

CM unveils logo of Godabarish School scheme

■ Major push for digital, child-friendly learning infra

■ Rs 12,000 cr to be invested over four years

RAJEEV RATHAN ■ Bhubaneswar

Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi on Friday unveiled the logo of the State Government's flagship Godabarish Model School scheme at Lok Seva Bhawan signalling a decisive push towards restructuring primary education in the State.

In the first phase, the government will upgrade 2,200 primary and upper primary

schools with an investment of Rs 12,000 crore over four years. The initiative focuses on strengthening academic infrastructure, upgrading classrooms with smart learning tools, improving library and sports facilities and ensuring safer, child-friendly campuses. The project is part of the government's broader effort to raise foundational learning outcomes and bridge rural-urban education gaps.



Majhi said the initiative would make school education "modern, attractive and impactful" by equipping children with digital literacy, creativity and strong academic fundamentals. The logo captures Odia cultural identity and pays tribute to eminent educationist Pandit Godabarish Mishra, whose ideas on inclusive and value-based education continue to shape policy thinking in the

State.

The logo's design carries layered symbolism, an open book and pen nib at the centre representing knowledge and creative expression; a torch symbolising truth and enlightenment; radiating rays denoting moral guidance; and a circular frame suggesting unity and inclusiveness. Three stars stand for knowledge, character and service while the Odia inscription re-

inforces the State's commitment to language and heritage.

Under the operational framework, schools will be established or upgraded in gram panchayats with at least five acres of land, good road connectivity and adequate student strength. Centrally located villages will get priority to ensure maximum accessibility. The model schools will also feature trained faculty, upgraded teaching-learning materials, community engagement programmes and enhanced monitoring mechanisms.

School and Mass Education Minister Nityananda Gond described the scheme as a "transformative commitment" to ensure equitable, high-quality education.

BSF blood donation camp honours K'put Gandhi legacy

NISHAN PATTANAİK ■ Koraput

In a heartfelt tribute to legendary freedom fighter and social reformer 'Koraput Gandhi', Biswanath Pattnaik, a blood donation camp was organised at Banabasi Seva Samiti, Balliguda, an institution founded on his ideals of selfless service and community upliftment.

The event witnessed a remarkable turnout, with 25 BSF personnel, including one officer, six Subordinate Officers (SOs), and 18 Other Ranks (ORs) from the 136 Battalion BSF, coming forward to donate blood alongside several enthusiastic local volunteers.

The noble campaign was spearheaded by Commandant of 136 Bn BSF Manas Ranjan Panda, in collaboration with secretary, Banabasi Seva



Samiti, Utchhab Jena, whose leadership and coordination ensured the smooth conduct of the drive.

The initiative not only paid homage to the humanitarian values of Biswanath Pattnaik but also underscored BSF's deep sense of social responsibility beyond its duty of guarding the nation's borders.

Speaking on the occasion, Commandant Panda highlighted the importance of vol-

untary blood donation as a symbol of compassion and solidarity, while Jena expressed gratitude to the BSF personnel for carrying forward the spirit of service envisioned by 'Koraput Gandhi'. The event concluded with a pledge to continue such humanitarian efforts in rural and tribal areas - keeping alive the enduring message of peace, service, and sacrifice that Biswanath Pattnaik devoted his life to.

Koraput bags nat'l honour for millet promotion



PNS ■ Koraput

Koraput district has added yet another feather to its cap by receiving the "Best Performing District Award" for exceptional work in millet promotion at the International Symposium on Shree Anna and Women Farmer - 2025.

The prestigious award was presented in the presence of Chief Minister Mohan Majhi, Union Minister of Agriculture Sivraj Singh Chawhan and Deputy Chief Minister KV Singh Deo, who felicitated the district for its outstanding efforts in reviving and scaling up millet cultivation under the flagship Odisha Millets Mission (OMM).

Speaking on the occasion, the Collector and District Magistrate, Koraput, expressed heartfelt gratitude to all stakeholders and said,

"This recognition belongs to the hardworking farmers of Koraput, especially our women cultivators, who have shown how traditional wisdom, scientific intervention, and community participation can together drive nutritional and economic transformation. The millet movement in Koraput is not just about crops - it's about empowerment, sustainability, and pride in our indigenous food heritage. We are committed to further strengthening this mission and ensuring Koraput continues to lead by example."

He also lauded the efforts of the District Agriculture Office, Watershed and Mission Shakti teams, NGOs, and SHG members for their tireless contribution in expanding millet cultivation, ensuring market linkages, and promoting millet-based enterprises.

'Developed Odisha by 2036' goal State Govt pushes fast-track infra drive

Minister reviews major highway, bypass, urban road expansion

RAJEEV RATHAN ■ Bhubaneswar

Aiming to realise the vision of a Developed Odisha by 2036, the State Government has intensified its focus on strengthening roads and core infrastructure. Works Minister Pritiraj Harichandan on Friday said there is no financial obstacle to infrastructure projects as the Centre is extending full support. He directed that all ongoing road

works must be completed strictly within deadlines.

Harichandan assessed the progress of key National and State Highway projects, including major bypass works at Koraput, Junagarh, Rourkela, Nuapada, Aska and the OMP-Kandarpur-Paradip corridor and reiterated that delays would not be tolerated as the State is in a crucial phase of infrastructure expansion.

A major point of the review focused on Bhubaneswar, where traffic congestion has emerged as a pressing concern. The minister recently discussed widening the Jayadev

Vihar-Nandankanan Road, including parallel service lanes, and speeding up the upgradation of the AIIMS approach road. The Khandagiri-Jagamara elevated road project and the proposed elevated corridor at Kalpana Square also came under detailed examinations. Officials presented a plan for a two-layer flyover at AG Square, one of the capital's most critical choke points. A proposal to construct a ground-level parallel road from near the Capital Hospital to the Jayadev Bhawan was also discussed, aimed at making AG

Square a signal-free junction and ensuring smooth movement between Raj Bhavan and Rajmahal Square.

The minister further reviewed the progress of several development works in Puri, including road expansion, housing, dharmashala construction, library upgrades and other civic infrastructure.

The government also decided that all division-level official processes would transition to the OSWAS online platform by December 31 ensuring full digitisation and faster approvals for infrastructure projects.

DAV K Nagar holds annual exhibition

PNS ■ Bhubaneswar

With an endeavour to promote scientific attitude among young students, the annual exhibition "EXPOSITIO STUDENTIUM"-2025 was organised at the DAV Public School Kalinga Nagar here during the observation of Children's Day. Chief guest Prof Achyutananda Acharya, Dean, Academic Affairs, OUTR, Bhubaneswar, inaugurated the exhibition and advised the students to exhibit



the quality of being inquisitive in whatever they do so that it would lead them to the best solution to the problems they may face in their life.

School Chairman Madan Mohan Panda rendered the

welcome address to the gathering and appreciated the innovative initiative taken by the school to help boost the creativities among students.

Presiding over the function Principal Balaram Mahapatra

urged the children to be scientific minded in the innovative practices.

As many as 397 projects in 14 subjects by 600 students were an eye opener for all. The integration of Artificial Intelligence was also another keynote of the exhibition. Parents and invited teachers of different schools appreciated the scientific skill and expertise demonstrated by the students through their exhibits. The subject experts of different field evaluated the projects and appreciated the efforts of the students.

Cong claims moral victory in Nuapada

Alleges BJP-BJD collusion

RAJEEV RATHAN ■ Bhubaneswar

The Congress on Friday alleged that the Nuapada by-election witnessed "unprecedented misuse of money power" and "partisan conduct" by officials, claiming that the BJP and the BJD acted in "tacit coordination" to influence the poll outcome.

In a statement, Congress Media Department chairman Aravinda Das said that despite "hostile circumstances" and "blatant violations" of the Model Code of Conduct, the Congress candidate secured over 40,000 votes and finished ahead of the BJD which is a

"significant political achievement".

The Congress further alleged that the BJP used police and administrative machinery to lure voters while the BJD "openly engaged in money distribution".

Referring to the BJP's selection of a candidate previously associated with the BJD, the Congress said this episode, along with BJD president Naveen Patnaik's "deteriorating health being exploited during campaigning," raised concerns about the ruling party's political ethics.

Das asserted that the Congress would continue to stand as the "sole and responsible opposition force" in Odisha.

Revenue Asst held taking bribe

PNS ■ Cuttack

The Vigilance police on Friday caught Partha Sarathi Chel, Senior Revenue Assistant, Morada block in Mayurbhanj district while accepting a bribe of Rs 2,000.

Chel had demanded the bribe from a former panchayat official of the same block for withdrawal of arrear salary. The former official superannuated in February, 2023. In spite of repeated requests by hm, Chel was delay-

ing the processing of his arrears demanding a bribe Rs.2,000.

During the trap operation, on seeing the Vigilance team, Chel tried to dispose of the bribe money by throwing it to the dustbin kept in the office.

Following the trap, simultaneous searches were launched on the residential house of Chel at Baripada town and his office room from the disproportionate assets angle. Later, Chel was arrested and forwarded to court.

Bhubaneswar city plan

Time to switch from tech-centric to people-centric



PIYUSH RANJAN ROUT



SWAPNA SARITA SWAIN

Do we shape our cities, or do our cities shape us? More space for people means more public life. A focus on cycling and walking invariably improves the living quality in any city. However, when people become tired of the preference given to motorcars, requiring expansion of existing roads, building new roads and flyovers, they demand more space for themselves. Crowded cities often choose to invest on building pool highways or flyovers inside the city's heart.

"New city" development once used to be a global phenomenon, with many efforts tied to the

"promise" of new urban space. In another way it is an excuse to run away from solving the real challenges. For example, in Egypt's New Administrative Capital, Indonesia's planned capital Nusantara, Kenya's planned smart city Konza, startup city Tatu City, and California's Forever city project in Solano County, people still grapple with several civic issues in spite of a modernisation plan.

Critics argue that new cities ignore the communal dynamics that make urban areas vibrant, while existing cities, where people already live and work, provide a founda-

tion for inclusive, people-centered smart development. Advocates of new city counter that digital transformation in established cities faces bureaucratic hurdles, resistance to change, and aging infrastructure, that make progress difficult, if not impossible. In this context, digital transformations in existing cities, much like the recent attempts to create new cities in California, Egypt, El Salvador, Indonesia, and Nigeria, have faced criticism for the imposition of automated or algorithmic technologies with negative impacts on public service delivery, privacy, and human rights. The scale and pace of urbanisation means policymakers and civic bodies face both challenges. The real question is how to develop cities that balance innovation with equity and inclusivity.

Various experts from all over the world agree in people centric urban planning that it is not expensive at all to utilise existing spaces better than having new cities. In existing cities we can easily make them more people centric with community led neighbourhood urban planning to simply take a breath from city life and sit down for a while. This also gives impor-

tance to local communities.

Just think of the latest retrofitting fifteen minutes cities into existing cities. These fifteen minutes cities show us how a large city can be planned at a very different scale. The fifteen minutes neighbourhoods are optimised for pedestrians, cyclists, as well as motorists with a speed of 10 to 20 km/h. They are pleasant for pedestrians and they have more public and green space. The result is in such neighbourhood people prefer a "24-hour-city" with a walkable, active and partly residential city centre, as opposed to commuting to a far away place.

Considering that by 2050, we will have to accommodate about triple the current number of urban dwellers in Bhubaneswar, the big challenge is how to keep Bhubaneswar vibrant, interesting, spontaneous and people friendly. It means looking at urbanisation beyond discourse on smart cities that has historically been dominated by a technocratic vision championed by corporations advocating a data-driven approach to urban governance. However, the learning from Smart City mission is make a shift toward a more people centred para-

digim, which means urban planners must stress on the need for a holistic approach that integrates technological innovation with the social, cultural, and environmental dimensions of the urban ecosystem.

The evolution from a tech-centric to a people-centric model reflects a broader rethinking of urban planning, where technology is not only deployed to optimize city services but to create inclusive, resilient, and sustainable communities. In practice, this means rather than a fixed set of technologies, smart cities can be thought of as a "smart process" whereby Bhubaneswar needs to evolve through continuous innovation, community engagement, and responsive governance.

However, the problem is that many urban planners want to copy-paste planning trends in the American society. Cities are already suffering from the car-focus approach that is destroying its "flavour". Interestingly, even big consulting firms are furthering the car focused infrastructure like flyovers over pedestrians, that are actually designed to make car traffic easier but after few years the flyovers requires further investments.

So what urban planners can do is finding ways to make cities more liveable. A survey amongst residents of Bhubaneswar conducted over a period five years was based on a simple question: what would they want from existing Bhubaneswar if they got a chance to plan it? Some fifteen thousand respondents shared their ideas in a participatory manner ignoring their age and genders.

Unsurprisingly, people wanted a liveable city centre with more low rise buildings, bicycle lanes, gardens, shaded trees, public spaces, primary health centres, schools etc and less focus on religious places or malls etc. In other words, they want a "city for people, a city that is accessible, a city within their reach".

It was very clear as urban planners, we need to think as people, not as consulting firms. People know exactly what their cities should be like and by focusing on their needs and demands, rather than expanding or investing on flyovers or widening roads over big trees.

Thus through simple innovations or simple participatory processes, we can move our focus from a "master" plan towards a bottom-up perspective. In the end, politics

and profit are short lived compared to cities, which are planned to last for centuries and still be pleasant for its inhabitants. Therefore innovation and urban planning need to sit in balance.

Today urbanisation offers us opportunities for all of us to rethink our cities. The urban life is changing almost beyond recognition. Citizens are desperate for liveable urban spaces such as parks, blue spaces and outdoor offers such as cafés, restaurants and play streets. Now it is the perfect time to create innovations for an improved everyday life. In only 20 years, there will be about 10 million people who will likely live in Bhubaneswar. It is time to revisit urban planning in making Odisha towns and cities furure ready for which the State needs urban planners who are passionate about creating such urban environments as making every inhabitant feel a sense of belonging, where they have equitable access to opportunities, and can lead a healthy and satisfying life.

(Dr Rout and Swain are faculty members in Department of Planning, Odisha University of Technology and Research).

In Athamallik Hosp waste water released into pond used by residents

Hundreds fall ill
BIPLAB MISHRA ■ Athamallik

The infected water of Athamallik Sub-divisional Hospital is being released into a nearby pond. It is alleged that the people of two wards of Athamallik NAC who use the water of the pond are falling ill with various diseases.

In this regard, during the construction of the new building of the hospital, the people of the ward had complained to the authorities. But the department had ignored their concerns and connected the water supply to the nearby pond. Now the situation is getting complicated.

Notably, the new building of the hospital was constructed in 2023-24 at a cost of Rs 6.91 crore. Patients are



getting services both In-door and Out-door in the new building. But the contaminated water flowing out of the hospital is not properly man-

aged. The waste water is discharged into the pond through a canal.

The people of Wards 9 and 10 of the Athmallik NAC de-

pend on the pond for various purposes. Apart from this, there is a cremation ground near the pond. So after cremation, people wash themselves on the pond. People also use the water of the pond for any festivals in the city. More than half of the city's population benefits from the pond.

There are allegations that on the pretext of cost overrun, the department has deliberately connected the pond by a canal.

Ward No. 10 Councilor Sonali Raut has demanded that the infected water of the hospital be diverted elsewhere as soon as possible.

Athmallik Sub-Collector Upendra Luha he has directed the Athmallik NAC EO and SDMO to take necessary action.

Only way to access outer world! Villagers cross swollen river clinging to ropes

Risking lives for years as there's no bridge
PNS ■ Phulbani

Shocking visuals have emerged from Kadamaha village under Baliguda block in Kandhamal district as the residents of the village continue to risk their lives by crossing the swollen Budha river with the help of ropes.

The Budha river has swollen dangerously, posing a risk to the tribal villagers. People are wading chest-deep through strong currents, clinging to ropes for balance.

In an even more heartbreaking sight, small children are being placed inside aluminium vessels and carried across the river. The villagers



have been facing the ordeal for years now.

Not only the residents of Kadamaha, but also those from Dublamaha and Malimaha villages are facing the same plight. Despite nearly 100 families living in the area, there is no bridge or proper road connectivity, forcing people to take life-threatening risks to access daily essentials.

A villager said, "We have no other option, even though we are scared. There's no road or bridge here. Our children have to cross this river using ropes just to reach school. We too risk our lives crossing the river like this to bring home food and essentials."

The villagers are even deprived of basic amenities like education and healthcare,

because of the river. Locals say they have been demanding the construction of a permanent bridge for many years, but allege that neither the administration nor local representatives have paid attention to their repeated pleas.

So far, no official response has been received from the local administration on the plight and grievances of the locals.

