulfed the entire floor in no time. A teenager who had come

the tannery on Sunday when

to serve tea suffered minor burns. On receiving the information, three fire tenders arrived at the scene and brought the fire under control. Shariq said that leather

worth lakhs of rupees was destroyed in the fire. CFO Deepak Sharma said

after approximately two hours of hard work, the fire was brought under control. There were no casualties.

September 26 over a

#### 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 the country. 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

5.17 lakh Waqf properties

on UMEED portal uploaded

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 reporters at the Suvarna Vidhana Soudha.

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 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,

To a question that



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

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.

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 dead-

line, 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.

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.

A two-day master trainer

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

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 naming to Deputy CM Ajit Pawar's NCP. Shiv Sena.



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.

## Actress assault case: Kerala Govt to appeal against verdict

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kerala Government on Monday said it will appeal against the verdict in the actress assault case in which Malayalam actor Dileep was acquitted while six others were found guilty.

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 expected," he told reporters, shortly after the court acquitted the actor in the case.

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

■ New Delhi

said. Pointing to the strong stand taken by the prosecution, 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 this regard," he added.

State Cultural Affairs and Cinema Minister Saji Cheriyan also said the Government has always guilty by the court, it was supported the survivor, not the verdict everyone 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

Opposition VD Satheesan said declaring those who 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 conspiracy part in the case and assuring justice to the survivor. Meanwhile, speaking to

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.

When asked whether the 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

Rajasthan will celebrate its first-ever Pravasi Rajasthani Diwas at the Jaipur **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 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 five years, and I invite you all to be a part of this historic growth story of Rising

Rajasthan.' To translate this vision

THE EVENT HAS BEEN ENVISIONED TO STRENGTHEN THE **BOND BETWEEN** RAJASTHAN AND ITS **GLOBAL DIASPORA** 

into action, the programme

will feature sectorial sessions engaging diaspora members, industry leaders, and policymakers 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 December 11-12.

complemented by a dedi-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 connect.

and business leaders,

The event will also be witnessing the annou-ncement of Pravasi Rajasthani Samman Awards honouring distinguished diaspora members for their achievements in business, science, art, philanthropy, and social service, with thirty-three eminent personalities attending as state guests at a venue thoughtfully designed to reflect Rajasthan's rich culture and heritage through a 'Progress Path' showcasing the state Government's achievements and folk artinspired souvenirs that will ensure Pravasi Rajasthanis carry home fond memoof their home land before the celebra-

tions continue with

the Rising Rajasthan

Partnership Conclave on

**Education and Skills Council** meeting (AIESC) held in New 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 Hon. Mr. Andrew Giles MP, Australian Minister for Skills & Training.

The Third Australia-India

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 and Vice-Chancellors & representatives of Australian universities

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



ment, and reaffirmed the commitment to deepen institutional linkages, 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 in the fields of the education, training, research and skill ecosystem.

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

Australia-India education, skills and research partnership, open wider avenues for 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 global priority. 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.

Pradhan further said that 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

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 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 India and between 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.

## **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

## **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.

In another hotspot of the

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 regis-

pied by foreign nationals during their brief stay in the valley were found to be vio-lating 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 Farooq 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 Ğh 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

culture." Referring to Special

## BJP claims LoPs skipped PM's speech out of guilt

Station RM Bagh.



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

They were absent because of the sense of guilt they had in their hearts because their The BJP on Monday alleged that both Leader of own family cheated, deceived Opposition (LoP) Rahul and betrayed the Vande Gandhi and Congress MP Mataram. They knew that Priyanka Gandhi Vadra they wouldn't be able to bear remained absent from the Lok Sabha out of a "sense of 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 of social harmony, and said it Modi spoke about how the was still following the politics 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

protest by Mohammad Ali innah in Lucknow. Terming Modi's speech "historic", Patra said the from the House on such an important day when it is the 150th anniversary of prime minister exposed the Vande Matram and the prime minister is speaking,"

#### it," he told reporters in the Parliament House complex. 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

Patra charged.

He also targeted Nehru for "agreeing" with the sugges-tion 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

Congress and its betrayal towards Vande Mataram.

#### Bengal CM Mamata slams centre over IndiGo crisis **SAUGAR SENGUPTA** ■ Kolkata interests of the people at

HARYANA NOW

"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

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.

Research

Agricultural

and 1.30 pm.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

LARGE FARM

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 BIP-led Centre was only concerned about its votes and not the

large, Banerjee asked "the Government of India to make a plan to resolve the issue," adding, "it seems that the BJP 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, Vidva Sagar." She said "things have come to such a pass that

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

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 year," 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

the kin of the workers. "There is no such particu-

each would be provided to

lar 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 deceased.

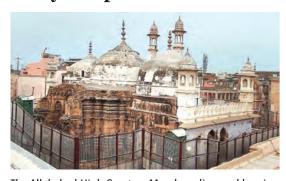


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HC adjourns hearing on plea seeking ASI survey of Gyanvapi's wazukhana



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 Surva 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 advo-cate 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

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, Puniab and Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Telangana, where elections have been notified, the

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

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 be undertaken so that

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 petitioners, 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

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

percentages of practising

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

on a rotational basis.

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



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi

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

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

The judge had, on December 4, directed the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to file a report after verifying the status of the accused in the 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 case. Of the 103 accused, four 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 Manju 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 of 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 court 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

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 (CJI) Surya 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

case for further hearing on

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 unavailable at the moment.

The top court on September 8 sought responses from the Gujarat Government and the ED on Langa's bail plea. While issuing the notices on Langa's bail plea, the bench asked, "What kind of a jour-The top court fixed the nalist is he?" "With due

December 15.

respect, there are some very 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 background to the case also.

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

petitioner has urged the apex

court to declare the 2025 Act

"ultra vires and unconstitu-

persons with disabilities

through deceit would attract

bail plea in the money laundering case on the grounds that if released on bail, preiudice 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 issues, etc."