6 illegal clinics sealed in Rayagada dist

PNS ■ Rayagada

In a major crackdown on unauthorised medical establishments, the Rayagada district administration on Saturday sealed six illegally operating private clinics in Gunupur town.

The operation was carried out under the supervision of Gunupur Sub-Collector Dudhal Abhishek Dilip in the presence of the Chief District Medical Officer (CDMO) and Public Health Department officials.

According to health officials, these clinics were functioning without valid Clinical Establishment Certificates, a clear violation of State health regulations. Acting on this, inspection teams visited the locations and sealed all six clinics immediately.

The Sub-Collector said this move is part of a larger drive to ensure patient safety and maintain healthcare standards in the district.

"We urge the public not to trust these illegal clinics. There are government hospitals equipped with qualified doctors who can provide proper treatment," said the Sub-Collector.

He added that another inspection team has been deployed to identify and take action against similar unregistered medical facilities in other areas. "Strict measures would continue against all such establishments operating without licenses," he warned.

The Health and Family Welfare Department has also appealed to residents to report any such unauthorised medical practices to local authorities for swift action.

Nat'l Folk Fest 'Parab 2025' held in Koraput

PNS ■ Koraput

The vibrant rhythm of tribal drums, folk chants, and the fragrance of incense filled the air as the National Level Folk Festival 'Parab - 2025' began from Dulukila, Kutunipadar under Laxmipur block in Koraput district.

The festival, a grand celebration of Odisha's rich tribal heritage and folk traditions, was inaugurated in a spectacular ceremony attended by dignitaries, artists, and villagers amid much cultural fervor.

The event began with a holy ritual at the Shivalinga Temple in Kutunipadar, where the Parab torch was lit after the traditional puja. A massive torch procession followed, winding through the village to the main stage, symbolizing the spread of light, unity, and cultural pride.

Koraput District Magistrate and Chairman of the



District Cultural Council, Manoj Satyavan Mahajan, presided over the event. The ceremony was graced by Koraput MLA Raghuram Macha, Pattangi MLA Ramachandra Kadam, Laxmipur MLA Pabitra Sawanta, Kotpad MLA Rupu Bhadra, and District Council President Sasmita Meleka as guests. Together, they lit the ceremonial lamp, officially marking the opening of the festival.

During the event, the District Collector administered the 'Parab Oath', reaffirming commitment to cultural unity and preservation of tribal

identity. Posters and stickers of Parab-2025 were also unveiled by the guests, showcasing this year's theme of "Harmony through Heritage."

The event was attended by a host of dignitaries including Laxmipur Chairperson Shuai Kuleshika, Vice-Chairperson Aarti Kuldeep, Kusumguda Sarpanch Indra Panjia, former MPs Jayram Pangi and Jhina Hikka, and representatives from the MPs of Koraput and Nabarangpur. Koraput Deputy Collector Premlal Hial extended the vote of thanks, while District Cultural Officer Surya Kant Behera and Laxmipur BDO

Sabyasachi Behera coordinated the day's proceedings.

Earlier in the day, members of the organising committee offered prayers to the village goddess at Nishanimunda, Koraput, seeking blessings for the smooth conduct of the month-long festival.

Among those present were Koraput MLA Raghuram Macho, Collector Manoj Satyavan Mahajan, Koraput Municipal Council Chairman Lalat Ranjan Sethi, Additional District Collector Tapan Kumar Nayak, Chief Development Officer Benudhar Shabar, and Deputy Collector Premlal Hial.

CUO workshops on gender sensitisation, sexual harassment

PNS ■ Koraput

The Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) of the Central University of Odisha (CUO) conducted two workshops on Gender Sensitisation and Awareness of Sexual Harassment on Thursday, separately for university staff and students.

The first session, held from 11 am to 1:30 pm for teaching and non-teaching staff, began with a welcome address by Associate Professor of Economics and Convenor of ICC Dr Minati Sahoo. She underscored the importance of creating a safe and inclusive work environment based on gender equality.

Vice-Chancellor of CUO Prof NC Panda delivered the inaugural address. He reflected on the social and psychological dimensions of gen-



der issues and cited references from ancient philosophical texts, reiterating the university's commitment to ensuring gender justice through the ICC. Registrar Dr Rakesh Kumar Lenka, and Finance Officer Duryodhan Sethy conveyed their greetings.

Presiding Officer of ICC and

former Vice-Chancellor of Rama Devi Women's University, Bhubaneswar, Prof Aparajita Chowdhury, served as the principal resource person.

She presented key provisions of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013, elaborat-

ing on the role of the ICC, procedures for redressal, and institutional responsibilities.

Assistant Registrar and ICC member B Ramesh proposed the vote of thanks.

The second workshop, held from 3 pm to 5 pm for students and research scholars, focused on broadening the understanding of gender.

14th SBI FPI Connect prog held



49 FPOs, 16 representatives of FPO promoters attend

PNS ■ Bhubaneswar

The State Bank of India, Bhubaneswar Circle, APMAS and CYSD organised a day long SBI FPO CONNECT program at State Bank Institute for Learning and Development, Bhubaneswar on November 7.

A total of 49 FPOs and 16 representatives of FPO promoters attended the event along with over 20 officials from the SBI. The desk appraisal of 47 FPOs was undertaken and 45 FPOs

were given in-principal sanction letters.

A brief overview of FPOs in India and how FPOs can be developed into thriving business organisations with FPO financing as the main driver was shared with the participants. For FPOs to effectively utilise financing, they were advised to improve member-ownership, their systems of accounting and book keeping and their business-readiness with business planning and market linkages.

State Bank of India is organising such FPO Connect Programs across India in collaboration with different CBBOs/ NGOs. It was the 14th program in the series.

Keonjhar's 22 trained rural girls get jobs



PNS ■ Keonjhar

In a significant step towards empowering rural youth through skill-based employment, 22 candidates from the Keonjhar Centre, have secured job opportunities at Hyderabad and Tiruchirappalli under the Placement Linked Training Programme (PLTP) of the Government of India.

These candidates were trained at the Skill Development and Extension

Centre (SDEC), Mining Road, Keonjhar. The training programmes are being implemented by the Dalmia Bharat Foundation.

Under the General Duty Assistant (GDA) trade, a total of 16 candidates underwent 630 hours of training in the healthcare sector. Out of them, 12 candidates have been selected for placement as Nursing Assistants with La McLean India Limited,

Hyderabad, to work at AIG Hospital, Hyderabad. Similarly, in the Sewing Machine Operator (SMO) trade, 10 trainees from the ongoing 7th batch are being placed with Color Jerseys, a unit of Shri Saravana Mills Pvt. Ltd., Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu.

The successful trainees were felicitated by CEO, DMF, Keonjhar Dr Rina Pradhan and CDO-cum-EO, Zilla Parishad, Keonjhar Kumar Nagbhusan.

'Himadri Private Ltd running Birla Tyres'

Union leader seeks clarification
UBACHAK MOHANTY ■ Baleswar

While controversies continue to goad the activities of new management which acquired erstwhile Birla Tyres, Birla Tyres Workers' Union (Recognised Union) president Rajendra Bal has sought an official clarification and documentary evidence regarding the present status, statutory compliance, and operational authorisations of Himadri Birla Tyre Manufacturing Private Limited (HBTMPL) from the MD Dalmia Bharat Refractories Limited (Resolution Applicant) and the MD, Himadri Specialty Chemical Limited (Strategic Partner).

Bal mentioned in his letter to

them that the said company was incorporated on September 1, 2016, having CIN: U22119WB2016PTC271245, registered under Registrar of Companies, Kolkata. The company's authorised capital stands at Rs 15 crore, and paid-up capital is approximately Rs 0.294 crore. It has obtained a GST registration (GSTIN: 21AAFCDD8615G1ZX) on December 27, 2023, showing a manufacturing site at Plot No. 1747/2023, Khata No. 497/1925, Baleswar with declared business activities including manufacturing, retail, import, and warehousing.

"In light of the above, and since HBTMPL is declared to be a subsidiary of Birla Tyres Limited and thereby under the operational control of Himadri Specialty Chemical Limited as Strategic Partner

along with Dalmia Bharat Refractories Limited as Resolution Applicant. I on behalf of the union requested them to furnish the following details for transparency and record," Bal said.

"Whether Himadri Birla Tyre Manufacturing Private Limited has obtained valid Registration Certificates and Licences from the Directorate of Factories and Boilers, Government of Odisha, Bhubaneswar, for the Baleswar plant site? Whether necessary clearances, approvals, and statutory compliances have been obtained from other departments, including Pollution Control Board, Labour Department, and Local Authorities?" Bal asked. He also sought certified copies of relevant statutory documents, including factory licence, consent to op-

erate, and other mandatory registrations.

"As this matter directly concerns the legitimate rights, service continuity, and welfare of the workers of Birla Tyres, transparency is imperative. If these details are not promptly and satisfactorily furnished, I shall be constrained to initiate appropriate legal steps before the competent authorities to ensure justice and compliance with the approved Resolution Plan and applicable laws," Bal said warned.

Notably, on the allegations of recruitment of workers through third party by the workers' unions, the Labour department has revoked and cancelled the registration certificate and labour licence of Himadri Clean Energy Limited and Ques Corporation Limited with effect from October 18, 2025.

Grief struck: A Delhi family’s agony after Red Fort blast

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

In a small Delhi home, a three-year-old boy keeps glancing at the main door. It has been three days since his father, 34-year-old Amar Kataria, last knocked, and he rushed into his arms. Now, his hope fades a little each day as he watches the silent rooms and his grief-struck mother, unaware that his father was among the 13 lives lost on Monday evening.

“He keeps looking at the door. Every sound outside, he turns around. He thinks someone is coming. You can see it in his eyes. He is realising something is wrong, but he does not know what,” the victim’s relative, Swadesh Sethi, said.

Among the victims of the tragedy was Amar Kataria, a pharmaceutical businessman from Chandni Chowk’s Bhagirath Palace. He had stepped out after finishing work, unaware that within minutes his family’s life would be torn apart.

Amar and his wife Kriti, had been married for four years and were happy in their little world. Until the clock struck 6:52 in the evening, when a blast shattered the dreams of his and 12 other families.

For his family, the hours that followed unfolded in disbelief and panic. They searched for information, clung to hope and prayed. By the time the confirmation arrived, their home had already fallen silent. He described the scene when

Amar’s three-year-old son stood beside his father’s body, confused and frightened by what he was seeing. Sethi’s voice trembled as he recalled it. “He kept tugging my hand and asking, ‘Papa zameen pe kyun so raha hai?’ (Why is Dad sleeping on the ground?) He kept asking again and again. I could not hold myself. I was crying and bawling. How do we answer a child who still thinks his father is only asleep?” he said.

Speaking about Amar’s wife, Kriti, Sethi said she has barely moved since the news arrived. “She just sits in one place. She has not spoken much. She is in complete shock,” he said, adding, “She is three months pregnant. She has not cried loudly. She



is not reacting. She is just there, staring.” At this point, Sethi broke down again. He said Amar and Kriti had big and beautiful plans for their future.

“They were married for four years. They were planning for another baby. Planning to build their own little world. Everything was

going smoothly. And now everything is gone,” he said. “Her life has just stopped, like it is frozen in time.”

Kataria’s family said that there are no words for the gloom that has settled over their home. Sethi added that the family is shattered beyond anything they could have imagined. He broke into

tears repeatedly as he spoke about the moments that followed the news.

Sethi also said that no representative from the Delhi Government has visited them since the blast. “Our constituency’s MP came on the day of the cremation, and the next day, the BJP president came. Not one person from

the Delhi Government has come. We are mourning alone,” he said.

Amar’s father, Jagdish Kataria, spoke quietly about the final moments before the tragedy. “Amar was our only son. He got married four years ago and has a three-year-old son. He had called us to say he was on his way home,” he said. When the family tried calling him again, a stranger answered. “A woman picked up and told us she had found his phone near the Red Fort, where a blast had happened,” Jagdish said and added, “We did not know what to do. We just left immediately.”

The family rushed to the spot and then to LNJP Hospital, where they waited through the night among

other grieving families. “We waited till five in the morning and then we got his body,” he said. His body was found charred beyond recognition, and the tattoos on Amar’s arms helped them recognise him when almost nothing else remained.

One read ‘Mom, my first love’. Another said, ‘Dad, my strength’. A third carried the name ‘Kriti’.

Amar, who ran a medicine shop in Chandni Chowk, leaves behind an elderly father who depended on him, a young pregnant wife who cannot yet process the loss and a little boy who still waits at the door. Their family was still being built. Now it has been broken in a moment that changed everything.

Investigation reveals terror module communicated through email drafts

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Members of the terror module under scanner for the deadly blast near the Red Fort, relied on an unusual yet effective method of communication to avoid detection —through unsent emails kept as drafts.

According to investigators, the suspects, including Dr Umar Un Nabi, who is believed to have driven the car that exploded, and his associates, Dr Muzammil Ganaie and Dr Shaheen Shahid, communicated using a single email account accessible to all in the module.

Instead of sending, they saved emails as drafts, a police source said. The intended recipient would log into the same account, read the draft, and delete it immediately, leaving no digital trail of communication, the source said. This method was chosen to evade surveillance and prevent interception of their conversations, as nothing was transmitted across networks, police said.

Officials said the technique reflects a high level of caution and planning within the module, allowing them to coordinate activities related to the conspiracy without relying on traceable channels.



Members of the terror module were also in constant contact, mainly through a Swiss communication application called Threema and other such apps. They allegedly used the encrypted messaging app to plan and coordinate the terror conspiracy while also staying in touch with their foreign handlers, police said. “Unlike conventional messaging platforms, Threema does not require a phone number or email ID for registration, making it extremely difficult to trace the users,” a source said.

The app assigns each user a unique ID not linked to any mobile number or SIM card and offers end-to-end encryption with an option to be run on private servers. Investigators suspect the

accused doctors set up a private Threema server to communicate securely and evade detection. This server was allegedly used to share sensitive documents, maps, and layouts related to the Delhi blast conspiracy.

“Detailed planning, including location sharing and task allocation, is believed to have been conducted through this private network,” a police source added. Threema also allows messages to be deleted from both ends and does not store metadata, further complicating forensic retrieval, the source added.

Preliminary findings suggest the app was used to transfer restricted material and coded messages among the members of the terror module, officials said.

Cyber crooks use blast to spread malware: Police

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Cyber fraudsters are exploiting public curiosity surrounding the recent blast near the Red Fort by circulating malicious files through messages claiming to contain “blast-related evidence”, police sources said on Friday.

According to a source, several people, including Delhi Police personnel, have received messages from foreign-based numbers. “These messages purportedly come from a woman who claims to possess crucial proof or videos linked to the November 10 blast that killed 13 people and injured over two dozen,” said the source.

To lend authenticity, the senders are attaching APK files and zip folders, urging recipients to download them to see the truth behind the explosion, he added.

The source described the development as a “new modus operandi” crafted to take advantage of heightened public anxiety and widespread online discussions about the attack.

“This is a new modus

operandi of cyber fraud. Since the blast near the Red Fort took place recently, people want to know every possible detail. Fraudsters are exploiting this curiosity,” added the source.

Explaining further, he said that the moment a recipient downloads the attached APK or zip file, malware is silently installed on the device, granting cyber criminals direct access to the user’s phone.

“The APK or zip file, once installed, gives remote access to the fraudsters. They can enter the victim’s mobile banking apps, read OTPs, intercept messages and siphon off their hard-earned money within minutes,” he said.

He also said that many personnel within the force have also reported receiving such messages, which further raised an alarm. Investigators also believe the fraudsters are deliberately using the sensitive matter to increase the likelihood of victims engaging with the message.

“People tend to click more when the subject is linked to a major issue. The fraudsters know this very well,” a cyber-expert said.

CM praises Bihar’s vote for change



Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, MLAs Bansuri Swaraj, Ashish Sood, and other leaders during celebrations for the NDA's victory in the Bihar elections at the BJP headquarters in New Delhi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Friday congratulated the people of Bihar for “choosing the path of development” after the NDA appeared to be heading to a landslide victory in the State. Speaking at an event, the CM said Delhi and Bihar are interconnected.

“Congratulations to the people of Delhi and Bihar. The trends show that NDA is heading towards victory. I hope that Bihar progresses on the path of development under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi,” she said.

Later, talking to reporters, she said that the State had chosen the path of development. “My wishes to the people of Bihar for choosing the path of development under the leadership of our prime minister,” she added.

Gupta, who is the lone woman to hold the chief minister’s post among the 14 BJP-ruled States, had made multiple visits to the state to campaign for BJP candidates.

The Delhi CM had conducted rallies, roadshows, public meetings, etc in as many as 21 Assembly segments in Bihar this time out of which the party won 20 seats while lost just 1 seat. Gupta had extensively cam-

paigned in regions like Lkahi Sarai, Bihar Sharif, Patna, Muzaffarpur, Gaya, etc where the NDA registered their victory. She not only campaigned from the BJP candidates while for LJP, JDU and RLP also where they registered their win. The only Warisaliganj seat lost by BJP where Gupta participated in a rally.

Campaign for Bihar elections had witnessed participation of Delhi BJP leaders as they were assigned election duties in various parts of the state. Delhi government ministers were assigned election responsibilities in phases.

Party sources had claimed that a large number of Purvanchali voters in the national capital voted for the BJP and the reason Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta is among the demanded leaders for campaigning for the party. They said that after transfer of ₹10,000 in the account of women besides other announcements for them, the election campaign of a woman Chief Minister gave a positive impact.

The CM, who was in the list of star campaigners of BJP for Bihar, first participated in a public meeting for Deputy CM Vijay Sinha who won from Lakhli Sarai.

Dr Pankaj Singh, Health Minister of the Delhi government, had arrived in Bihar much earlier. He was assigned to campaign in various parts of Bihar. Pankaj Singh was the first Delhi Government minister to reach Bihar. Singh is originally from the Buxar district of Bihar. Delhi has a large population of people from Bihar who are originally from Bihar. Keeping this in mind, Pankaj Singh has been sent to Bihar.

Delhi Power Minister, Ashish Sood, was also sent to Bihar for election campaigning. He was assigned to the Siwan region in Bihar. During the 2020 elections also, he had spent three months in Bihar, overseeing the organisation. Additionally, the results in the areas he was assigned to were quite positive.

Bhojpuri superstar and North East Delhi MP Manoj Tiwari was given the responsibility of organising the public in favour of BJP through small meetings and street plays across Bihar. Manoj Tiwari has a huge fan following in Bihar. His songs and films have left a distinct impression on the people of Bihar. Consequently, he has been given the responsibility of campaigning in every part of Bihar throughout the election.

Landlord kills tenant over suspicion of theft, says cops

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

A man died and another was injured after their landlord allegedly assaulted them on suspicion of phone hacking and stealing rare coins from his collection.

The accused, identified as Irshad (31), was arrested on November 11 and was addicted to using Termin injection vials for gym workouts and had used one during the assault, police said.

“The incident came to light on November 9 when the victim, Tamannee, arrived at

Subhash Place police station with two acquaintances and alleged that he had been beaten by his landlord,” Deputy Commissioner of Police (Northwest) Bhisham Singh said.

He soon began losing consciousness and was taken to Bhagwan Mahavir Hospital, where doctors declared him dead. During the inquiry, police learnt that the deceased worked at a factory in Lawrence Road and lived in Shakurpur.

His co-worker, Nazim, told investigators that the victim and his roommate, Virender,

were confined and beaten by their landlord, Irshad, for two days— Wednesday and Thursday—over suspicions of phone hacking and theft of rare coins. The assault involved kicks, fists and a belt, he said.

Nazim said the duo managed to escape on Friday morning and reached his residence. Over the next two days, Tamannee sought treatment at multiple clinics after complaining of abdominal pain. An ultrasound later revealed heavy internal bleeding, prompting them to report the matter to the police

station, he added. Virender, the second victim, reportedly fled to his native village in Bihar out of fear, Nazim told police. Raids were conducted across Delhi and in multiple locations in Uttar Pradesh, including Etah, Kasganj and Aligarh, to nab the accused.

Acting on a tip-off, police apprehended Irshad from Rohini on November 11. During interrogation, he confessed to assaulting both victims, claiming he suspected them of trying to hack his phone to erase evidence related to a robbery at his Wazirpur factory. He also accused them

of stealing some rare coins from his collection.

Police said a case was registered under Section 103(1) (Murder) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. A belt used for beating, a rope used for tying the victims, a Termin injection vial and the deceased’s mobile phone were recovered at the instance of the accused, they added. Police said Irshad has previously been involved in a case related to causing hurt and wrongful restraint in Subhash Place earlier this year. Further investigation is underway, police added.

DFS refuses to renew fire safety certificate for annexe building of Talkatora stadium

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Delhi Fire Services (DFS) has declined to renew the fire safety certificate for the annexe building of Talkatora Stadium after inspectors found multiple violations during a recent check. The decision was communicated to the New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) on Thursday, with DFS listing 12 safety lapses that it said make the building unfit for certification.

DFS officials inspected the annexe on November 6 in the presence of NDMC representatives. The inspection found that several key systems designed to alert and protect occupants during a fire were either broken, missing, or not functioning. According to the DFS letter, the fire control room panel on the ground floor was non-operational. The public address system, manually operated alarm units, smoke detectors, and the smoke management system were also found dead.



The inspection revealed that the 900 LPM terrace pump was removed, leaving the building without an essential emergency water supply. Multiple hydrants were damaged, and hoses were missing. Critical fire escape staircases were locked and blocked by furniture and stored materials.

DFS stated that these conditions rendered the building unsafe for public use. “In view of these shortcomings, the application for issuance of the fire safety certificate is rejected,” the letter stated. It

warned that continuing to occupy the structure without fixing the violations would be at the “risk and liability of the owner and occupier.” The fire department also requested that NDMC initiate necessary corrective action immediately.

In a separate decision, the DFS rejected the application for a fire safety certificate for the 600-bed Ambedkar Hospital in Dakshinpuri. The building had first been inspected in May 2023, when DFS flagged major failures in its safety infrastructure.

Officials found the pressurisation system for staircases, lift shafts, and lobbies to be non-functional. Fire check doors lacked self-closing devices, and smoke management arrangements were not operational.

Although the hospital had an automatic fire detection and alarm system installed, DFS noted that it, too, was non-functional at the time of the 2023 inspection. Manually operated electronic alarms were also not working.

A follow-up inspection was carried out on October 30 this year. According to a DFS letter sent to NBCC on Thursday, the department found that none of the earlier shortcomings had been rectified. The letter noted that the hospital still lacked functional smoke management systems and had not fixed its pressurisation units. Fire control systems remained inactive. DFS officials said the failure to correct the lapses despite repeated notices left them with “no option” but to deny certification again.

Delhi Police deport 23 foreign nationals for illegal stay in Dwarka

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Delhi Police have deported 23 foreign nationals who were found living illegally in the Dwarka district. The deportation happened after a month-long crackdown carried out through October, officials said on Thursday. DCP Dwarka, Ankit Singh, said the police will continue strict action against illegal stays and will keep pressure on those misusing the system. “Our teams are conducting regular checks. We will not allow any illegally staying foreign national to hide in the district,” he said.

Police teams from Bindapur, Dabri and Mohan Garden traced the individuals during prolonged field verification drives. Bindapur police accounted for 20 of the 23 cases. Dabri police tracked two, and Mohan Garden police traced one.

All 23 were produced before the FRRO, which

OFFICERS SAID MANY OF THE INDIVIDUALS HAD BEEN LIVING IN INDIA LONG AFTER THE EXPIRY OF THEIR VISAS

later issued deportation orders. They were then sent to a detention centre, officers said.

The police said those detained were from Nigeria, Senegal, the Ivory Coast, Tanzania and Liberia. Officers said the enforcement drive was carried out because overstaying foreign nationals put pressure on local resources and create security gaps. They said Dwarka district has seen an increase in such cases over the past few months.

The Operations Unit and police stations have been developing intelligence on foreign nationals staying in rented flats, shared rooms and temporary housing.

Police teams conducted checks in residential colonies, market stretches, narrow lanes and high-density rented areas. Officers said the target was individuals who had overstayed visas or entered the country without valid documents.

Police said landlords who rented out premises without submitting tenant verification forms were also questioned. Checks were conducted early morning and late evening to track those who frequently change locations.

Of the 23 detainees, 15 were from Nigeria. Police said the Nigerian nationals were found in different pockets of Bindapur, Dabri and Mohan Garden. Four were from Senegal. Two were from the Ivory Coast. Each was from Tanzania and Liberia.

Police said the detained group included both men and women.

Police recorded the details of all foreign nation-

als and submitted the documentation to FRRO. Deportation orders followed after scrutiny of each case.

Officers said many of the individuals had been living in India long after the expiry of their visas. Further, police added that the district will continue with similar verification drives in the coming weeks. Officers said the crackdown is part of preventive policing and is necessary to ensure that no illegally staying individual is able to move unchecked in the region. The district police are also working with RWAs and property owners to strengthen compliance with tenant verification rules.

Officials said October’s operation is one of the largest actions against illegally staying foreign nationals in recent months. They added that more checks will be carried out as part of a sustained monitoring plan.

CM Yogi congratulates voters, NDA workers for win in Bihar



Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday congratulated the voters, workers and office bearers of the NDA for their resounding victory in the Bihar Assembly elections.

NDA’s cash pitch to women swung Bihar polls: VIP chief

Vikasheel Insaan Party (VIP) founder Mukesh Sahani on Friday attributed his party's rout in the Bihar Assembly polls to the NDA's aggressive cash outreach to women voters, as the INDIA bloc ally failed to take a lead in any of the 12 seats it contested. Projected as the alliance's deputy chief ministerial face, Sahani insisted that the verdict was the "people's mandate", not a reflection of organisational slack.



People want development, says Haryana Minister Anil Vij



As the BJP-led NDA inched closer to a landslide victory in Bihar, Haryana Minister Anil Vij on Friday said the big message from the election is that "people want development".

Congress will deliberate on Bihar results: Hooda

After the Congress' worst-ever drubbing in the Bihar polls, former Haryana chief minister Bhopinder Singh Hooda Friday said that the election results in the state were not "in accordance with the public support" the 'Mahagathbandhan' had anticipated. "The alliance did not expect such an outcome," he further said. "Therefore, the Congress party will carefully analyse the reasons behind the Bihar defeat and conduct a thorough review," he said.



BJP credits historic Bihar win to PM’s development agenda

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Terming the NDS's victory in the Bihar Assembly polls as 'historic,' the BJP on Friday said people have once again expressed their trust in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "development-focussed" politics.

The BJP-led NDA has impressive leads in more than 180 of the state's 243 assembly seats, with trends indicating that the saffron party was on track to post its biggest tally with an excellent strike rate.

Senior BJP leader Ravi Shankar Prasad said people have voted for development and good governance, rising above caste and community. "This vote is of hope and trust. People have shown



BJP supporters celebrating as the NDA alliance leads during the counting of votes of the Bihar Assembly elections in Patna

"They also remember Lalu's jungle raj," the BJP MP from Bihar's Patna Sahib Lok Sabha constituency said.

"People have shown faith in Modi, BJP and NDA...I am proud of the fact that our Bihar is today ready to march on a new path of development," Prasad said.

Bihar will now move faster on the path of development, he added.

In a social media post in Hindi, BJP MP and chief spokesperson Anil Baluni said, "NDA heading towards a landslide victory in Bihar."

Baluni also posted a video footage of Prime Minister Modi's poll campaigns in Bihar where he had asserted that the NDA would register its biggest-ever poll victory in the state.

faith in Prime Minister Modi's leadership and his guarantee for development (of Bihar)," the former Union minister told reporters here.

Prasad said the people of Bihar have seen "Lalu Prasad's jungle raj" during the RJD rule and the change

that took place in the state during the NDA's tenure.

People of Bihar have seen the NDA's good governance and the measures taken for their welfare, including for women, he said while hailing the poll results as "historic".

Firecrackers at NDA offices, silence in RJD

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Patna

As the Bihar Assembly results swept in on Friday, Patna's Veerchand Patel Marg, the city's political artery, split into two starkly different worlds.

At one end, the BJP and JD (U) offices throbbed like festival outposts, alive with drums, firecrackers and the smell of fresh laddoos. At the other, the RJD headquarters sat in a tightening hush, its corridors marked by long faces, hesitant murmurs and a disbelief that deepened with every fresh tick of the EC's screen.

As the NDA headed for a resounding victory, the BJP headquarters had already burst into a full-blown carnival. A tide of workers pushed

past the iron gates, many cycling in from the old city, and some tumbling out of auto-rickshaws stuffed with party flags that fluttered like festival bunting.

The party office's courtyard changed colours with every firecracker, orange from the saffron smoke, grey from the debris, and red from the gulal smeared on jubilant faces.

Workers wearing Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Nitish Kumar masks held their position at the entrance, breaking into impromptu jigs each time the BJP tally flickered upward on the large LED screen fixed above the porch. "Modi ka Parivar" they roared in unison, waving miniature cut-outs of the PM.



JD(U) supporters celebrating as the NDA alliance leads during the counting of votes of the Bihar Assembly elections in Patna

Close by, women workers in saffron saris punched the air with scarves, chanting, "Bharat Mata ki Jai!", "Narendra Modi zindabad!", "Nitish Kumar zindabad!" The drumbeats were relentless, threatening to drown

out even the fireworks.

"With one-sided leads, the NDA appears invincible! The public has rejected the politics of lies, loot and illusion," shouted a woman worker from Purnea, raising her voice above the crescendo.

A young man, perched precariously on a guardrail, added: "Bihar is once again with the NDA, this is the verdict against the Thugbandhan!"

Inside, senior leaders exchanged restrained smiles, cautious, but widening steadily as the BJP shot past the 90-seat mark of the 101 it contested. Workers distributed laddoos, declaring the party "on course for its biggest-ever assembly tally in Bihar, burying the ghost" of its Lok Sabha dip last year.

A few hundred metres away, the JD(U) office was exploding in its own shade of euphoria — green.

As the EC trends nudged the party to an 82-seat lead, the compound erupted with rolling dhols, green gulal clouds and crackers.

NOTA’s share up from 2020

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Election Commission of India's (ECI) data shows that the share of None of the Above (NOTA) option went up marginally this time in the Bihar assembly polls as compared to the last elections but is still much lower than 2015.

After two-phased election held on November 6 and 11, votes are being counted on Friday. The NDA was set to sweep the Bihar Assembly polls, surging ahead in close to 200 out of the total 243 seats, with the BJP emerging as the single largest party with nearly 95 per cent strike rate.

The Mahagathbandhan, which includes the RJD, the Congress and three Left parties, was struggling to

cross the 35-seat mark.

According to the latest figures, 1.81 per cent or 6,65,870 of the total votes polled went to the NOTA option on electronic voting machines (EVMs) when voting took place for the 243-member Bihar House.

Bihar has an electorate of over 7.45 crore. With 66.91 per cent voter turnout, it was the highest since the first Bihar elections in 1951. As many as 3.51 electors turned up at polling stations to cast their vote. Bihar recorded the

highest female voter turnout in its history

In 2020, about 7,06,252 people chose the NOTA option in the assembly election, which worked out to 1.68 per cent of the total votes polled.

The number of people who had chosen NOTA in 2015 was 9.4 lakh out of 3.8 crore people who voted, which comes to 2.48 per cent.

The NOTA option had recorded its lowest percentage share in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls.

Introduced in 2013, the NOTA option on EVMs has its own symbol — a ballot paper with a black cross across it.



From resurgence to renaissance: Bihar’s march toward a new era



DR SANJAY MAYUKH

The people of Bihar have spoken with clarity and conviction. This mandate is not merely an electoral victory; it is a reaffirmation of Bihar's collective faith in the path of development, stability, and good governance.

As we step into a new term, the responsibility ahead is immense, but so is our determination to accelerate the journey of progress that has transformed millions of lives over the past decades.

Under the visionary guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the steady and experienced leadership of Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, Bihar has been on a remarkable path of transformation. This mandate is a reaffirmation that the people want this journey to continue with greater momentum.

Over the past decade, Bihar has undergone an extraordinary shift in its development trajectory. What was once a state struggling for basic roads, healthcare access, electricity, and administrative stability is today a state that is building expressways, attracting industries, empowering women, strengthening agriculture, and expanding welfare delivery with remarkable speed. None of this hap-

pened overnight. It is the result of consistent effort, collaborative governance between the Centre and the State, and a clear commitment that the fruits of development must reach every home, every village, and every citizen. Infrastructure has been the backbone of Bihar's resurgence. The expansion of national highways and state roads has fundamentally changed the pace of life and commerce in the state.

Through major projects like the AIIMS-Digha elevated road, the Patna-Buxar highway, the Patna Gaya route, and the fast-progressing Ganga bridge projects including the monumental Kacchi Dargah Bidupur bridge Bihar's connectivity has been reshaped. Roads that once took hours to traverse can now be covered in minutes. Markets have become more accessible, schools and hospitals easier to reach, and transport of goods more efficient. Whether it is the Muzaffarpur-Darbhanga corridor, Sitamarhi link roads, or other regional connectors, Bihar's road network has become a symbol of its new aspirations.

Railways have witnessed a similar transformation.

Modern trains such as Vande Bharat Express have begun operating in Bihar, bringing faster and more comfortable travel to the people.