Over the day, a separate petition seeking directions to the Centre to provide support and refunds to affected passengers was mentioned in the



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

day, sources said. At the Delhi airport, 134 flights were cancelled - 75 departures and 59 arrivals -- while at the Bengaluru airport,

across the country.

some directions in the matter, the

counsel responded in the affirmative.

for hearing on December 10.

The bench said the PIL will be listed

IndiGo has been facing heat from both

the Centre and the passengers for can-

celling 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

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

the carrier cancelled 117 services - 65

arrivals and 62 departures, they said.

Justice Devendra Kumar Upadhyaya the Government had already passed

SC seeks response from Rajasthan on plea challenging validity of anti-conversion law a iail term of 10 to 20 years of India' with separate the apex court. The

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE** New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Monday issued notice to the Rajasthan Government seeking its response on a petition challenging the validity of the State's 2025 law against illegal religious conversions.

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

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

that similar matters are

pending consideration before

tional". The Rajasthan law has a provision of imprisonment for 20 years to life for mass conversions through deception and a jail term of seven to 14 years for conversions by fraudulent During the hearing on means. Conversion of minors, Monday, Solicitor General women, Scheduled Castes, Tushar Mehta told the bench Scheduled Tribes, and and a fine of at least ₹10 lakh. In September, another

bench of the apex court 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 Delhi High Court. A bench of Chief 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



extreme poverty. Global comparisons illustrate

what is possible. The African Continental Free

Trade Area is projected to raise Africa's region-

al 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 reser-

voir of cultural connections that can be har-

nessed to rebuild trust even when politics stag-

nates. India's soft power initiatives, such as the

Buddhist Circuit, the revival of

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

BETWEEN INDIA

AND PAKISTAN

Santhosh Mathew is a

Professor at Puducherry

University, and Inputs by

**Denny Thomas** 

dailypioneer

@veranani

Nalanda University, the HOWEVER, HAS International Solar Alliance and the International Big Cat Alliance, **BEEN CONSISTENTLY** political divides. These efforts draw UNDERMINED BY on the ethos of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam — the **GEOPOLITICAL** world is one family — and demonstrate that meaningful regional collaboration does not MISTRUST, always require formal institutional momentum. **PARTICULARLY** 

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 each day, yet UNICEF estimates that more than half will lack the create platforms that transcend **SINCE 1865** 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.

# PIC TALK



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

PHOTO: PTI

#### DIGITAL EXPERIENCE

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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

Confronting popcorn brain in the digital age



**SAKSHI SETHI** 

#### **OPINION** THE PIONEER

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,

reflective tasks-reading, writing, analytical reasoningbegin to feel burdensome. The very founda-

tion of real learning is compromised. The 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. becomes a rarity.

Teachers now carry a dual mandate: to deliver curriculum 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 signs are subtle yet unmistakable. A student where depth is celebrated over speed, where sits in class eyes fixed on the teacher but observation matters as much as reaction. Simple routines-journalling, mindful breath-

ing, silent thinking-can gently retrain wandering 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

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.

**BAL GOVIND | NOIDA** 

Please send your letter to the info@dailypioneer.com. In not more than 250 words. We appreciate your feedback

A MYILSAMI | TAMIL NADU





# 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 **KUMAR JHA SINHA** 

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 six districts.

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-

India's Viksit Bharat aspiration by 2047 transcends

traditional capital investment. While tangible infrastructure remains critical, the primary con-

straint to sustained, high-quality growth is the

knowledge ecosystem deficit. To successfully tran-

sition from a middle-income economy to a fully

developed nation, India must aggressively culti-

vate a robust, home-grown intellectual infrastruc-

ture; one encompassing R&D, credible think tanks,

advanced data infrastructure, and scalable

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 emerg-

ing markets like China (2 per cent). This places

India well under the global average of approxi-

mately 1.8 per cent, reflecting a structural under-

investment in innovation. This structural weak-

ness is compounded by a profound imbalance:

only about 5 per cent of India's R&D spending

comes from the private sector, compared to

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 govern-

ment'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 trans-

parent governance, mandated industry co-

funding, and a focus on measurable outcomes

This chronic underinvestment depresses inno-

vation output, technological absorption, and pro-

ductivity growth. OECD studies show that a 1 per

cent rise in business R&D increases productivi-

ty by approximately 0.13 per cent, and an equiv-

alent 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

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 glob-

ally (WIPO). The gap, though, remains large. India's

patent portfolio is still only a small fraction of

China's or the United States', and over 70 per cent

its productivity gap with peer economies

tied to national priorities.

While the 2025-26 Union Budget increased

approximately 70 per cent in the US.

domestic innovation capacity.



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

> BKP Sinha is Former PCCF. UP and Arvind Kumar Jha is

LEFT OUT

@dailypioneer The Pioneer

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 four hectares. The Ministry of Tribal Affairs

(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 objective science. As a result, while many states, including major ones such as Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh, reportedly discontinued their use,

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 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 traders, while the intended empowerment of FDST and OTFD communities for resource conservation and democratic local governance envisioned by the FRA 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 facilitated 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

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

200 institutions, signalling an ecosystem that







**KARKUN** 

remains narrow, institutionally shallow, and programme, built on modest budgets and indige-partnerships.

KUNTALA nous capabilities, has delivered world-class missions such as Chandrayaan and Mangalyaan at a fraction of global costs. India's digital public infrastructure (DPI) has revolutionised financial inclusion and service deliv-

ery 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-

Contextualisation: Bridging the gap between academic research and on-the-ground implementation, generating timely, granular, India-focused PAHLÉ INDIA FOUNDATION 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 structural and social reforms. 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 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 competitive levels. Set a clear national target for R&D

of high-quality publications come from fewer than 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 Yet India has proven that strategic investments 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 The Pioneer research bodies. Create a dedicated Viksit Bharat Knowledge Fund or SINCE 1865 similar endowment, allowing multiyear 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 globally in consultancy, policy research, data for evidence-based PUTTING INDIA FIRST TO MAKE INDIA FIRST data analytics, design, and technology

> 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 innovation-driven growth.