Station redevelopment in Patna, Rajendra Nagar, Darbhanga, Muzaffarpur, and Begusarai reflects the state's growing infrastructure ambitions. Electrification and doubling of tracks have improved safety and efficiency, benefiting both passengers and industries dependent on freight movement. Under Prime Minister Modi's national vision for rail modernisation, Bihar has been an important beneficiary. Healthcare in Bihar has expanded rapidly.

AIIMS Patna now serves as a major centre of advanced treatment, and new medical colleges in Purnea, Madhepura, Bettiah, Nalanda, Vaishali, and Chhapra are strengthening both medical education and district-level services. Ayushman Bharat has provided lakhs of families with crucial financial protection, while Health and Wellness Centres have brought primary care closer to rural homes. Under the combined leadership of the Centre and State, healthcare has moved from scarcity to steady, structured growth.

Agriculture too has seen major transformation. The Kosi-Mechi Link Project and over ₹11,000 crore in central assistance have strengthened irrigation and flood management across vulnerable regions. Modernisation of the Sone canal, soil testing, mechanisation, agricultural credit, and PM-KISAN have significantly improved farmers'

financial stability. Guided by the vision of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, Bihar's agricultural sector has become more resilient, productive, and future-ready, with targeted policies bringing real change to rural lives.

Social welfare programmes have transformed lives across Bihar. Under PM Awas Yojana, lakhs of families now have permanent homes as an outcome of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's unwavering commitment to ensuring dignity and security for every household. Ujjwala Yojana has provided clean cooking fuel to lakhs of women, improving their health and easing daily hardship.

The Jal Jeevan Mission has brought reliable tap water to rural homes that once depended on distant or uncertain sources, reflecting the Prime Minister's focus on essential services for all. Swachh Bharat has strengthened sanitation infrastructure and awareness, driving a major shift in rural hygiene practices and advancing the nationwide cleanliness movement inspired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Bihar's industrial landscape is gaining new momentum. Under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, new industrial parks in Gaya, Purnea, Motihari, and Sitamarhi are drawing investment in food processing, agro-industries, textiles, and small manufacturing, giving a decisive push to regional growth.

MSMEs, strengthened by Mudra loans and the Credit Guarantee Trust, have

OVER THE PAST DECADE, BIHAR HAS UNDERGONE AN EXTRAORDINARY SHIFT IN ITS DEVELOPMENT TRAJECTORY

become major engines of employment and entrepreneurship across the state.

Youth skill development centres, upgraded ITIs, and vocational institutes are preparing young people for modern trades from logistics and healthcare to hospitality and digital services reflecting the Prime Minister's unwavering focus on skill enhancement and future-ready employment.

Education has expanded significantly, with new universities, engineering colleges, and agricultural institutions, alongside the implementation of the National Education Policy, opening wider opportunities for students. Digital India, driven by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has bridged the urban-rural divide by bringing broadband connectivity, e-governance, and digital financial services to every corner of Bihar.

Atmanirbhar Bharat has provided a powerful national framework for Bihar's aspirations. Under this vision of self-reliance articulated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the State has embraced local production, skill development, agricultural mechanisation, and empowerment of small and micro enterprises. The emphasis on building domestic capacity, strength-

ening supply chains, promoting rural industries, and encouraging innovation has fuelled a new sense of purpose among Bihar's youth and entrepreneurs.

Atmanirbhar Bharat is not merely a slogan, it has become a road map through which Bihar is positioning itself for sustained economic independence and future-ready growth.

Self-employment and entrepreneurship have emerged as engines of transformation in Bihar. Thousands of youth are now turning to self-employment not out of compulsion, but out of ambition whether through food processing units, small manufacturing setups, digital service centres, agri-based enterprises, or rural startups. Schemes such as Mudra Yojana, PM SVANidhi, Stand-Up India, and access to collateral-free credit have helped young entrepreneurs overcome traditional financial barriers.

Simultaneously, skill development centres, upgraded ITIs, and digital training hubs are equipping youth with capabilities for modern trades. This surge in self-employment reflects a deeper economic awakening in which Bihar's youth are becoming job creators, innovators, and contributors to local economies.

Urban development, too, has progressed. Under the Smart Cities Mission, cities like Patna, Bhagalpur, and Muzaffarpur have seen improvements in traffic systems, surveillance, solid waste management, public

service integration, and infrastructure. AMRUT projects have strengthened water supply, sewerage networks, urban transport, and green spaces. These improvements have contributed to more organised and sustainable urban life.

Energy infrastructure has expanded rapidly. Bihar today has almost universal household electrification, supported by new substations, upgraded transmission lines, and reduced outages. The extension of gas pipelines under the Pradhan Mantri Urja Ganga Yojana has introduced cleaner energy for households and industries.

It is in the context of this large-scale progress that the contrast with the past becomes unmistakable. Bihar has moved far away from the era once described as "jungle raj", a period associated with fear, administrative paralysis, and a breakdown of law and order.

The transformation from that uncertainty to today's environment of stability, infrastructure expansion, and welfare delivery is a testament to what focused governance can achieve. The people's mandate has made it clear that Bihar must never lose the progress it has gained, and must never return to an atmosphere where insecurity overshadows opportunity.

Under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's guidance and Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's leadership, Bihar has seen what cooperative federalism and purposeful governance can accomplish togeth-

er. Today, Bihar stands on a stronger foundation with better roads, robust welfare programmes, improved healthcare, expanding educational institutions, and systems built on transparency and efficiency.

With this new mandate, the people have expressed their desire for development to move even faster. They want more industries, more jobs, stronger agricultural support, better healthcare access, modern schools, advanced digital infrastructure, and continued focus on women, youth, and the most vulnerable.

They want Bihar to align itself with India's goals for 2047 to become a state that contributes confidently and meaningfully to the national journey towards becoming a developed nation.

This victory is a reminder of responsibility more than celebration. It is an assurance that the people believe in a development-first model of governance. It is a call to deepen our commitment, accelerate our work, and ensure that the benefits of growth reach every corner of the State.

Bihar today moves forward with steady leadership, visionary national guidance, and the collective hope of millions. With humility and determination, we remain committed to building a Bihar that is stronger, more prosperous, and more confident than ever before.

■ States Focus ■



PM TO LAUNCH DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN GUJARAT

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Gujarat on Saturday to mark Janjatiya Gaurav Divas and participate in the 150th birth anniversary celebrations of Bhagwan Birsa Munda. He will also inaugurate and lay the foundation stone for development projects worth over ₹9,700 crore in Narmada district, with a strong focus on tribal welfare, infrastructure, health, education and heritage, the Prime Minister's office said in a statement. The Prime Minister will also review the progress on the Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train project.



BIHAR POLL OUTCOME EXTREMELY UNNATURAL: CPI(ML) LIBERATION

CPI(ML) Liberation general secretary Dipankar Bhattacharya on Friday termed the outcome of the Bihar Assembly polls “extremely unnatural”, and said the party would undertake a thorough analysis of the results. In a statement issued by Bhattacharya, whose party could win only two of the 20 seats it contested, said, “The outcome of the assembly elections. Has the scars of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls all over it”. “The party will undertake a thorough analysis of the outcome and draw necessary lessons,” he said.

Bihar polls: Cracks appear in Congress-SP alliance

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Lucknow/Patna

With Congress being blamed squarely for routing of the RJD in its bastion in Bihar, doubts are being raised about the prospect of another major INDIA bloc partner the Samajwadi Party (SP) to continue with the Congress as alliance in Uttar Pradesh when the State goes to polls in 2027. Akhilesh Yadav-led SP, in partnership with the Congress, had exhibited a stupendous performance by claiming victory on 37 of the 80 Lok Sabha seats, which was instrumental in spoiling the BJP's arithmetic in the 2024 General Elections. While Congress called for an introspection on its massive loss despite of an aggressive campaign together with RJD's Tejashwi Yadav

as the Mahagathbandhan Chief Ministerial candidate, SP chief Akhilesh Yadav on Friday alleged that the “game” carried out through the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar will no longer be possible in other States. Posturing for a bold move, Yadav said that the “game” carried out through SIR in Bihar has now been exposed, and that such “election conspiracies” will not be possible in West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh or anywhere else. “Like CCTV, our ‘PPTV,’ or ‘PDA (Backwards, Dalit, Minority) Prahari (watchdog)’ will remain vigilant and thwart the BJP's plans,” he said. The months-long SIR in Bihar concluded with the Election Commission (EC) publishing the final voters' list



Rahul Gandhi and Akhilesh Yadav

on September 30. The exercise drew sharp protests from the opposition, which accused the poll panel of working at the behest of the ruling BJP, a charge it flatly rejected. Yadav further said the BJP is “not a party, but a fraud”. As the Congress and the

Mahagathbandhan suffered a humiliating defeat in the Bihar elections, calls for introspection and course correction started emerging from the opposition bloc, with some criticising the concentration of power in a few hands. Congress stalwart late

Ahmed Patel's daughter Mumtaz Patel alleged that the party's failures are a result of giving power in the hands of leaders who are totally disconnected from the ground reality. In a social media post, she said it is time to look within and accept the reality. She asked how long the loyal party workers have to wait to witness success. Another partner of the INDIA bloc, Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Priyanka Chaturvedi, who was formerly with the Congress, urged opposition leaders to speak to the women of the country. “Dear Opposition Leaders. Unsolicited advise. Speak to the women of the country. An alternative cannot be without them. Thank you,” she said in a social media post. Congress leader and Lok Sabha MP Shashi Tharoor

said the party would examine the results, do some serious introspection, and look into the organisational mistakes that led to such a verdict. He also said he was not invited to campaign in the Bihar election, while noting that the Congress would examine the reasons for its defeat. “Remember, we were not the senior partner in the alliance, and the RJD also has to look carefully at its own performance,” he told reporters. According to him, in a mandate like Bihar's, it is important to examine the totality of the party's performance. He noted that elections are about a number of factors. Another Congress leader and former state chief Akhilesh Prasad Singh said, “We will introspect where Congress lagged.

J&K bypolls: National Conference suffers twin defeats in Budgam, Nagrota

MOHIT KANDHARI
■ Jammu

In a stunning reversal of fortunes just one year after the National Conference (NC) dominated the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly elections, the ruling party on Friday lost its longstanding stronghold of Budgam to the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and Nagrota to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the bypolls on Friday. In Budgam (central Kashmir), PDP candidate Aga Syed Muntazir Mehdi clinched victory with 21,534 votes, defeating NC's Aga Syed Mehmood (17,382 votes) by a margin of 4,152 votes. An independent candidate, Jibran Dar, disrupted JKN calculations by siphoning off 7,152 votes, enough to dent Mehmood's tally and hand PDP the edge in a three-way split. BJP's Syed Mohsin languished in sixth place with a

paltry 2,619 votes, underscoring the party's waning influence in the Kashmir Valley despite its dominance in Jammu. Since 1977, the National Conference has won the seat in every contested election. The bypoll in the constituency was necessitated after Chief Minister Omar Abdullah vacated the seat following his election from the family bastion of Ganderbal as well in last year's assembly polls. The NC's high-stakes campaign in Budgam, led by the Chief Minister himself, ministers, and top leaders, failed to sway voters, underscoring fissures within the party and its alliances. From the Nagrota Assembly constituency, Devyani Rana, daughter of deceased BJP leader Devender Singh Rana, scripted a historic victory by defeating her nearest rival, Harsh Dev Singh, by a huge margin of over 24,000 votes. National Conference candi-



date Shamima Begum stood third in the final tally. The seat fell vacant after the death of her father, Devender Singh Rana, a prominent BJP leader in Jammu & Kashmir. Voters entrusted Devyani to carry forward her father's

vision for the constituency. Devyani's decisive win from Nagrota has increased women's share in the legislature to 4.44 per cent. The other elected women members of the current assembly are National

Conference (NC) leader Sakina Masood Ittoo, who is also a Cabinet minister in the Omar Abdullah Government, Shamima Firdous (NC), and Shagun Parihar (BJP). The results clearly signal deepening anti-incumbency against Chief Minister Omar Abdullah's Government and a resurgence for regional rivals. In Budgam, estranged National Conference MP from Srinagar, Aga Ruhulla, also contributed to the party's defeat. He purportedly stayed away from campaigning due to differences with Omar Abdullah. On the other hand, the grand victory of a PDP candidate from Budgam is also seen as a 'historic comeback' by PDP supporters. Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Friday said NC leader Aga Ruhullah “killed himself politically” by withdrawing from the Budgam bypoll campaign, adding that his decision was meant as a message to the party but

ended up hurting him more than anyone else. Speaking to reporters, Omar used the English phrase “you cut your nose to spite your face” to describe Ruhullah's move. “Ruhullah killed himself to give me a message,” he said. “But remember, the person who has won from there will never let Ruhullah rise again.” He said Ruhullah's political future in Budgam will now depend entirely on whether he can rebuild his space. “Only Ruhullah can decide if he will be able to rise again in Budgam or not,” he added. “Whatever happened, happened.” Omar admitted that NC knew the contest would be difficult, even before the campaign began. “In Budgam, people do not vote only based on work,” he said. “There is a large section that does not vote on issues at all. Many voters make their choice quietly, behind the curtain. So I already knew it wouldn't be easy for us.”

Rift between Ajit Pawar, State NCP chief

TN RAGHUNATHA
■ Mumbai

Ahead of the local body polls in Maharashtra, a major rift has developed between the camps of the founder-president of NCP (AP) and deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar and State NCP President Sunil Tatkare. In the newly released 2025 star campaigners' list for the local body polls is anything to go by, there are two power centres in the NCP (AP) – one led by Ajit Pawar and another headed by Sunil Tatkare. The rift over the star campaigners' list has cropped up at a crucial time when Ajit Pawar finding it difficult to handle his personal crisis arising out of his son Parth Pawar's alleged involvement in the Pune land scam. Tatkare released the list of NCP's star campaigners on Thursday. Among others, the names of the party's founder-president Ajit Pawar, national working president Praful Patel, Sunil Tatkare, Medical Education Minister Hasan Mushrif, former minister Dhananjay Munde, Women & Child



Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar

Development Minister Aditi Tatkare, senior leader Sayaji Shinde, Minorities Commission Chairman Mushtaq Antulay and former MP Sameer Bhujbal figure in the NCP's star campaigners' list. Significantly enough, the campaigners' list includes four members from Tatkare's own family - he himself, his daughter and Women and Child Development Minister Aditi Tatkare, son Aniket Tatkare, nephew Sanjay Tatkare and four leaders from his home district, Raigad, including his close associate Mushtaq Antulay.

However, the names of important part leaders like veteran OBC leader and Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Protection Minister and veteran OBC leader Chhagan Bhujbal, Rajya Sabha MP and Pawar's wife Sunetra Pawar, MP Nitin Patil, Dilip Walse Patil, National General Secretary Subodh Mohita, State Vice President Saleem Sarang, and Nationalist Students Congress National President Chaitanya (Sunny) Mankar. Informed party sources said that the omissions in the star campaigners' list was a clear indicator of the ongoing internal power

struggle within the NCP. Tatkare is said to be getting directions from former Union Minister and party's national working Praful Patel. Surprisingly, senior Muslim leader and former minister Nawab Malik has been ignored despite his seniority and stature within the party. Unlike the 2024 list of NCP's star campaigners which bore the stamp of Ajit Pawar's influence, the 2025 list has been prepared under the direction of Tatkare. “Tatkare has been steadily consolidating his control over the party's organisational machinery. The new list is an attempt to reduce the influence of Ajit Pawar in the party set-up,” a senior state party leader said. This move appears to be a calibrated step to reduce Ajit Pawar's immediate influence,” a senior leader commented. The elections to 246 municipal councils and 42 nagar panchayats will be held on December 2. The counting of votes will be held on December 3.

Bengal will remain pipe dream for the BJP: TMC

SAUGAR SENGUPTA
■ Kolkata

The Trinamool Congress has asserted that the Bihar election results will have no effect on Bengal, as it is Chief Minister “Mamata Banerjee who matters in Banga.” The TMC's remarks came after the State BJP leaders gave a call for a “final putsch” to throw out Banerjee from power. “Out of Anga (Bihar), Banga (Bengal) and Kalinga (Odisha), two have fallen. Now it is the turn of Banga. The BJP workers are called upon to prepare for the final battle in 2026 when the corrupt Mamata Banerjee government will be pulled down from power,” Bengal Opposition Leader Suwendu Adhikari said. Another senior saffron leader said, “Abki bari Didi hari (now it is the turn of Mamata Banerjee)” even as the BJP workers descended on the streets celebrating and distributing sweets all over Kolkata, Howrah and several parts of Bengal. The TMC was prompt to react, saying, “This time also



TMC spokesperson Kunal Ghosh

the BJP will face a humiliating defeat in Bengal like they did in 2021 when they targeted 200 out of 294 seats but ended up winning 77 seats only.” TMC spokesperson Kunal Ghosh claimed in a post on X that the TMC would return to power for the fourth time with over 250 seats, with an additional jibe at the Congress, saying the Bihar elections once again showed that the tri-colour outfit was not fit to lead the opposition. “Bihar has its own equation, which has no connection with Bengal. Once again,

I loudly iterate that Bihar will not affect Bengal. Whereas the factors are different in Bengal, the factors are only development, unity, harmony, rights, and self-respect. Mamata Banerjee will once again return to power with 250 seats and become the Chief Minister again,” Ghosh said, advising the Congress once again to “introspect why some parties are repeatedly failing to give leadership.” He said, “People's love cannot be won by hurting their rights and self-respect. The way Bengal and Bengalis

have been insulted and the way their self-respect has been hurt, they will never vote for the BJP. In Bengal, love only matters, and the people's love is with Mamata Banerjee, whether it is winter, summer, or monsoon. “Saying that the TMC would keenly watch the direction the BJP-JD(U) relationship would go, Ghosh said that “all the tricks being applied by the BJP via Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls in Bengal would go in vain. SIR and other tricks based on which the BJP is exuding such confidence will have little or no impact in Bengal. They will use agencies and other modes to browbeat us, but we will continue to fight them and defeat them here.” Another senior leader and MP said, “In Bihar they could not catch the BJP's tricks and track SIR and thwart its manipulation as they were not in power, and those who were in power played the game. But in Bengal, the khela (game) will be played by none other than the TMC and Mamata Banerjee.”

CM Yadav's outreach emerges as key factor in Bihar polls

GIRISH SHARMA
■ Bhopal

The trends from Bihar's vote count have thrown the spotlight on the NDA's calibrated, data-led campaign architecture—and at the centre of this strategy is Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav. His targeted outreach across Bihar's competitive constituencies is emerging as one of the most consequential factors in the alliance's strong early performance. NDA-backed candidates are leading in 21 of the 25 seats where Yadav campaigned, a statistic that party strategists view as evidence of his growing electoral traction beyond Madhya Pradesh. Yadav's campaign in Bihar was designed as a tactical intervention rather than a symbolic visit. The brief was clear: energise voter groups that had remained political-

ly dormant, create visible momentum in constituencies with narrow margins, and tighten booth-level mobilisation using his reputation for organisational discipline. His rallies were built around sharp, governance-focused messaging—centred on economic stability, welfare delivery and alignment with national priorities—which resonated strongly with voters looking for predictable, execution-driven politics. According to party insiders, what strengthened Yadav's impact was his communication style. While Bihar politics often leans towards emotive rhetoric, Yadav brought a data-backed, administrative approach, emphasising measurable outcomes and performance indicators. This contrast, strategists say, allowed the NDA to broaden its appeal among undecided voters



who were fatigued by political theatrics and wanted a more grounded narrative. The NDA's Bihar playbook this cycle reflects a corporate-style deployment model that prioritises operational efficiency. High-performing leaders are assigned to low-traction geographies to unlock incremental vote share, energise cadres, and stabilise campaign messaging. Yadav's assignment suggests the alliance's confi-

dence in his growing brand equity—an asset the party is now deploying strategically across state borders. If the current leads consolidate into actual wins, it would offer empirical validation for the NDA's cross-state leadership mobility strategy. It would also strengthen the case for expanding the roles of regional chief ministers in national campaigns—particularly those with a reputation for administrative preci-

sion and on-ground delivery. For the opposition, Yadav's successful intervention exposes a strategic weakness: the absence of a comparable leadership pipeline capable of driving momentum in unfamiliar terrain. Bihar's early trends indicate that voters responded to consistency and credibility—two areas where the NDA's messaging, aided by Yadav's presence, held a clear advantage. The broader political take-away is straightforward. Bihar's electorate rewarded a campaign anchored in discipline, governance outcomes and structural clarity. As the NDA prepares for upcoming electoral cycles, the momentum generated in Bihar will likely reinforce the alliance's reliance on cross-state campaigners like Mohan Yadav. For the opposition, the runway for course correction is getting shorter.

NDA's win emphatic vote of confidence in PM's leadership, says Shrikant Shinde

TN RAGHUNATHA
■ Mumbai

Availing that the people of Bihar had chosen *Mangal-raj* over *Jungle-raj*, the Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena said that the NDA's spectacular electoral success was an emphatic vote of confidence in the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. “The historic mandate in Bihar is an emphatic vote of confidence in the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji. The people of Bihar have delivered a clear and unmistakable message—they have rejected the forces of corruption, chaos and *jungle raj* and chosen the path of *Mangal Raj*, development and dignity,” Kalyan MP and Shiv Sena Parliamentary Party leader Dr Shrikant Shinde said. Dr Shinde, who is the son

of the deputy chief minister Eknath Shinde, said, “The Congress slipping to single digits exposes a simple truth that (Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha) Rahul Gandhi commands zero political credibility in one of India's most politically-aware states. Their caste card, their communal card, their fabricated narratives—everything has collapsed.” “Bihar's poor, backward communities, women, youth, farmers and workers have overwhelmingly backed the NDA. This mandate is a ringing endorsement of Nitish Kumar's clean governance, stability and people-first approach. Despite relentless attacks from the so-called opposition, the people have chosen security, trust and progress over opportunism and empty promises,” the Sena's Parliamentary

Party leader said. “The powerful pro-incumbency wave in Bihar demolishes the opposition's propaganda that India wants 'change'. Yes—India wants change, but a change from disorder to stability, from corruption to accountability, from jungle raj to good governance. And only the NDA represents that change,” Dr Shinde said. Slamming Rahul for “stooping” to make the SIR issue the centre of the Congress' campaign, Dr Shinde charged that the leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha had attempted to undermine the credibility of the Election Commission of India (ECI)—an institution respected across the world. “The people of Bihar have rejected this reckless and irresponsible politics outright. They have chosen democracy over disruption,” the Shiv Sena leader said.

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Kerala HC refuses to entertain State's plea to defer SIR



The Kerala High Court (HC) on Friday refused to admit the plea filed by the State Government seeking deferment of the special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls being undertaken by the Election Commission of India (ECI) Justice VG Arun said that judicial discipline requires the High Court to not entertain the plea since petitions concerning SIR in other States are already pending before the Supreme Court. The Judge said that the State may approach the Supreme Court, as matter is pending there.

"Judicial discipline and comity requires this court to not entertain this petition. Therefore this writ petition is closed leaving it open for the petitioner to move the Supreme Court or approach this court depending on the outcome of the petitions pending before the Supreme Court," the Court said. The Kerala Government filed the plea in light of the upcoming panchayat elections in the State.

According to the plea, the elections would require about 1,76,000 Government personnel apart from 68,000 security personnel. The conduct of SIR would require the services of an additional 25,668 personnel. The same officials would have to be deployed for duties in connection with SIR and panchayat elections and this would strain the human resources of the State, it was argued.

ED moves Kerala HC seeking case files in Sabarimala gold case



Sabarimala temple

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Kochi

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Friday approached the Kerala High Court seeking documents related to two cases probed by the Special Investigation Team (SIT) in the Sabarimala gold theft incident, for initiating a probe under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

In its petition, the ED said it had received information indicating that the accused's modus operandi in the two cases probed by the SIT showed that valuable temple property was illicitly diverted and its proceeds converted for personal gain, thereby giving rise to proceeds of crime as defined under the PMLA.

The agency said that as the sole authority to investigate money laundering activities, it was duty-bound to initiate an inquiry under the PMLA to trace, identify, and attach the proceeds of crime arising from the alleged offences.

The ED stated that it had approached the Judicial First Class Magistrate Court in Ranni, Pathanamthitta, last month seeking certified copies of the FIRs and First Information Statements (FIS) in the two cases.

However, the Magistrate dismissed the request on October 17, citing the sensitive nature of the case and noting that the

investigation was being monitored by the Kerala High Court.

The ED argued in its petition that the Magistrate had incorrectly held that an investigation by another agency was prohibited by the High Court. It said the High Court had earlier directed that the FIRs registered by the Crime Branch be handed over to the SIT.

"There is no prohibition whatsoever on another investigation agency probing offences under a special legislation.

The wrong interpretation of the order of the Division Bench is far-fetched and liable to be interfered with," the agency said.

The High Court will hear the ED's petition on Monday. Meanwhile, former Travancore Devaswom Board secretary S Jayashree on Friday moved the High Court seeking anticipatory bail in the case related to the loss of gold from the Dwarapalaka (guardian deity) idols.

She approached the HC after her anticipatory bail plea was dismissed by the Pathanamthitta District Principal Sessions Court.

In her petition, she expressed apprehension about her possible arrest, cited health issues, and denied any involvement in the case.

The High Court will consider her petition on Tuesday.



CJI to deal with claim of bias at Chennai NCLAT

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The sensational claim that a senior High Court judge approached a judicial member of NCLAT, Chennai for an order favouring a company came under the scanner of the Supreme Court on Friday which said that the matter will be dealt with by the Chief Justice of India on the administrative side. Advocate Prashant Bhushan claimed before the top court that according to his information, "the message came from the Chief Justice of a High Court" to the judicial member of the company's appellate tribunal.

Taking note of the sensational claim, a bench comprising Chief Justice of India-designate Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi transferred the case, in which the said judicial member has recused itself from hearing, from the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) bench at Chennai to the NCLAT, Principal Bench at New Delhi.

"The larger issue raised in the matter is of vital importance and will be dealt with by the Chief Justice of India on the administrative side," the bench told Bhushan, appearing before the top court.



Justice Sharad Kumar Sharma

ing for a private firm AS Metcorp Private Ltd, in whose matter the judicial member of the NCLAT, Chennai recused himself.

It requested the NCLAT Chairperson Justice Ashok Bhushan to hear the matter in a bench headed by him and adjudicate the dispute at the earliest.

The top court also directed the interim resolution professional (IRP) appointed by the National Company Law Tribunal at Hyderabad to proceed in the insolvency dispute. According to the bench, the said judicial

member has recorded the incident in his order before recusing himself from hearing the matter, is enough for looking at the issue on the administrative side. "Consequently, we direct that the company appeal pending before NCLAT, Chennai be transferred alongwith all records to the Principal bench, NCLAT at New Delhi in the peculiar facts of the case. We request the President, NCLAT to list the company appeal before his bench and decide the same after notice to the contesting party at the earliest," the top court

ordered. The Bench said that there can be no qualm that all other issues are of vital public importance and the competent authority must have examined the available material and taken necessary steps as may be required.

"In any case, all these issues can be effectively dealt with by the Chief Justice of India on the administrative side. We thus deem it appropriate to keep this writ petition as a representation bringing on record information for consideration by CJI. Let the law take its own course," the top court said.

Bhushan said that based on the material, it is evident that it is an offence under the Prevention of Corruption Act (PCA) and an appropriate course would be to lodge the case against the senior judicial officer who approached him. He submitted that according to his information, "the message came from the Chief Justice of a High Court".

Bhushan further said the judicial member of the NCLAT has kept the screenshot of the WhatsApp message and shown it to the party in the insolvency dispute, saying he was approached by one of the most revered members of the higher judiciary seeking an order favouring a particular party. The bench said it would not like to comment any further as it has ordered the matter to be placed before the Chief Justice of India, who will look into the issue on the administrative side. The petition, filed by AS Met Corp Private Ltd, arises from proceedings before the NCLAT Chennai relating to the insolvency of KLSR Infratech Ltd.

On August 13, 2025, during the hearing in the NCLAT, Justice Sharad Kumar Sharma created a sensation by stating in an open court that he had received messages from a

senior member of the higher judiciary pressing him to rule in favour of a particular party. He also showed the messages on his phone to one of the counsels present and immediately recused himself.

According to the petitioner private firm, the approach was allegedly made to favour the other party. Justice Sharma recorded in the order, which was uploaded later the same day, that he was approached by "one of the most revered members of the higher judiciary" but did not mention on whose behalf the approach was made.

The writ petition before the top court sought registration of an FIR for offences under the PCA disclosed by the incident, including provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). It said the Supreme Court's earlier ruling had held that a criminal investigation into alleged judicial corruption cannot be substituted by any internal "inhouse" fact-finding. The private firm has also sought a court-monitored probe by an independent agency after preserving the electronic evidence, including video and audio of the August 13, proceedings, which the NCLAT registrar has refused to share, citing a lack of enabling rules.

Jharkhand HC pronounced 32 judgements in 61 pending cases: SC told

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Supreme Court was on Friday informed that the Jharkhand High Court has delivered 32 judgements out of the 61 cases, where verdicts were reserved for over six months.

The Jharkhand High Court had come under the top court's scanner for not pronouncing verdicts for years, particularly in criminal matters including death and life sentence cases.

A bench of justices Surya Kant and Joymalya Bagchi was told by senior advocate Ajit Sinha, appearing for the High Court, that the remaining judgements will be pronounced within a month's time and judges have been working on them.

"They have delivered 32 judgements till now and the remaining will be done in a month's time. The oral message of the court was placed before the judges of the High Court and they are working on

giving verdicts in remaining cases," Sinha said. The bench told the counsel that the court will be taking a holistic view in the matter and posted it for hearing in January and tagged it with pending matters.

On August 8, the top court suggested the Jharkhand High Court judges to take leave for penning verdicts after observing there were dozens of cases in which judgments weren't pronounced.

It had asked the judges to take their sanctioned leaves and complete the pending work. Sinha had earlier informed the court that till January 31, there were 61 cases in which judgements were not pronounced after reserving the verdicts for over six months.

The top court had passed the order in a batch of pleas in which students of faraway tribal areas of Jharkhand complained of judgements not being pronounced since 2023 in cases on appointments of home guards. On May 16, the top



Jharkhand High Court

court asked the High Court to file a status report of pending cases in which judgements were reserved on or before January 31 in both criminal and civil cases.

Students complained their case was last heard on April 6, 2023 but no verdict was pronounced.

According to the pleas, the aspirants of home guard positions have sought a direction to the High Court for pronouncement of the verdict in their cases. The petitioners moved the High Court after the Jharkhand Government cancelled the recruitment for over 1,000 posts

of home guards advertised in 2017, despite their names having featured in the merit list. The High Court, after having heard the matter since 2021, reserved the pleas filed by over 70 aspirants for orders on April 6, 2023.

Similarly, on July 21, the top court was informed that the High Court has delivered verdict in cases of 10 convicts out of which six were on death row in a week, after they moved the Supreme Court complaining of delay in deciding their appeals against conviction despite the verdicts having been reserved years ago. Advocate Fauzia Shakil, appearing for the convicts had submitted that the High Court pronounced verdicts in a week's time after the top court on July 14 issued notice on their plea. On May 13, the top court, which was hearing the pleas of life convicts, observed that the High Court judges were taking breaks "unnecessarily" and called for their performance audits.

SC lambasts Punjab Govt over lack of infrastructure for judiciary

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ New Delhi

The Supreme Court (SC) on Friday lambasted the AAP led Government in Punjab for not creating requisite infrastructure for the judiciary and rather building houses for itself besides misusing central grants. A bench of justices Surya Kant and Joymalya Bagchi pulled up the State Government for failing to create even basic infrastructure despite repeated directions from the Punjab and Haryana High Court and pointed out that funds provided by the Centre meant for judiciary may have been utilised somewhere else by the State officials.

"If we order an inquiry, we will find out that they have already consumed the central grant for other purposes. They are building houses for themselves but cannot construct courts and create judicial infrastructure," Justice Kant observed.

The top court was hearing a plea of the Punjab Government challenging the orders of the Punjab and Haryana High Court for creating appropriate judicial infrastructure and transit accommodation for judicial officers in the newly-created Malerkotla district of the state. Punjab advocate general Maninderjit Singh Bedi submitted that the State has created posts and facilities for Malerkotla judges and required infrastructure is being created.

Senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi, who also appeared for the Punjab Government, submitted that the High Court's criticism of the State Government was unjustified and unwarranted.

He added that the issue before the High Court was limited to the establishment



Punjab CM Bhagwant Mann

of a court at Malerkotla.

Justice Kant told Singhvi, "You don't know what is happening in the state of Punjab. I know the State very well. Even if the funds are sanctioned by the Centre, they don't even allocate a site. They have enough money to spend on so many other things." The top court also questioned the logic of the state Government behind creating new districts without first planning necessary infrastructure including courts.

"First of all why did they declare Malerkotla a revenue district. It was only for political appeasement. When they knew infrastructure was not created, they should not have done it. You say you require a house for SP, but you don't require a house for a sessions judge," Justice Kant said.

Justice Bagchi pointed out that the court infrastructure often depends on centrally sponsored schemes and that state contributions are either delayed or diverted.