> 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.

Ravi Pokhama is Executive Director at Pahle India Foundation & Kuntala Karkun is a Senior Fellov at Pahle India Foundation



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 The Pioneer

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 rejuvenation. 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 KUMAR SINGH 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

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 appeasement 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 BJP, 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 commentator, former journalist and teaches Political Science at DDU Gorakhpur



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#### **BLASÉ CAPITAL**

**SENSEX-ED** 



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 val-

uations 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 Pfizer, the largest manufacturer in the US, paid and China were the favourites, South Korea, 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 inten\$1.25 billion to a Chinese biotech firm for the 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. In conjunction with the policy-makers, Chinese

The Pioneer

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' spends billions of dollars to launch a new drug,

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 rein-

vented 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 security, 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 these challenges as the US questions its drug-effi-

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.

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, passengers 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 ity over a few years. The medium-term

# 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 profitabil-

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 struc-

ture 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

for another nine per cent of the revenues.

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

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



Author is the Co-Founder and CEO of i-exceed technology solutions. the company behind Appzillon, a leading digital banking platform used by 125+ over 30 years of experience in banking technology, he has been at the forefront of driving global digital transformation. Prior to founding i-exceed, he played Oracle's flagship FLEXCUBE ecognised for his leadership, innovation and flawless execution in

processes more than 900 million transactions 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

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 evidence, transparent lineage and clear or routing anomalies. The human officer adds at the right moment.

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

#### **Decision packs: engineering context**

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,

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**

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 AI 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



**ASEERVATHAM ACHARY** 

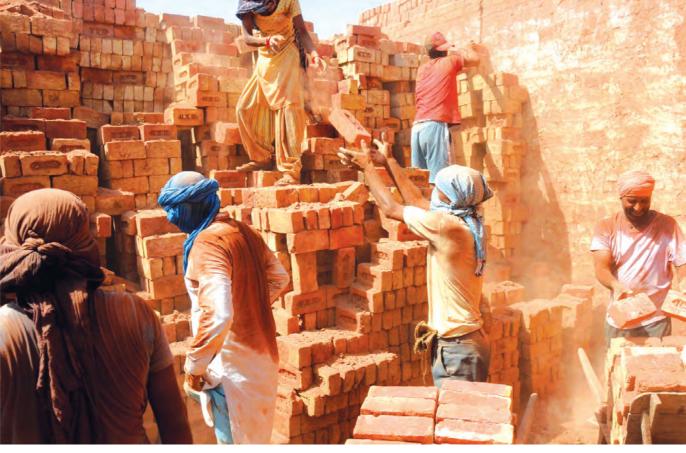
India, that is Bharat had long been burdened by laws created during the British regime, shaped by a colonial mentality that openly viewed Bharativas as their slaves and servants. Those laws were never meant to empower the people of this land.

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 Employment (Standing Orders) 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

> Author is a National coordinator of digital library, library and

Aseervatham.achary Dr. Aseervatha

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

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 check-ups and regulated working hours. In hazardous industries. annual medical tests and safety committees are mandatory. Women are empowered to work safely even in 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 essential workplace facilities.

#### **Additional transformative** reforms under the labour codes

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 including transgender persons.

duced focusing on guidance and compliance support rather than fear and harassment. Disputes will now be resolved in a time bound manner through two member Industrial Tribunals giving workers and employers faster and predictable outcomes. Paperwork has been simplified through single registration,

facilitator model has been intro-

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 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, calling it an important 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.

## 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. Led by Benin army officer Lt. Col. Pascal Tigri, eight soldiers appeared in a broadcast announcing the removal of President Patrice Talon, dissolution of the Government and suspension of all state institutions.

By Sunday afternoon, the coup was foiled by Benin's military, supported by Nigerian air and ground forces, which launched a series of attacks against fleeing mutineers. At least a dozen soldiers were arrested while others remained at large Monday.

## **TURKEY**

#### Officer killed in drug raid

A police officer died on Monday after being shot and seriously wounded during an early morning drug raid in Istanbul, Turkish officials said. Officer Emre Albayrak died of his wounds in a hospital. He was part of a special operations team carrying out the raid in the Cekmekoy district on Istanbul's Asian side. "Our police officer Emre Albayrak, who was seriously injured in a narcotics operation in the Cekmekoy district, could not be saved despite all interventions in the hospital to which he was taken and became a martyr," the Istanbul Governor's Office said in a

The man who opened fire on police was killed, and two other suspects were detained, the office said. Turkiye has experienced a rise in drug-related crime in recent years. There was a 23 per cent rise in drugrelated incidents last year.

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

**ASSOCIATED PRESS** ■ Kyiv

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 proposal. 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."

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 Moscow.

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 four-year conflict he says has cost far too many lives. Zelenskyy said Saturday

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.

Trump's criticism of 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

"There are statements

there against confrontation and in favour of dialogue and building good relations," he said, adding that Russia hopes this would lead to

updated strategic document,

which spells out the admin-

istration's core foreign policy

interests, was largely in line

with Moscow's vision.

"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 "reestab-

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," and the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power

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 invasion of Ukraine and is not in service.

It needs reliable power to cool its six shutdown reactors and spent fuel, to avoid any catastrophic nuclear

Kellogg, who is due to leave his post in January, officials of the cold.

Zelenskyy hasn't read US peace proposal: Trump

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.

Kviv 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"

## Ukraine President visits London for peace talks

**ASSOCIATED PRESS** ■ London

Volodymyr President 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 USbacked 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 longterm funding for Ukraine's war effort. The leaders are working to ensure that any ceasefire is backed by solid security guar-

antees, both from Europe

and the US, to deter Russia

from attacking again. US and Ukrainian negotiators completed three days of talks on Saturday aimed at trying to narrow differences on the US administration's



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

"substantive" and that National Security and Defence Council Secretary Rustem Umerov and Chief of the General Staff Andrii Hnatov were travelling back to Europe to brief him.

A major sticking point in the proposal is the suggestion that Ukraine must cede control of its eastern Donbas region to Russia, which ille-Zelenskyy said in a post on gally occupies most but not Telegram that talks had been all of the territory. Ukraine this afternoon," he told

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 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.

## Top EU official warns US against interfering in Europe's affairs

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Brussels

A top European Union official on Monday warned the United States against interfering in Europe's affairs and said only European citizens can decide which parties should govern them.

European Council President Antonio Costa's remarks came in reaction to the Trump administration's new national security strategy, which was published on Friday and paints European allies as weak while offering tacit support to far-right political parties.

It's "good" that the strategy depicts European countries as an ally, but "allies don't threaten to interfere in the domestic political choices of their allies," Costa

"What we can't accept is the threat of interference in European political life. The United States cannot replace European citizens in choosing what the good or the bad parties are," he said in Paris at the Jacques Delors Institute, a think tank. The strategy was critical of

European free speech and



Europe face the "prospect of civilizational erasure," the document said, raising doubts about their longterm reliability as American partners.

But Costa, who chairs summits of the 27 national EU leaders, said Europe's "history has taught us that you can't have freedom of speech without freedom of information.

The former Portuguese prime minister also warned there will never be free speech if the freedom of information of citizens is

tech oligarchs in the United States.' The security strategy is

the administration's first since President Donald Trump returned to office in January. It breaks starkly from the course set by President Joe Biden's Democratic administration, which sought to reinvigorate US alliances.

It comes as the US seeks an end to Russia's nearly 4year-old war in Ukraine, a goal that the national security strategy says is in America's vital interests.

## Nepal's Home Minister Aryal seeks cooperation to conduct free, fair elections

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA < Kathmandu

Nepal's Home Minister Om Prakash Aryal on Monday said that the Government is committed to institutionalising democracy as he sought cooperation from all stakeholders to conduct the next year's general elections in a free, fair and fearless manner. "The effective implementa-

tion of human rights is possible only when democracy is strengthened, as democracy and human rights are interdependent," Aryal said while addressing the inaugural ceremony of the 17th Human Rights National Magna Meet 2025 in Lalitpur district. In the present context,

the Government is committed to institutionalising democracy, he said. The minister sought coop-

eration from all stakeholders to conduct the upcoming



general elections in a free, fair and fearless manner.

Arval underscored the need for a logical conclusion to the Transitional Justice Process, both relating to the decade-long Maoist insurgency and the recent Gen Z movement that toppled the KP Oli-led Government in September.

As human rights are the backbone of any civilised, inclusive and democratic society, the first duty of the Government is to ensure

freedom, equality and security of the people, he said.

Since the Gen Z organised protests in September against impunity, corruption and lack of good governance, it is the duty of the caretaker Government formed as per the mandate of the Gen Z group to crack down on corruption, impunity and nepotism, besides holding the general election on March 5, 2026, said human rights activist Charan Prasai.

#### **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. Similar meetings were held last year in the United States.

**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



114 people were killed, including 63 children,

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 RSI 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 oil-rich 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

Famine was declared last month in the capital of South Kordofan, Kadugli. Dilling, also in South Kordofan, has reportedly experienced the same hunger conditions

as Kadugli.



#### 2 men found alive as 17 dead found on migrant boat near Crete

**ASSOCIATED PRESS** ■ Athens

Two men found alive among 17 dead bodies in a partially sunken migrant boat south of the island of Crete over the weekend told Greek authorities the vessel had been carrying a total of 34 people, and that 15 had fallen overboard and were missing, Greece's coast guard said Monday.

A search and rescue operation was underway, the coast guard says, but strong winds and rough seas have been hampering efforts. The survivors' revelation could mean the death toll might increase to 32. On Saturday, the coast guard said a passing Turkish merchant vessel had come across the half-sunken migrant boat 36 nautical miles southwest of the town of Ierapetra in southern Crete. Seventeen of the passengers on board, all men, were already dead, and there were only two survivors, the coast guard said, revising its initial count of 18 bodies.



#### 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 on Israeli territory.

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.

Earthquake triggers tsunami on

northern coast of Japan

420000

**ASSOCIATED PRESS** ■ Tokyo

A powerful 7.6-magnitude

communities in the region, the

tsunami of up to 40

Agency said.

centimetres in coastal

Japanese Meteorological

The agency said the

east of Aomori, the

magnitude quake struck just

northernmost prefecture of

and just south of Hokkaido

Japan's main Honshu island,

island. It said a tsunami of 40

## Thailand strikes Cambodia as border tensions flare

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Bangkok

Thailand launched airstrikes along the disputed border with Cambodia on Monday as both sides accused the other of breaking a ceasefire that halted fighting earlier

Longstanding border dis-putes erupted into five days of combat in July that killed dozens of soldiers and civilians, US President Donald Trump pushed the Southeast Asian neighbours to sign a truce agreement in October, but tensions have continued to simmer.

The Thai army said that more than 50,000 people have left areas near the border for shelters, while Cambodia's Information Minister Neth Pheaktra said that residents of several villages near the border have been evacuated.

The latest round of clashes has killed at least one Thai soldier and four Cambodian civilians, officials said.

Thai Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul said in a televised speech that military operations would be carried out as necessary to defend the country and protect public safety.

"Thailand has never wished for violence. I'd like to reiterate mines, leading Thailand to



A wounded Thai soldier is carried to be transferred to a hospital in Sisaket province Thailand on Sunday after, according to a Thai army spokesperson, Cambodian troops fired into Thai territory

that Thailand has never initiated a fight or an invasion, but will never tolerate a violation of its sovereignty," he said.

Fighting followed the exchange of fire on Sunday The ceasefire was strained in early November after Thai troops were injured by land

announce that it would indefinitely suspend implementation of the agreement. Both sides continue to trade accusations over responsibility. even as they are supposed to be cooperating in getting rid

of the mines.

Trump said in mid-November that he'd inter-

vened to preserve the ceasefire as tensions simmered between the two countries.