He then suggested that a more systematic budgetary commitment may be needed and there should be some minimum allocation in State and central budgets for the judiciary.

"It's not even one percent of the GDP at present," Justice Bagchi remarked.

Sensing the mood of the

court, Singhvi said that he would like to consult the state Government and sought permission of the court to withdraw the appeal and approach the High Court instead. "We will place a detailed status report with explanation before the High Court and seek suitable extension of time," he submitted.

The bench allowed the petition to be withdrawn with liberty to move the High Court and asked it to look into the issue of extension of time. The High Court while hearing a PIL had recorded that Malerkotla was declared a revenue district in June 2021 and a separate sessions division was approved in August 2023, but the State had not created permanent courtrooms or residences for the district and sessions judge and other judges.

On August 22, it directed the state to issue fresh administrative and financial approval for two additional courtrooms in the existing complex and asked the High Court's building committee to examine whether the deputy commissioner's guest house and other buildings occupied by executive officers could be used for judges.

The High Court in September took a strong view and flagged repeated delays despite the building committee's resolution and directed that the guest house presently occupied by the deputy commissioner and another house occupied by the Senior Superintendent of Police be vacated and allotted to the district and sessions judge as residence and, if possible, as a courtroom space.

Aggrieved by the order, the Punjab Government challenged the order before the Supreme Court.

World Cup: SC rejects Kolkata civic body plea over advertisement tax



Eden Gardens stadium

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Supreme Court (SC) on Friday dismissed the Kolkata Municipal Corporation's plea challenging an order which quashed the demand notice claiming ₹51.18 lakhs from Cricket Association of Bengal on account of advertisement tax for the 1996 Cricket World Cup held at Eden Gardens.

The corporation had issued a demand notice on March 27, 1996, claiming ₹51,18,450 from the association on account of advertisement tax for the inaugural ceremony and a semifinal match of the 1996 World Cup held at the Eden Gardens.

The inaugural ceremony of the World Cup was organised by the association on February 11, 1996, while the semifinal match was held on March 13, 1996.

A plea filed by the Kolkata Municipal Corporation challenging an order of June this year by a division bench of the Calcutta High Court came up for hearing on Friday before a bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta.

The High Court's division bench had dismissed an appeal filed by the corporation against an April 2015 order of its single judge. The division bench had said Eden Gardens stadium cannot be held to be a "public place". The single judge had allowed a plea filed by the Cricket Association of Bengal challenging the demand notice.

The top court dismissed the corporation's plea against the High Court's order.

In its order, the High Court's division bench had noted that the Cricket Association of Bengal enjoys a lease of the Eden Gardens in Kolkata and the owner of the property is the Ministry of Defence, Government of

India. It had said that certain advertisements were put up both inside and outside the stadium during the 1996 Cricket World Cup. The corporation had issued a demand notice on account of advertisement tax for the two days of the World Cup by invoking a provision of the Kolkata Municipal Corporation Act, 1980, which deals with tax on advertisements.

The association had challenged the demand notice before the High Court contending that the concerned advertisements were displayed within the Eden Gardens stadium which was not a public place and the same were not visible to the public from a public street or a public place.

A single judge of the High Court had quashed the demand notice after which the corporation had moved the division bench.

Before the High Court's division bench, the counsel appearing for the municipal corporation had argued that when advertisements were deployed either inside or outside the Eden Gardens stadium, such advertisements were visible from a public place.

"In our opinion, as soon as conditions are imposed on members of the public for having access to a place, that place ceases to be a public place. A public place must be accessible to an indeterminate number of people without any hindrance or condition," the division bench had said.

It had said that the public does not have absolute or unrestricted right of access to Eden Gardens and just because the stadium can accommodate a huge number of people, that would not per se make it a public place.

The division bench of the High Court had refused to interfere with the single judge's order and dismissed the appeal filed by the corporation.

Editor's
TAKE

Exit polls were right:
NDA wins fair and square

NDA's thumping victory shows that elections in Bihar are won not with rhetoric alone, but with organisation and careful social-coalition management

The exit polls were right all along. Bihar has chosen to give another five years to the NDA with thumping majority. What may be debated is not the victory itself, but the margin of it. The National Democratic Alliance's emphatic win in the Bihar elections marks one of the most decisive mandates the state has witnessed in recent years. What makes this outcome remarkable is not merely the scale of the majority, but the clarity with which voters opted for continuity over change, organisation over loose alliances, and national issues over the local ones.

The opposition's inability to convert anti-incumbency into electoral advantage saw the smooth sailing for the NDA. Although dissatisfaction existed, it did not consolidate into a demand for change. Voters preferred stability and alignment of state politics with the central government . Moreover, Nitish Kumar, despite long years in power and multiple political shifts, remains a towering figure in the state's political landscape.

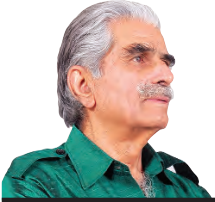
The NDA's campaign strategically positioned him as the anchor of stability and good governance, a tag he has earned over the years. While anti-incumbency was expected to weigh in favour of Mahagathbandhan, the NDA managed to turn the narrative towards experience, predictability and steady administration. This perception proved crucial tipping the balance in favour of the NDA. What truly powered the NDA, however, was its broadened social coalition. Beyond its traditional upper-caste and OBC support, the alliance made significant inroads among Economically backward castes (EBCs), Dalit communities and, critically, women voters. Women emerged as a silent yet decisive constituency whose turnout strongly favoured the NDA.

Equally important was the alliance's disciplined and highly coordinated election machinery. It ran a focused, message-driven campaign that highlighted development, welfare continuity and social stability. Booth-level workers, constituency-level organisers and well-networked local leaders ensured that the NDA's messaging travelled uniformly and effectively across the state.

In contrast, the Mahagathbandhan struggled to match this coherence. Despite generating enthusiasm in several pockets and fielding energetic leaders such as Tejashwi Yadav, the opposition failed to convert sentiment into structured mobilisation. Internal contradictions, an uneven ground presence and reliance on a narrow caste base weakened its effort. The dependence on the traditional Muslim-Yadav combination further limited its reach. Attempts to expand into EBCs and non-Yadav OBC groups did not significantly alter the electoral arithmetic. The underperformance of key partners – particularly the Congress – dragged down the coalition's overall tally. The entry of new players such as the Jan Suraa Party further fragmented the anti-NDA vote, weakening the Mahagathbandhan in several constituencies without yielding compensatory gains.

Nepal: Will the elections be held on time?

The country is caught between competing demands for electoral reform, a restive youth movement seeking deep structural change, and a judiciary questioning the very legitimacy of the current government



ASHOK K MEHTA

The question on everyone's lips is whether the elections in Nepal, slated for 5 March 2026, can be held on time—or even at all. The alternatives being discussed include the reinstatement of the dissolved Parliament with a new election date and the reappointment of former five-time Prime Minister SB Deuba; or an extension of the existing election date, something Prime Minister Sushila Karki herself has mentioned. So far, sixteen petitions have been filed in the Supreme Court seeking the restoration of the House. Former Prime Minister KP Oli, ousted three times, has called the present government unconstitutional and demanded Parliament's revival. On 29 October, a constitutional bench of the Supreme Court asked President R. C. Paudyal to provide justification for the dissolution of the House and directed petitioners seeking its revival to appear before the Court on November 20.

The establishment has not yet responded to the Court. Prime Minister Karki has attributed the formation of her government to the GenZ Andolan, for which its members seek national recognition as MOV 082. The real question now is whether the reforms demanded by GenZ—a directly elected Prime Minister, a stable government, voting rights for overseas Nepalis, and a reduction in the voting age from 18 to 16—can be implemented before March 5. Some reforms could be enacted through a Presidential Commission empowered to amend the Constitution, should the government agree. On October 19, Miraj Dhungana, who had earlier released a video outlining GenZ's demands, announced the formation of a new political party.

However, some maintain that GenZ itself will not contest the elections. Several of their initial eight-point demands were found to be unimplementable—such as the core issue of eradicating corruption, which is best addressed by an elected government rather than an activist movement.

GenZ itself remains deeply fractured. Nineteen different groups, many infiltrated by vested interests, have rendered the reform movement lacking in cohesion and clarity. In neighbouring Bangladesh, students recently hammered out the “July Charter”, which includes electoral reforms that must be implemented before the February 2026 elections. Although the Charter was initially opposed as unconstitutional by the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), it was supported by its ally, Jamaat-e-Islami. Nepal's own Andolan-led reforms of 1990 could not be fully implemented because of the “mischievous clauses” inserted by the Palace into the 1990 Constitution—clauses that eventually triggered the Maoist uprising of 1996 and paved the way for the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal in 2008, replacing the Constitutional Monarchy. The single-party Maoist



rule that followed saw Prachanda attempt to bring the Nepal Army under party control.

The 2015 Constitution sought to prevent a repeat of the 2008 scenario by introducing a mixed electoral system, but it was later manipulated by three Prime Ministers—Oli, Prachanda, and Deuba—who shared power among themselves. Nepal, which has already had seven constitutions in seven decades, now faces the urgent need for constitutional amendments that can address this entrenched instability.

Prime Minister Karki has met various political parties, engaged with GenZ representatives, and selectively addressed some of their demands. The state violence that resulted in 76 deaths and incidents of arson is under investigation. Of the 1,300 weapons lost by the police, only a few have been recovered. Many of those who fled the jails have been recaptured, though some are believed to have escaped into India. Recent arrests in Ghorai, Dang, include arsonists who torched the district court, government offices, and public facilities—evidence gathered through CCTV footage. Meanwhile, whispers are circulating that Karki is leaning towards the United States and the European Union, raising eyebrows within the establishment. Nineteen new political parties have registered, adding to the existing 122. Rising political figures such as Balen Shah, Mayor of Kathmandu, and Harka Sampang, Mayor of Dharan, are keeping their cards close to their chests. Rabi Lamichhane, the charismatic leader of the ostensibly non-ideological Rastriya Swatantra Party, is currently in jail, and his popularity has declined.

The Nepali Congress (NC) is also in turmoil. Party President and five-time Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba is recovering in a Singapore hospital following an assault by GenZ activists. Acting President Purna Bahadur Khadka is overseeing Central Committee deliberations on whether to hold the national convention before or after the elections—and whether to contest the March polls at all. General Secretary Gagan Thapa favours holding the convention now, while a majority led by senior leader Shekhar Koirala wants it postponed until after the elections.

The CPN (UML), meanwhile, is in a dilemma. Its leader Oli has been tarnished by the events that led to the GenZ uprising and his eventual ouster. A majority of the party's Central Committee wants him to resign, but he has dug in his heels. This has opened a window for former President Bidya Devi Bhandari to attempt a political comeback. It is clear that the UML will not fight the next elections under Oli's leadership.

Maoist leader and thrice-elected Prime Minister Prachanda, known for his political agility and instinct for survival, has orchestrated the merger of ten leftist parties into what China has long sought—the revival of the erstwhile Nepal Communist Party, with Prachanda as its coordinator. The word “Maoist” has been conspicuously dropped. Meanwhile, the CPN (Unified Socialist) has split, with former Prime Ministers Madhav Nepal and Jhalanath Khanal parting ways—Nepal joining Prachanda's bloc. Other new entrants include Minister Kulman Ghising's Ujjailo Nepal Party and the Dynamic Democratic Party, founded by Buddha Air owner Birendra Basnet. Smaller parties are also undergoing rebranding. The Madhes parties, already splintered into at least six factions, have fractured further. Among royalists, divisions are emerging between Rajendra Lingden and Dhawal Shamsheer Rana, while firebrand royalist Durga Prasain

has announced a Hindu Rashtra movement and a protest for the restoration of the monarchy on 1 December.

Ultimately, the verdict on whether the elections will be held—with or without reforms—will rest with President Paudyal, Prime Minister Karki, Chief Justice Prakash Man Singh Raut, and, inevitably, GenZ and the political parties. Elections may yet be delayed, for precisely the same reasons that could hold up Bangladesh's own 2026 polls. Elections in Nepal were originally due at the end of 2027, with the expiry of the dissolved House. Prime Minister Karki remains confident that she will hold them earlier—but whether she will be allowed to do so remains the question.

The Pioneer
SINCE 1865

The writer, a retired Major General, served as Commander, IPKF (South), Sri Lanka, and was a founder member of the Defence Planning Staff, now the Integrated Defence Staff

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 The Pioneer

The path to inner peace through spiritual living



SADGURU SRI MADHUSUDAN SAI

2ND OPINION
THE PIONEER

All of us seem to be in a perpetual rush, all the time. There is noise, pressure, and endless demands from the external world, and we hardly have a moment to breathe. Many of us try to manage our duties, chase desires, and somehow keep up. Yet often, we end up feeling restless, even a little lost. At times like these, finding inner peace feels deeply important. Ancient Indian wisdom has much to say about it. It shows ways to step back, calm the mind, and see things clearly. Spiritual living, founded on truth and balance, offers a way forward.

The *Bhagavad Gita* says that peace begins with the mind. In Chapter 6, Verse 6, it mentions: “For one who has conquered the mind, the mind is

the best friend; but for one who has failed to do so, the very mind will be the greatest enemy.”

It is a simple idea, yet so true. When the mind is restless, even small issues seem huge. But when it is calm, even big problems appear small. Spiritual living helps us look inward, away from distractions, and notice what truly matters.

The Kathopanishad tells a story that makes this clear. A young seeker, Nachiketa, asks Yama, the lord of death, about life and peace. Yama says:

“The good and the pleasant approach the human being. The wise, examining both, distinguish one from the other. The wise choose the good over the pleasant.”

It is easy to see why so many of us remain stuck in chaos. Often, we choose what feels easy or pleasant on the surface, even if it becomes a source of trouble later.

The spiritual path asks something different: it asks us to choose what is good over what is merely pleasant—truth, discipline, and compassion. At first, it may seem difficult and even unattainable, but it leads to ultimate freedom and joy.

Inner peace also comes from knowing oneself. The Kathopanishad compares the body to a chariot, the senses to horses, and the mind to reins. The Self, or Atman, is the master. If the senses run wild, life becomes

messy and confusing. But if the mind holds the reins carefully and listens to the Self, the way forward becomes clear.

In practice, this means taking moments of quiet every day—praying, meditating, or simply sitting and observing our minds. Like a pond settling when the wind dies down, the mind can become still if we pay attention. In that quiet, we feel connected to everything. The Gita says: “The yogi, uniting the self with the Self, sees the same in all beings.” Such vision reduces fear, anger, and restlessness.

Spiritual living is also about kindness. Seeing others as part of the same Self makes compassion natural. Hearts soften and minds become clear. Peace is no longer only personal; it spreads to families, friends, communities, and even the wider world.

In the end, clarity is not somewhere out there—it is within. Following the Self, guided by the Gita and the Upanishads, shows us how to live in harmony. The world may remain noisy, chaotic, and messy, but within, there can be silence, strength, and joy. That is the gift of spiritual living—the kind of peace that remains untouched, unperturbed, and timeless.

The writer is a Global Humanitarian, Spiritual leader & founder of the One World One Family mission

PIC TALK



The crescent moon rises behind the Çamlıca Mosque and the Galata Tower in Istanbul, Turkey.

PHOTO: PTI

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GLOBAL CLIMATE WARNINGS DEMAND SWIFT COLLECTIVE ACTION

This refers to the Editor's Take, "The Clock is Ticking on Carbon & Climate". The article rightly reminds us that the world is running out of time; with only a few years left within the global carbon budget to keep warming below 1.5°C, incremental action will no longer suffice. The weakening of natural carbon sinks—from the Sundarbans in our own neighbourhood to the Amazon rainforest—shows how ecosystems that once protected us are now under severe and accelerating strain.

Ever since Al Gore and organisations such as Greenpeace began sounding the alarm, climate science has only become more definitive. Yet political will has repeatedly been undermined by misinformation, including reckless assertions that climate change is a "Chinese hoax". Such

irresponsible claims have cost humanity precious momentum. The real lesson is that economic growth and clean energy can advance together—but only through deliberate, consistent policy. For developing nations, the shift from fossil fuels to clean fuels is not anti-development; it reduces long-term energy costs, improves public health, and strengthens climate resilience.

What is now required is resolute global and domestic action: investment in renewable infrastructure, restoration of threatened ecosystems like the Sundarbans, and protection of global lungs such as the Amazon. Developed nations must meet climate finance commitments, while emerging economies must reject the false binary between sustainability and prosperity.

HARSH PAWARIA | ROHTAK

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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

US shutdown leaves economy strained

The recent situation in the United States reflects a difficult period of economic and administrative disruption caused by the prolonged government shutdown. President Donald Trump signed a funding bill to end what became a record 43-day closure, a crisis that inflicted considerable hardship on federal employees and disrupted essential public services. Airports experienced severe delays, while many workers were compelled to rely on food banks for basic support.

Although the shutdown has now ended, it brought little satisfaction to either political side. Democrats failed to secure the healthcare provisions they demanded, while Republicans, despite controlling both Congress and the White House, faced significant public criticism. The temporary agreement funds operations only until 30 January, leaving the federal government on a path to continue adding roughly \$1.8 trillion annually to its already substantial \$38 trillion debt.

While the immediate crisis has been lifted, underlying fiscal and political tensions persist. Attempts are being made to improve overall conditions, yet the shutdown has underscored deep divisions within the US political system and created enduring repercussions for ordinary citizens.

DIMPLE WADHAWAN | KANPUR NAGAR

NDA mandate must inspire responsibility

The NDA's sweeping victory in the Bihar elections, securing 197 of 243 seats, is not surprising given the strong performance of the BJP and JD(U) over previous electoral cycles. Their renewed partnership, combined with a largely clean image, naturally led to an emphatic mandate and a fifth term for Nitish Kumar as Chief Minister.

However, such an overwhelming majority must not encourage complacency. With the opposition reduced to merely 47 seats, it is essential that the government resists the temptation to dismiss alternative views.

A democratic mandate, however decisive, carries an equal responsibility to govern inclusively. The administration must focus on strengthening Bihar through sustained development, structural reforms, and welfare measures that benefit the poor, the middle class, and the wider public.

The government would do well to consider constructive suggestions from all political quarters. The progress of the state depends not merely on electoral victories, but on the collective wisdom that emerges from diverse voices in the Assembly. With cooperation, transparency, and accountability, Bihar can move steadily towards long-term growth.

PVP MADHU NIVRITI | TELANGANA

Bihar verdict shows democratic maturity

The recent Assembly election results in Bihar have reaffirmed that Indian democracy has matured considerably. The exit polls proved accurate, and the NDA secured a comfortable majority, demonstrating once again that voters cannot be influenced by last-minute promises.

The RJD's commitment to offering a government job to each family failed to sway voters, showing that unrealistic assurances hold little weight when people assess credibility. The NDA's success can be attributed to several factors. The consolidation of the BJP-JD(U) alliance worked effectively, reflecting stability after the turbulence that followed the 2020 polls. The BJP's expanding organisational strength in Bihar, combined with its capacity to translate national themes—welfare delivery, infrastructure expansion, and confidence in the Centre's leadership—into local appeal, may have significantly shaped voter sentiment.

This election also witnessed broad agreement across parties on key issues such as employment, job creation, and education. As these concerns were widely shared, the outcome hinged less on the promises themselves and more on the electorate's faith in who could actually deliver.

YASH PAL RALHAN | JALANDHAR

Before the ice melts, the ego must: The real crisis behind COP30

Destructive attitudes arise from flawed notions of self-identity. One feels a void within, clamouring to be filled, yet ignores it. The result is a simplistic conclusion: I must consume the world to feel fulfilled. This urge for consumption, born of an absence of self-knowledge, lies at the root of the climate catastrophe

FIRST
Column



ACHARYA
PRASHANT

The 30th UN Climate Conference has opened in Belém. The world meets in a burning forest to discuss how to stop the fire. For decades, we have spoken of cooperation but practised postponement. Finance is sidelined, attendance is thin, and the absence of the United States, the world's second-largest emitter, is dismissed as "less disruptive than expected". Yet the Earth does not hear declarations; it registers only emissions.

The Thresholds We Have Crossed

We are well past uncertainty. The world has already crossed the 1.5 °C threshold above pre-industrial levels. Each of the past eleven years has been the hottest on record. The planet's fever mirrors our own: restless, rising, unwilling to abate.

The Global Tipping Points Report 2025 confirms the first irreversible Earth-system collapse: warm-water coral reefs, more than 80 per cent bleached since 2023, are dying, threatening nearly a billion people who depend on them. The Amazon is nearing dieback below a two-degree rise; 17 per cent has already turned to savanna, releasing more carbon than India emits in a year. The Greenland and West Antarctic ice sheets are destabilising, together capable of raising sea levels by up to five metres.

The Arctic is warming 3.5 times faster than the global average, releasing methane and fuelling record wildfires. The United States has already endured fourteen billion-dollar climate disasters this year, with losses exceeding \$100 billion. Global emissions, instead of falling 44 per cent by 2030 as pledged, have risen by 3 per cent. Even if every COP30 promise is kept, we remain on track for 2.3–2.5 °C of warming. The fever will not subside because the disease lies not in the atmosphere but in ambition.

Policy and Technology Alone Will Not Help

Governments cannot impose what voters refuse. The same person who demands climate action as a citizen demands consumption as a buyer. No political system survives long by asking its people to live with less, so nations sign accords and return home to preserve comfort. The richest five per cent of



BE CAUTIOUS OF
YOUR ROLE
MODELS.
CELEBRITIES
AND GURUS WHO
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ARE EDUCATORS
OF DESIRE.

The writer is a teacher,
founder of the
PrashantAdvait
Foundation, and an author
on wisdom literature

acharya_prashant_ap
@Advait_Prashant
prashantadvait

humanity produce most emissions, and the levels generated by the top one per cent are criminally excessive. Yet those who contribute least will suffer most. We worship technology as our saviour without examining the worshipper. Technology is the new theology. Each new gadget is a prayer for redemption without reflection. Electric vehicles may halve lifetime emissions, yet the same mind that buys a "green" SUV demands wider roads on which to drive it faster, and then buys additional green SUVs.

Yes, we need renewables and carbon removal. But technology without wisdom is surgery performed on a patient still drinking poison. The tools are innocent; the user is not. Until wisdom guides invention, cleverness will remain our curse.

The Existential Root

The deeper crisis is an artificially implanted existential sense of incompleteness. The two drivers of the climate crisis — population growth and consumption — share a single root: the illusion that consumption brings fulfilment. The richest produce most emissions; the poor almost none. A

billionaire's jet may emit more in one flight than a farmer emits in an entire lifetime, yet both, as human beings, are driven by the same restlessness to acquire and accumulate. Beyond the biological hard-wiring of loneliness, social forces work constantly to make people feel incomplete so that they keep buying. Loneliness is sold as a problem and products as companions. Relationships and family become engines of commerce. We exploit the Earth for the same reason we exploit one another: because we feel hollow within. Climate change is the symptom; ignorance is the disease.

Two centuries of industry have given us immense power but not the wisdom to use it. Real sustainability begins not with technology but with wisdom. With wisdom, restraint is not even required, because excesses are not desired. A mind that knows itself needs no slogans to behave sanely. Consciousness is the ultimate regulator; when it shifts within, systems shift without.

Pledges to consume less, save the planet, or generate less waste matter only when they arise from insight. Otherwise,

one buys fewer plastics but more gadgets. The storm within rages on: the urge to upgrade and display. That same storm heats both the mind and the planet.

Self-Knowledge for Right Action

Destructive attitudes arise from flawed notions of self-identity. One feels a void within, clamouring to be filled, yet ignores it. The result is a simplistic conclusion: I must consume the world to feel fulfilled. This urge for consumption, born of an absence of self-knowledge, lies at the root of the climate catastrophe.

When one observes her thoughts and the predictable outcomes of her actions, she begins to check her tendencies. Change begins with attention. Before clicking 'buy', she pauses and asks what she seeks: the object, or a fleeting sense of fulfilment through the object.

Self-knowledge is solid action. Inner clarity can take social form. Cooperatives in Europe run solar grids owned by residents rather than corporations. Bhutan's "Gross National Happiness" demonstrates that even states can measure success using internal parameters rather than external growth.

One begins voting for policies that curb planned obsolescence, limit luxury emissions, and reward circular design. One demands that governments tax waste, not work, and that corporations disclose ecological facts rather than glossy pledges. One supports a green cess and a carbon border tax. And all this arises not from morality or ethics but from the same inner place that, if left unexamined, leads to destruction.

Can personal transformation reshape political reality? It must, because politics ultimately reflects the consciousness of the populace. When enough individuals see through manufactured desire, industries lose their grip. When consumption is recognised as compensatory behaviour, markets adapt or collapse.

Multiply inner awakening a millionfold, and industries will shift, because demand creates supply. Policy without inner change breeds resentment; introspection without public action is hypocrisy. The atmosphere will not cool while the mind burns. Humanity has always had insight, but wisdom was rarely lived by the masses. Religion became ritual rather than realisation; belief rather than understanding. The Gita calls Kama (desire) the destroyer of knowledge; the Buddha named Trishna (craving) the root of suffering; Lao Tzu counselled knowing when enough is enough. Yet economies were built on stoking desire.

What went wrong? Wisdom was kept separate from commerce, confined to temples while society walked blindfolded. The crisis is not that wisdom was absent, but that it never left the books to challenge the factory floor. Forests fell while prayers rose; rivers died as shrines multiplied.

The philosopher's task does not end with meditation or publication. He must enter society and ensure that the light he has seen becomes the living light of the common man. He must be both rebel and builder: challenging the system while shaping new institutions. If he retreats, his self-absorption becomes the planet's ruin.

Reclaiming Joy and Responsibility

Be cautious of your role models. Celebrities and gurus who preach freedom while flying private jets or endorsing luxury brands are educators of desire. Cricketers marketing lifestyles obscenely high in emissions, actors presenting consumption as virtue, influencers monetising aspiration, and politicians selling deforestation as development — all profit from planetary harm. Stop funding them through your wallet, your vote, and your like button.

Demand public disclosure of celebrity carbon footprints; hold fame to the same scrutiny as factories. Concert tours that burn millions of litres of fuel and sporting events that leave mountains of plastic waste are industries disguised as entertainment.

Above all, seek deeper joy. Would you burn fuel if a book brought you joy? Seek retail therapy if music could heal you? Scroll endlessly if one conversation could move you? Watch a five-hundred-crore spectacle if a simple wisdom talk touched you more deeply? Chase distant resorts if a nearby forest could quieten you? Yearly upgrade devices if you saw that technology cannot fill an inner void? Buy status symbols if self-respect no longer needed proof? Hoard possessions if you discovered that lightness is freedom? Accept the extinction of species once you recognised consciousness in all beings?

When joy is rediscovered within, compulsive consumption loses its power. A person with self-knowledge cannot be sold dissatisfaction. The greatest cleansing force on Earth is consciousness.

The world in a single nest: How India's education is embracing Tagore's global vision



PREM KUMAR
KALRA



J K
VERMA

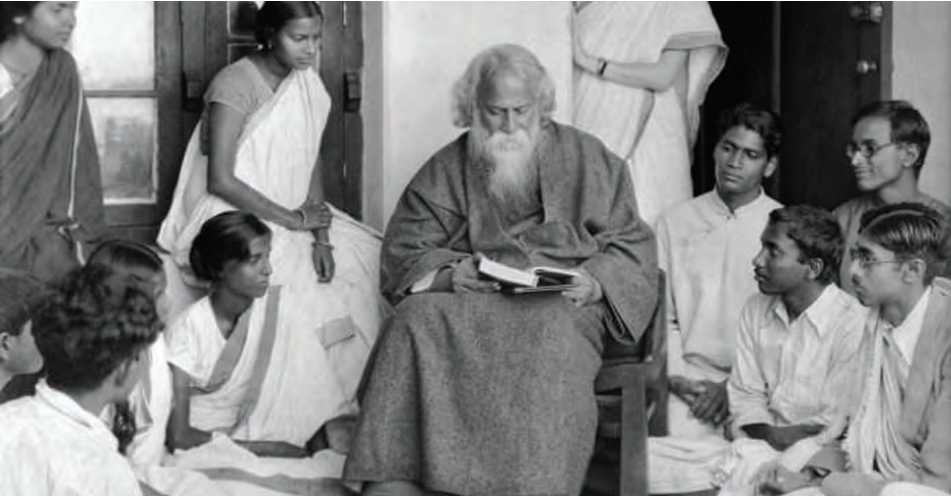
When Rabindranath Tagore founded Visva-Bharati University, he envisioned it as a place "where the world makes a home in a single nest". His dream was not to Westernise Indian education, but to universalise it — to let the winds of the world blow freely through India's corridors of learning without uprooting the Indian tree. A century later, that vision appears to be taking root once again. The decision to allow foreign universities to establish campuses in India marks a defining moment in the nation's educational journey. India's civilisation has always been broad, inclusive, and intellectually open.

The ancient universities of Takshashila and Nalanda remind us of our rich tradition of cosmopolitan scholarship. History is replete with accounts of scholars from China, Greece, and Central Asia travelling to India in search of wisdom and dialogue.

Today, the arrival of foreign universities is often viewed through economic or competitive lenses. Yet its deeper significance lies in something more profound — the revival of India's ancient spirit of dialogue between seekers of truth across cultures. It signals India's readiness to engage with the global education ecosystem on its own terms. Diversity, excellence, and affordability will soon stand at our doorstep. For thousands of Indian students, the dream of an international degree no longer demands the crushing expense of studying abroad. The world, quite literally, is coming home.

This exchange, however, will not be one-way. The partnership between Indian and foreign institutions promises to be both cooperative and competitive. Indian students will benefit from exposure to global pedagogies, research methods, and multidisciplinary learning environments. In return, foreign universities will gain unique insights into the opportunities and challenges of one of the world's fastest-growing knowledge economies. The "global classroom" is already taking shape — where a student from Jaipur debates a peer from Japan, and a professor in Delhi co-guides a thesis with a mentor in Melbourne.

Yet the road ahead is not without chal-



lenges. The internationalisation of education, if left unchecked, could become a luxury reserved for the privileged. Many global programmes still cater primarily to affluent learners. India must therefore establish strong frameworks for scholarships, flexible credit transfers, and "earn while you learn" opportunities. Equity and access must remain at the heart of this transformation. The true spirit of Indian education lies in balancing public good with private growth. The nation must ensure that education does not become a commodity, but continues to serve as a catalyst for character and creativity.

Importantly, India is no longer merely a recipient of global influence; it is also emerging as a contributor. Several premier Indian institutions, including the IITs and IIMs, are now setting up campuses abroad. This represents not just the export of curriculum, but the sharing of an Indian educational philosophy — one rooted in moral reasoning, inclusivity, and holistic growth.

Among the most promising innovations in this evolving landscape is the Academic Bank of Credits (ABC). This initiative allows students to accumulate and combine credits from both Indian and foreign universities, paving the way for dual or joint degrees. It recognises that learning is a lifelong, borderless pursuit.

A student might begin her degree in India, complete a semester in Singapore, and finish her research in London — all within a single academic framework. The result is not only greater mobility, but a deeper intellectual maturity born of diversity.

Meanwhile, the classroom itself is transforming. The rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI), virtual laboratories, and hybrid learning

models has made education more interactive and cost-effective. Students can now attend lectures by global faculty, collaborate with peers across continents, and simulate experiments in real time. Yet technology cannot replace the human touch. The teacher's role as a mentor, guide, and moral compass has never been more vital. We must ensure that machines do not erode the spark of curiosity and the depth of reflection that define true learning. This transformation calls for introspection. What do we truly value in education? As India opens its universities to global influences, it must also nurture critical thinking, empathy, and ethical awareness. The test of education lies not merely in employability, but in enlightenment. The challenge is to engage with global diversity without losing one's distinct identity.

The global winds, then, need not uproot the Indian tree — they can help it bloom. India's entry into the global education marketplace is not merely a policy shift, but a cultural evolution. It signals a confident assertion that Indian education can stand shoulder to shoulder with the best in the world while retaining its moral centre.

If pursued with vision and vigilance, this initiative will allow India's universities not only to absorb global knowledge but also to radiate their own light outward. The Tagorian nest, it seems, is ready once again — for the world to make its home.

Prof Prem Kumar Kalra is the Senior Director of the Dayalbagh Educational Institute, Agra, and a former Director of IIT Jodhpur. Prof JK Verma is the Head of the Department of English at the Dayalbagh Educational Institute

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New US Bill Targets Outsourcing, Threatens India's IT Engine



AJAY
SRIVASTAVA

The HIRE Act bill introduced in the U.S. Senate on 5 September 2025 seeks to penalise outsourcing through a 25 per cent excise tax and denial of tax deductibility for payments to foreign service providers. For India's \$280-billion IT, BPO and GCC ecosystem—dependent on the U.S. for over 60 per cent of revenues—this would sharply erode the cost advantage that underpins offshore delivery. Though still at an early legislative stage, the bill signals rising U.S. hostility to offshoring, and India's tech sector must monitor it closely. The new 'Halting International Relocation of Employment (HIRE) Act' bill, introduced in the U.S. Senate on 5 September 2025—if it becomes law—would pose a serious threat to India's IT and BPO sector.