But another brief episode of fighting took place along the border Sunday, after which both sides said the other fired first. The Thai army said Cambodian fire injured two Thai soldiers, and Thai troops exchange of fire that lasted around 20 minutes. Cambodia said that the Thai side fired first and that its own troops did not retaliate.

On Monday, Thai army spokesperson Maj. Gen. Winthai Suvaree said the Cambodian troops fired first into Thai territory in multiple areas. He said at least one Thai soldier was killed and about eight other soldiers were wounded, and civilians were being evacuated from the affected areas.

Thailand used aircraft "to strike military targets in several areas to suppress Cambodian supporting fire attacks," he said.

The Thai army said artillery rounds landed near residential areas on the Thai side, but reported no civilian casualties so far. Cambodian Defence Ministry spokesperson Maly Socheata said the Thai military attacked the Cambodian troops first on Monday, and that Cambodia did not retaliate during the initial attacks.

'Cambodia urges that Thailand immediately stop all hostile activities that threaten peace and stability in the region," she said.

Pheaktra, the Neth Cambodian Minister of

Thai forces killed four Cambodian civilians and injured about nine others.

The prime minister of regional neighbour Malaysia, Anwar Ibrahim, called for restraint in a statement posted to social media and said that his country is ready to support efforts to avert further fighting.

"Our region cannot afford to see long-standing disputes slip into cycles of confrontation," he wrote.

Centuries of rivalry lie beneath the territorial dispute

Thailand and Cambodia have a history of enmity going back centuries, when they were warring empires.

Their modern territorial claims stem largely from a 1907 map drawn when Cambodia was under French colonial rule, which Thailand has argued is inaccurate.

The International Court of Justice in 1962 awarded sovereignty to Cambodia over an area that included the 1,000year-old Preah Vihear temple, which still rankles many Thais.

The ceasefire does not spell out a path to resolve the underlying basis of the dispute, the longstanding differences over where the border should run.

#### centimetres struck the Hokkaido prefecture town of Urakawa and the Aomori earthquake struck off northern prefecture port of Mutsu Japan on Monday, triggering a Ogawara. Several people were injured at a hotel in the

Aomori town of Hachinohe,

public broadcaster NHK

reported. Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi, in a brief comment to reporters, said the government set up an emergency task force to urgently assess the extent of damage. "We are putting people's lives first and doing everything we can," she said

#### 'One Battle After Another' leads **Golden Globe nominations**



**ASSOCIATED PRESS** ■ Beverly Hills (US)

Paul Thomas Anderson's "One Battle After Another" scored a leading nine nominations to the 83rd Golden Globe Awards on Monday, adding to the Oscar favourite's momentum and handing Warner Bros. A victory amid its deal to be acquired by Netflix.

'One Battle After Another' landed nominations for its cast - Leonardo DiCaprio, Teyana Taylor, Sean Penn and Chase Infiniti - along with nods for Anderson's screenplay and

direction. It's competing in the Globes' category for comedy and musicals.

Close on its heels was Joachim Trier's "Sentimental Value," a Norwegian family drama about a filmmaking family. The Neon release's eight nominations included nods for four of its actors: Stellan Skarsgard, Renate Reinsve, Elle Fanning and

Inga Ibsdotter Lilleaas.

The Globe nominations, a tattered but persistent rite in Hollywood, are coming on the heels of a potentially seismic shift in entertainment.

#### **UK care home** agency boss jailed for hiring **Indian migrants** illegally

PRESS TRUST OIF INDIA London

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 repeatedly employing immigrants from India with no right to work in the UK.

Benoy Thomas was convicted after a trial at Lewes Crown Court in July and sentenced on Friday, the UK's Crown Prosecution Service

The 50-year-old was found to have recruited Indian nationals to work as care assistants through his A Class Care Recruitment Ltd at Bexhill-on-Sea in East Sussex despite being aware of their illegal migration status.

Benoy Thomas knowingly breached immigration laws by employing people who had no right to work in the Katie Samways Specialist Prosecutor for CPS South East, said in a statement.

"Many of those he illegally employed were working with some of the most vulnerable people without adequate training or medical expertise, putting the safety and wellbeing of those who needed care at significant risk.

"The Crown Prosecution Service will continue to prosecute those who exploit our immigration system,' An investigation by

Immigration Enforcement, an agency of the UK Home Office, determined that Thomas assisted the "unlawful immigration" of 13 individuals between 2017 and 2018.

#### UAE-backed separatists tighten grip of southern Yemen The official described the with its light blue chevron and

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Aden

The airspace of war-torn Yemen was briefly closed Monday, an official said, as tensions escalated in the country's south after a separatist group, backed by the United Arab Emirates, took over of an oil-rich region in a rift that could fracture the anti-Houthi alliance.

A Yemeni government official said that the Saudiled coalition didn't issue required permissions for flights to or from Yemen, briefly halting flights to and from the southern city of Aden - the seat of the internationally recognized government.

to the separatist Southern Transitional Council's latest clashes across southern Yemen, including its seizure of much of the sprawling oilrich province of Hadhramaut, which borders Saudi Arabia.

The move was later reversed, allowing flight operations in Aden airport, where hundreds of passengers were stranded for hours, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he wasn't authorised to brief the media.

An Associated Press journalist at the airport said workers have begun processing pas-

sengers of a Cairo-bound flight that was supposed to take off early Monday. Since the entry of a Saudi-

led coalition into Yemen's war in 2015, the coalition has controlled the country's airspace. Saudi Arabia didn't acknowledge Yemen's airspace on Monday.

The Southern Transitional Council (STC) — an umbrella of armed groups trained and financed by the UAE has expanded its control over Yemen's south earlier this month.

They seized control of Seiyun in Hadhramaut, including crucial oil fields and energy installations following brief clashes with the Yemeni military, and allied tribes. Forces of the secessionist

group were deployed across strategic Wadi the Hadramout area, which includes major urban centres and military bases, according to STC-allied media. They took over the presidential palace and the international airport in Seivun last week. and advanced to the province of Mahra, which borders Oman, the group said.

STC hoisted the flag of South Yemen over government buildings across the country's south including on the border crossing with Oman. Images circulated on STC-allied media showed the South Yemen flag,

loyalty through much of southern Yemen and have repeatedly pushed to break up Yemen into two countries, as it was between 1967

a red star, flying over govern-

ment buildings and schools in

The separatists enjoy

the south.

and 1990. Hundreds of STC supporters took to the streets in Aden to call for the establishment of an independent state in the south.

The demonstrators raised the flag of South Yemen, and pictures of Aidarous al-Zubaidi, the STC leader, who is also vice president of the

## Rubio, Hegseth meet Australian counterparts on Indo-Pacific security

ASSOCIATED PRESS Washington

Secretary of State Marco Pete Hegseth are meeting their Australian counterparts Monday in Washington for annual talks expected to focus on Indo-Pacific security and countering China's increasing assertiveness in the region, including in the South China Sea and directed at Taiwan.

Rubio, Hegseth, Australian

Foreign Minister Penny Wong and Defence Minister Richard Marles gathered at the State Department, with many eyes also on the Russia-Ukraine war, fragile ceasefire in Gaza and US military strikes against alleged drug traffickers in the Western Hemisphere that have raised questions about the use of force there.

"This is a very strong partnership, it's a strong alliance, and what we want to do is continue to build on it. We leader Xi Jinping met later Kingdom," Wong said.

think we have a lot of momenthat month, Beijing said it tum behind this alliance," Rubio said, hailing cooperaerals, defense production and troop deployments.

None of the four mentioned China by name in their brief comments to reporters before the formal meeting began, but the challenges posed by Beijing throughout the Pacific and elsewhere for years have been a central theme of the US-Australia relationship.

President Donald Trump and Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese signed a critical minerals deal at the White House in October after China imposed tougher rules on exporting its own critical minerals, used in technology from cellphones to fighter jets and of which Beijing is the top producer and processor.

After Trump and Chinese

would pause those rules for a year. "We have to have crittion between Washington ical mineral supplies and and Canberra on critical min-supply chains that are reliable, and that are diverse and not overly invested in one place where they can be used as leverage against us or our partners of the world," Rubio said Monday.

One element of that is the AUKUS pact, a Biden administration-era agreement under which the US Britain and Australia committed to building an Australian fleet of submarines powered by US nuclear technology.

Rubio is to meet later Monday with British Foreign Secretary Yvette Cooper. "The alliance has always been to ensure it delivers concrete benefits for our security and prosperity and for that of the US. And AUKUS is central to that: a win for Australia, a win for the US and a win for the United 

## China positive on Putin's India visit; calls for stronger trilateral cooperation

PRESS TRUST OF IDNIA Beijing

China on Monday reacted positively to Russian President Vladimir Putin's visit to India, framing the three countries as an important part of the Global South and saying that sound trilateral ties are conducive to regional and global peace and stability, besides their own national interests.

"China, Russia and India are emerging economies and important members of the Global South," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Guo Jiakun told a media briefing here, reacting for the first time to Putin's high-profile visit to New Delhi last week and his interactions with Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Guo said that the "three countries maintaining sound relations is not only in line with their own interests but also conducive to regional



and global peace, security, stability and prosperity". Putin's visit was watched

here closely, considering Beijing's close and strong ties with Moscow.

Responding to a question about Putin's comments about New Delhi and Beijing ahead of his visit, Guo said that "China stands ready to work with Russia and India to continue advancing the bilateral relations". In an interview ahead of his

China are our closest friends we treasure that relationship deeply.

On India-China relations currently on a path of normalisation after the Eastern Ladakh confrontation, which resulted in a freeze in ties from 2020 until last year -Guo said China wants to promote sustained and strong ties with New Delhi with a long-term perspective. "On China-India ties, China

stands ready to work with visit, Putin had said, "India and India to view and handle the

bilateral relationship from a strategic height and longterm perspective, promote the sustained, sound and steady development of China-India ties, so as to better benefit the two countries and two peoples and make due contributions to peace and prosperity in Asia and beyond," he said.

Besides terming New Delhi and Beijing as close friends of Moscow, Putin, in the interview with an Indian news channel, also expressed confidence that the leaderships of India and China are committed to finding solutions to their issues, and Russia has no right to interfere in their bilateral affairs.

Chinese official media highlighted Putin's comments on India-China relations.

The state-run Xinhua news agency carried his remarks refuting US accusations over India's purchases of Russian oil.

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



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 thirdlargest copper producer, Peru holds the key to India's rising demand for critical 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



South American economies-Bolivia, Brazil, Argentina, and Chile-each with substantial reserves of minerals, lithium, agricultural commodities, and industri-

This single-entry platform allows Indian companies to access the broader Andean, Amazonian, and Southern Cone

land routes. For example, Bolivia and Argentina provide strategic lithium access, Brazil's western states offer soy and protein exports, and northern Chile adds further copper and mineral capacity. Corío thus becomes India's multi-

country 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 Corío would create predictable, highvolume trade routes for copper, lithium, grains, and fresh produce outbound from South America, while enabling 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 ong-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 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

This article has been written by Amb. Javier presently stationed in New Delhi.

### **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 New Delhi

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 Lok Sabha.

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-

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)

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 cash outflow, the bank's liq-

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

The newly constructed Club House cum-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 présent 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.

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 BJP-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 allotairport and expansion of the facility to had distributed financial assistance to 1,296 ment of land to 1,200 families under flagship

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, vertically integrated platform

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 (RTC) renewable energy.



## **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, reduc-

ing 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.

#### across 1,450 km long-haul network PIONEER NEWS SERVICE Constl India's first digital infrastructure provider to achieve a 1 Tbps transmission

Constl, Ciena achieve 1 Tbps transmission

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

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 lowering 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

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-

the high-quality fibre infra-

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 denied by Nidhi as she made to break the deadlock a sharp stop to keep the towards the end of the first

scores level. India eventually managed

quarter, courtesy a tap-in from Hina after some neat work by Sakshi Rana. Looking to double their

the pressure with another 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 Singh'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 well-

deserved 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 THE GOVERNMENT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA New Delhi

Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviva on Mondav 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

"A total of 1,191 posts are lying vacant in the SAI. The recruitment process of certain posts has already been initiated," he added.

the observations.

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, of women Coaches and where appropriate, consid-

CRORE TO THE MINISTRY OF YOUTH **AFFAIRS AND** SPORTS. OF THIS ₹830 CRORE WERE EARMARKED FOR SAI ered through supplementary

ALLOCATED ₹3,794

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 Support Staff in camps.

## Santos stuns Cruzeiro

**ASSOCIATED PRESS** Sao Paulo

Neymar'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.

RETURNED TO SANTOS IN JANUARY, WAS DECISIVE FOR THE CLUB WHERE HE STARTED HIS **PROFESSIONAL CAREER** Thaciano (26th and 28th minutes) and João Schmidt

NEYMAR, WHO

(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 the far bottom corner.



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

McKennie inadvertently also played a role at the other end in what proved to be the winner for Napoli in the 78th.

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 we wanted," Madrid coach



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 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 injury 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 a 3-1 loss to Rayo Vallecano.

Girona, sitting inside the relegation zone in 18th place, has only one win in its last six games in all competitions.

## 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 ninematch 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 reliance on electric hybrid

The FIA's target was for cal systems to harvest energy. 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.

more strategic but could lead to drivers lifting off the power and coasting on some straights to allow the electri-

The FIA claims the rules emphasize driver skill but there have been mixed reviews from those who've tried 2026 designs in their That makes driving even teams' simulators.

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

Smaller, more agile cars

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 since he joined Ferrari.

Mercedes has designed some of F1's most dominant engines before, but its eyecatching "zero-pod" aerody 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 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.

# India begin official T20I WC build-up against South Africa

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 February 7.

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

extended their tally to 26

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

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

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 highimpact opening pair that marries brute force with clean, classical strokeplay.

Abhishek, fresh from a standout tour of Australia injury during the Asia Cup, where he topped India's the all-rounder marked his scoring charts with 163 runs return in style with a 42-ball in the 2-1 victory, has been in 77 not out for Baroda in the monstrous domestic touch. SMAT before bowling four

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

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 breathtaking 52-ball 148 against Bengal as Punjab posted 310/5.

Hardik Pandya's comeback is equally significant.

Out for more than two months after a quadricep

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 routine. 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 prolonged lean patch.

The contrast between his

dazzling IPL 2025, where he amassed 717 runs for Mumbai Indians, and his underwhelming T20I returns have been striking.

Since taking over as fulltime T20I 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

Dec 14 Dec 17 Dec 19 2nd T20 3rd T20 4th T20 5th T20 Head-to-Head in T20s South No Result: 1 Highest Total India: 283/1 South Africa: 227/3 KBK Sports Graphics

**India vs South Africa T20 Series 2025** 

five matches. Any drastic move before the World Cup looks unlikely, but the next 10 T20Is will add fodder to conversations surrounding both his form and captaincy.

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 Jitesh was backed for the last three T20Is.

Since India's World Cup triumph, Samson has been the team's third-highest rungetter, 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

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 estab-

lished potency with the ball.

South Africa, for their part,

#### Teams (from):

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 Chakravarthy.

South Africa: Aiden Markram (captain), Ottineil Baartman, Corbin Bosch, Dewald Brevis, Quinton de Kock, Tony de Zorzi, Donnovan Reeza Hendricks, Marco Jansen, George Linde, Keshav Maharaj, Kwena Maphaka, David Miller, Lungi Ngidi, Anrich Nortje, Tristan Stubbs.

**DUBAI CAPITALS** 

DHABI KNIGHT

RIDERS IN ILT20

West Indian hard-hitting

batter Rovman Powell struck a stunning unbeaten half-century as Dubai Capitals crushed Abu Dhabi

Knight Riders by 83 runs to

notch their first win in ILT20

Dubai Capitals recovered

from a shaky start thanks to

Powell's 96 not out off 52

balls and Jordan Cox's 52 runs

(32 balls) to set the oppo-

In response, the Knight Riders were bundled out for

nents a target of 187 runs.

**CRUSH ABU** 

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai

## No major changes in T20 squad before World Cup: Skipper Salman

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Karachi

Pakistan's T20 skipper Salman Ali Agha has ruled out any major changes in his squad for the Men's T20 World Cup next year, saying the side has shown a marked improvement after the players were given specific roles in recent months.

Pakistan, who had made

big changes to its side following the Asia Cup final defeat to India earlier this year, bringing in Abdul Samad, Babar Azam, Usman Khan and Naseem Shah, defeated South Africa at home in a three-match T20I series and then won the Tri-series, also involving Zimbabwe and Sri Lanka, last month "In my personal opinion,

I don't see any major changes in the national T20 squad before the World Cup," Salman said on a Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB)

bination we have will be the

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Yash Dhull and skipper Nitish

Rana scored fine half-

centuries as Delhi ended

their Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy

campaign with an 18-

run win over Uttarakhand

With their third win in

seven games, Delhi finished

third in Group D, behind

Jharkhand and Rajasthan

who advanced in the premier

domestic T20 competition.

Both Dhull (52 off 37) and

Rana (51 off 29) had a produc-

tive tournament but the team

failed to qualify for Super 8

stage after a disappointing

first leg of the Ranji

Trophy.Delhi made 162 for

Ahmedabad

on Monday.

Delhi end SMAT campaign

with win over Uttarakhand



World Cup. Every player had been given a specific role in recent months and with that the team had moved forward," he added.

Pakistan are scheduled to play six T20 games before the World Cup, scheduled to be co-hosted by India and Sri Lanka from February 7 till March 8 next year, and Salman said the limited "I think the current com- major changes.

"We have six T20 matches

to play before the World Cup and I don't think we can make any big changes now in these remaining matches. We have to show consistency and move forward with the current combination,"

Experienced allrounder Shadab Khan, who was the vice-captain of the side before he got injured in May and underwent a shoulnumber of matches will der surgery in London, is make it difficult to make now rehabilitated and is set to make a comeback in the Big Bash in Australia.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Vidarbha pacer Yash

Thakur halted Andhra in its

tracks by grabbing four

wickets to guide his side to

a 19-run victory in a Group

A final-round match of the

Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy

Andhra, who have

already qualified for the

next stage along with

Mumbai from the group, failed to overhaul

Vidarbha's 154/8, with the

26-year-old right-hand

bowler returning excel-

lent figures of 4/22 to

restrict the opponents to

here on Monday.

## Hardik gives us lot of options: Suryakumar

TAPAN MOHANTA

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 fivematch T20I series starting here on Tuesday.

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.

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,

'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 available.

"Right now, both of them look healthy and fit," he

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 lot of combinations for us with respect to playing XI," Suryakumar said on Cup in 2024... Our preparation is similar. The preparation started after the T20 well. We wanted to continuous well. We wanted to continuous cont the eve of the series- World Cup 2024 got over. ue the same way."

Yash Thakur stars as Vidarbha beat Andhra by 19 runs



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

earlier match, ended

his SMAT campaign with

Vidarbha's innings

revolved around Aman

Mokhade's 50 and keeper-

batter Akshay Wadkar, who scored a 33-ball 41 with Andhra pacer

Satyanarayana Raju's 4/26

playing a big role in

restricting the opponents

to a below-average score.

even worse when they came out to bat, losing

three wickets for 31 runs

including India player

Srikar Bharat for a golden

duck. Pyla Avinash scored

a 37-ball 44 but that was

not enough as seven

players could only manage

single-digit scores.

However, Andhra fared

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 flexible. He was ready to bat

In another match, young Assam pacer Sadek

Hussain returned a four-

wicket haul on way to

defeating Kerala by five

Vidarbha 154/8 in 20

overs (Aman Mokhade 50,

Akshay Wadkar 41;

Satyanarayana Raju 4/26)

beat Andhra 135/9 in

20 overs (Pyla Avinash

44; Yash Thakur 4/22) by

Kerala 101 in 19.4 overs

(Sadek Hussain 4/19, Abdul

Ajij Kuraishi 2/16, Avinov

Choudhury 2/15) lost

to Assam 105/5 in 18.5

overs (Pradyun Saikia 41

not out; KM Asif 2/22) by

wickets.

19 runs.

5 wickets.

**Brief scores:** 

103 runs in 15.3 overs as the Dubai Capitals secured an easy win. Dubai Capitals did not have at any number." He insisted India will not indulge in needless tinkering. (PTI)

the best of starts with openers Toby Albert (8) and Sediqullah Atal (8) going cheaply with the team ending the powerplay at 43 for 2. Piyush Chawla, playing in his 300th T20 match, struck with his first ball to get rid of

the USA batter Shayan Jahangir (14) to leave the Dubai Capitals reeling at 43 for three. Cox and Powell took control of the match as they stitched a 119-run stand off 76 balls.

While Powell smashed eight fours and four sixes in his innings, Cox hit four fours and one six in his stay.

Abu Dhabi Knight Riders were off to a bad start as David Willey got rid of Alex Hales for a duck and Alishan Sharafu for 4 in the first over. Mustafizur Rahman reduced the Knight Riders to 10 for three by dismissing Unmukt Chand for a golden duck.

Phil Salt (27 off 21) tried to keep his team in the game with a fighting innings but fell to Rahman with his side struggling at 44 for 4 at the end of the powerplay. Mohammed Nabi trapped Liam Livingstone (16 off 15) plumb in front of the wicket to bring Andre Russell (12 off 6) out in the middle.

#### seven in 20 overs before lim-Thakur, who also had a five-wicket haul in an iting Uttarakhand to 144 for seven. Prashant Chopra (54 off 50 balls) top scored for



## Bihar humble UP by 6 wickets

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Kolkata

and Digvesh Singh Rathi took two wickets each for Delhi that stemmed the flow of Jharkhand topped Group D

Leg-spinner Suyash Sharma

after a 36-run win over Rajasthan, maintaining their unbeaten run in the group stage. Jharkhand hammered 215

for five courtesy quickfire contributions from Virat Singh (69 off 36), captain Kushagra (55 off 37 and Robin Minz 58 off 27). Rajasthan could only manage 179 in 19.2 overs

India's T20 specialist Rinku Singh failed to fire with the bat as Bihar humbled fancied Uttar Pradesh by six wickets in their Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy Group B match on Monday.

Opener Piyush Singh shone with a 54-ball 57 to help Bihar complete a chase of 145 with four balls to spare after Mangal Mahrour returned excellent figures of 3/12 in four overs to help his team restrict balls after IPL star Rinku was UP to 144 for six in the allotted 20 overs.

medium pace, was well sup-50 runs for a solitary success.

ported by skipper Sakibul Gani (1/20) and Sakib Hussain (1/31), both picking up a wicket each in their full quota of overs but Amod Yadav was expensive as he leaked

Batting at number seven,

Prashant Veer top-scored for

UP with an unbeaten,

counter-attacking 40 off 26

dismissed for a 25-ball 19 by Mahrour at the Jadavpur Mahrour, who bowls University Campus ground.

Middle-order batter Sameer Rizvi was shown the door by Mahrour after a 17ball 22, while pacer Shivam Mavi remained not out on 13 off 12 balls.

Had it not been for the 50run seventh-wicket stand between Veer and Mavi, UP would have probably ended up with less than what they eventually got.

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

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

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

after Haryana were 170 for 4 in 17 overs. In this edition of SMAT, Shami has been very effective at death barring the Punjab game when Abhishek Sharma took him to cleaners.

In reply, Bengal managed only 167 in 20 overs and that too after requiring 69 runs from eight overs with six wickets in hand.

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