With the United States accounting for more than 60 per cent of the industry's revenues, the introduction of this bill has triggered unease across India's \$280-billion technology services ecosystem. For a sector built on offshore delivery and cost arbitrage, the proposed law strikes at the heart of its operating model. It is essential to distinguish this legislation from the similarly named Hiring Incentives to Restore Employment (HIRE) Act of 2010, which was a post-financial-crisis stimulus package offering payroll tax holidays and retention credits to U.S. employers. The 2025 HIRE Act is entirely different—a new, standalone bill crafted to deter outsourcing by U.S. companies and shift work back onshore.

Key Proposals

Introduced in the U.S. Senate on September 5, 2025 by Senator Bernie Moreno (R-Ohio), the bill proposes a suite of aggressive anti-outsourcing provisions. The most far-reaching among them is a 25 per cent excise tax on payments that U.S. firms make to any "foreign person" for labour or services that ultimately benefit U.S. consumers, even if the services are performed entirely abroad. In parallel, the bill seeks to deny tax deductibility for such payments, dramatically increasing the net cost of sourcing work from countries like India.

It also introduces enhanced reporting requirements, forcing firms to disclose all "outsourc-



ing payments" and exposing them to significant penalties for non-compliance. If enacted, these measures would apply to all relevant payments made on or after 31 December 2025, effectively beginning January 1, 2026.

For India, the implications are stark. A 25 per cent tax surcharge combined with loss of deductibility could make offshore delivery meaningfully more expensive for U.S. companies, prompting some to renegotiate contracts, rebalance delivery toward onshore or near-shore hubs, or slow down the pace of new outsourcing.

High-volume functions such as application maintenance, customer support, and back-office processing are particularly vulnerable. Even GCCs—captive centres that serve U.S. parent companies—may not be sheltered, as the proposed tax applies to any payment benefiting U.S. consumers, including internal cost allocations.

Indian firms could face pressure to expand on-site U.S. staffing, accept margin compression, or accelerate a pivot toward higher-value digital, AI, cybersecurity, and consulting services. Meanwhile, uncertainty could chill new GCC investments at a time when India has become a global hub for such centers. That said, the bill is at an early stage. It has only been introduced—without committee referral, hearings, or co-sponsors—and its passage is far from assured. U.S. technology and services companies are likely to lobby aggressively against measures that raise their operating costs. Still, the political signal is unmistakable: Washington is re-examining the economics of offshoring. India's IT sector would be wise to monitor the bill's progress closely—and prepare for a world where U.S. outsourcing policy could turn structurally less favorable.

The writer is former
Indian Trade Services
officer worker at
Ministry of Commerce

dailypioneer
@dailypioneer
The Pioneer

Asia’s Potential Bipolarity: A vision of harmonious power between India and China



BHASKAR JYOTI MAHANTA

In the evolving geopolitics of the 21st century, the idea that Asia might become a new global power centre is increasingly compelling. Within this vision, two giants — India and China — naturally stand out. But rather than framing their roles in adversarial terms, what if India and China developed a cooperative relationship, each strong and independent, yet mutually respectful and supportive? What if that sort of partnership became the axis of Asia's rise — not a bipolar rivalry, but a constructive bipolarity? We explore that possibility: how it might come about, what it would look like, what the core factors of success and failure are and how this might translate into Asia becoming the world's strategic fulcrum.

Imagine India and China as the twin pillars of Asia's future. Each commands massive demographic, economic and strategic weight. Together, they would represent an Asian axis of power: China bringing scale, infrastructure, and manufacturing prowess; India bringing innovation, a relatively youthful population and soft-power resonance rooted in its democratic system. The key nuance is not merging into one hegemon, nor one country subsuming the other, but a bipolar axis of two complementary major powers, cooperating rather than contending. Their geopolitical outlook would shift from zero-sum competition to a shared recognition that a rising Asia benefits both and that in a global order marked by uncertainty, unity yields dividends. Asia thus ceases to be a theatre of great-power competition dominated by external actors, and instead becomes a platform for endogenous growth, innovation and influence, with India and China at its heart. If realised, Asia might shift from being perceived as a region to be contested, to being a region that leads.

The sheer power of this combined entity forms the foundational strength of this vision. Together, India and China already account for a huge fraction of global economic activity; on a Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) basis, their combined output is already immense. This scale creates an unshakeable base for Asia-wide demand and investment. Critically, their economic profiles are complementary: China's strength lies in large-scale manufacturing and sophisticated supply chains, while India's is rooted in its consumption-driven growth, its vast digital economy, and



its leadership in services exports. If China's capital and industrial expertise were leveraged with India's consumer base and human capital, the resulting synergy could create an unparalleled economic engine for Asia. Furthermore, with the two Asian powers aligned, their influence on global Governance would be amplified. Both nations are key voices for the Global South and their coordinated action—whether on climate change negotiations or demands for multilateral institutional reform—would solidify Asia's voice, moving the world toward a truly multipolar structure. Moreover, successful cooperation itself would be a strategic win, reducing the immense cost and risk associated with a classic zero-sum rivalry, freeing up resources for domestic development.

However, the path to this harmonious bipolarity is riddled with formidable obstacles—the very realities that currently shape the relationship. The single most critical deterrent is the deep-seated mistrust stemming from their long, unresolved border. Historical conflicts and recent clashes mean that territorial disputes

remain an active and potentially fatal flashpoint. This fragility is compounded by a structural economic issue: the massive and widening trade imbalance. India's fears of being structurally dependent on China for critical imports, coupled with the low level of mutual investment, breeds strategic anxiety and undermines confidence in long-term economic alignment. Beyond economics, the divergent political systems and strategic cultures pose inherent challenges to trust and transparency.

China's party-led system and its vision for a regionally centralised power structure conflict with India's democratic and federal system, which seeks a multipolar Asia where its autonomy is paramount. Past initiatives like the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar (BCIM) Economic Corridor have ultimately stalled, demonstrating the difficulty of sustaining high-level cooperation mechanisms when core strategic friction persists. Furthermore, both countries face immense domestic pressures—China managing its ageing population and debt, India tackling infrastructure and

inequality—which can easily force them to turn inward and sideline the cooperative agenda.

Yet, if these weaknesses can be managed, the opportunities unlocked are transformational for Asia. A cooperative axis could, for the first time, deliver pan-Asian connectivity. Infrastructure corridors, moving beyond old, stalled proposals, could be built with shared finance and technology, knitting South, Southeast and Central Asia more tightly and making regional supply chains more resilient. This would be a crucial step in accelerating the shift of the world's economic centre toward Asia. Moreover, in the critical area of technology and green transition, the potential synergy is enormous.

By combining China's overwhelming manufacturing capacity in solar and EV components with India's market scale and innovation ecosystems, the two giants could lead the green tech revolution and set new global standards for sustainable development. This coordinated leadership, backed by jointly reformed regional institutions, could truly empower the Global South, allowing these nations to partner with Asia on

their own terms, rather than being subject to the strategic manipulations of external powers.

The successful realisation of this vision, however, is constantly shadowed by significant threats. A resurgence of border escalation remains the most dangerous risk, capable of instantly collapsing any framework of cooperation and plunging the region into crisis. This threat is amplified by the external great-power dynamic. The involvement of the US, Japan, and others in the Indo-Pacific, through mechanisms like the Quad, introduces persistent centrifugal forces.

These alliances inherently pull India in one direction and China in another, risking the fragmentation of the cooperative axis into competing blocs. Even without conflict, the underlying competition for regional primacy—who influences neighbours, who leads global fora—may reassert itself, eroding the necessary trust. If the India-China axis is viewed by smaller nations not as a partnership for prosperity but as a new form of dominance, they may resist, creating fragmentation and undermining the entire Asia-wide project.

The future, therefore, hinges on a single, audacious pivot. Imagine a scenario in the early 2030s. India has sustained high growth and expanded its manufacturing base; China has upgraded its economy and consolidated its infrastructure networks. The two nations establish a "Shared Asian Prosperity Framework"—a commitment to structurally reduce India's trade deficit, jointly invest in advanced manufacturing in India and co-finance regional green technology corridors. They commit to a high-level strategic mechanism to manage the border, freeing up resources and attention.

This strategic choice—to opt for managed cooperation over antagonism—allows for the creation of an Asian architecture where both are strong, respected, and autonomous, yet interdependent. If India and China manage to align interests, build trust, invest together and lead regionally, Asia's rise could be orderly, inclusive and dominant.

The ultimate challenge for policymakers, business leaders and strategists is to foster the frameworks and mind-sets that turn rivalry into partnership. Because if the two most populous nations on earth, neighbours with massive stakes in each other's stability, opt for cooperation, the strategic centre of gravity could very well shift to Asia.

The author is a former DGP Assam and the General Secretary of the Think Tank Society to Harmonise Aspirations for Responsible Engagement-SHARE

WPI inflation falls to 27-month low in October on GST cut, favourable base

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ New Delhi

Wholesale price inflation fell to a 27-month low of (-) 1.21 per cent in October, led by a sharp deflation in food items like pulses and vegetables and lower prices of fuel and manufactured items, Government data showed on Friday.

Wholesale Price Index (WPI)-based inflation was 0.13 per cent in September and 2.75 per cent in October last year.

"The negative rate of inflation in October 2025, is primarily due to decrease in prices of food articles, crude petroleum and natural gas, electricity, mineral oils and manufacture of basic metals etc.," the industry ministry said in a statement.

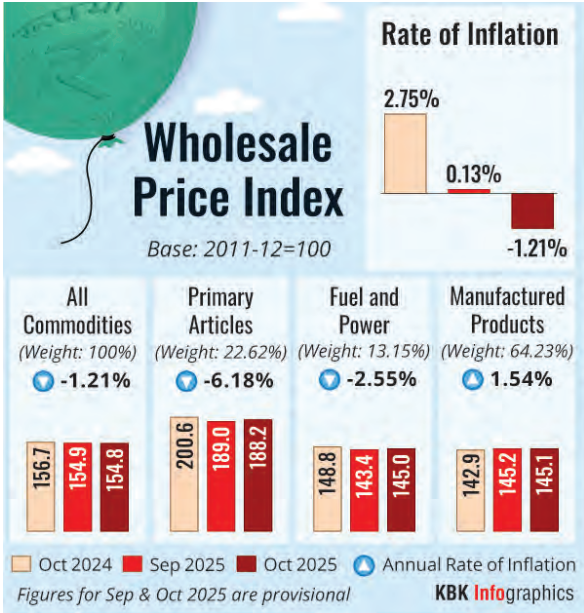
According to WPI data, deflation in food articles was 8.31 per cent in October, compared to 5.22 per cent in September, with onion, potato, vegetables and pulses seeing a decline in prices.

In vegetables, deflation was 34.97 per cent in October, against 24.41 per cent in September. In pulses, deflation was at 16.50 per cent in October, while in potato and onion it was 39.88 per cent and 65.43 per cent, respectively.

In the case of manufactured products, inflation eased to 1.54 per cent, from 2.33 per cent in September. Fuel and power witnessed a negative inflation or deflation of 2.55 per cent, against 2.58 per cent in September, thus recording a decline for seven consecutive months.

"Looking ahead, a favourable base effect in the rest of FY26 is expected to keep the wholesale index into deflation. Consequently, Ind-Ra anticipates wholesale deflation in November 2025 to be under 1 per cent," said Paras Jasrai, Associate Director at India Ratings and Research.

The fall in WPI inflation is on expected lines after the rates of Goods and Services



Tax (GST) were slashed effective September 22.

GST rates on daily use mass consumption items were cut as part of the tax

September retail or consumer price index inflation was 1.44 per cent.

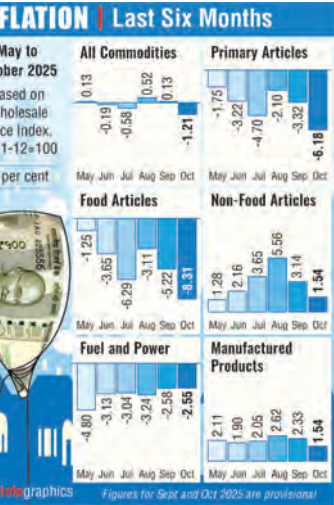
The Reserve Bank of India (RBI), which takes into account retail inflation, had kept benchmark policy rates unchanged at 5.5 per cent last month.

The decline in both retail and WPI inflation would put pressure on the RBI to cut benchmark interest rates in the next monetary policy review meeting scheduled on December 3-5.

Jasrai, however, said based on the trend of India's economic growth, the rationale for monetary easing is not very strong. FY26 retail inflation is now expected to be going down to around 2.5 per cent.

"However, to prevent the economy going deep in sluggish and weak economic growth, the RBI may go for a 25-50 bp cut in repo rate in its December 2025 monetary policy," he added.

PHDCCI, CEO and Secretary General, Ranjeet Mehta said the chamber expects WPI inflation to remain range-bound due to benign international crude oil prices, comfortable buffer stocks of food-grains and healthy kharif harvest.



rate rationalisation under which the four-tier tax structure was brought down to just 2 slabs of 5 and 18 per cent.

The tax cuts which lowered prices of goods, plus a favourable inflation base of last year, has pulled down both wholesale and retail inflation.

Data released last week showed, retail inflation was at an all-time low of 0.25 per cent in October, driven down by GST rate cuts and a high base of last year. In

India, Canada to boost partnership in critical minerals

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ New Delhi

India and Canada have agreed to encourage long-term supply chain partnerships in critical minerals and clean energy collaboration essential for the energy transition and new — age industrial expansion.

Besides, both countries have agreed to identify and expand investment and trading opportunities in aerospace and dual-use capabilities partnerships, leveraging Canada's established presence in India and the growth of India's aviation sector.

Canada's Minister of Export Promotion, International Trade and Economic Development Maninder Sidhu was on an official visit to India between November 11 and 14 at the invitation of India's Minister for Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal.

The ministers reaffirmed the strength and continuity of the India-Canada economic partnership and reiterated

their commitment to deepening bilateral cooperation through sustained dialogue, mutual respect and forward-looking initiatives, a joint statement said.

"Recognising the importance of supply chain resilience, the ministers exchanged views on global developments and reflected on lessons from recent disruptions.

They underscored the relevance of strengthening resilience in critical sectors, including agriculture and highlighted the need for diversified and reliable supply chains as essential for supporting long-term economic stability," it said.

The ministers expressed satisfaction with the progress made in strengthening bilateral economic engagement and reaffirmed their shared commitment to elevate the economic partnership to reflect global developments and evolving supply chain and trade dynamics, it said.

They emphasised the importance of maintaining



momentum in the bilateral dialogue and supporting people-to-people ties, which provide a strong foundation for the partnership, it said.

The ministers agreed to sustained ministerial engagements with the trade and investment community in both Canada and India early next year, it added.

On the bilateral trade, the statement said, it has reached \$23.66 billion in 2024, with

merchandise trade valued at nearly \$8.98 billion, a substantial 10 per cent increase over the previous year.

The ministers emphasised the importance of continued engagement with the private sector to unlock new opportunities for trade and investment, it said.

They welcomed the steady expansion of two-way investment flows, including notable Canadian institutional

investment in India and the growing presence of Indian firms in Canada, which together support tens of thousands of jobs in both economies, it said.

The ministers committed to maintaining an open, transparent and predictable investment environment and to exploring avenues for deeper collaboration across priority and emerging sectors, it added.

Germany to subsidise industry’s energy prices in bid to revitalise economy

ASSOCIATED PRESS
■ Berlin

Germany's Governing coalition agreed to subsidise energy prices for heavy industry over the next three years as it tries to breathe new life into a stubbornly slow economy that is weighing on Europe's performance. Chancellor Friedrich Merz said he and other coalition leaders agreed Thursday evening to introduce an electricity price of about 5 euro cents per kilowatt hour starting January 1, through 2028, to "support companies that use a lot of electricity and face international competition."

Talks on the plan with the European Union's executive commission are near-complete and "we assume we will get permission for this," Merz said. The German economy, Europe's biggest, has shrunk

for the past two years and has not seen significant growth for much longer. The conservative Merz's coalition Government with the centre-left Social Democrats has made revitalising it a priority since taking office in early May.

Still, results haven't shown through yet, with gross domestic product stagnating in the third quarter. This week, the Government's panel of independent economic advisers forecast it will grow by an unimpressive 0.9 per cent next year after edging up 0.2 per cent this year. The country's economy, which is heavy on manufacturing and exports, has been held back by multiple factors including high energy prices, competition from Chinese producers of autos and industrial machinery, a lack of skilled workers and excessive bureaucracy.

India should be a leader of reform process at WTO: Ngozi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Visakhapatnam

World Trade Organisation Chief Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala on Friday said India should be a leader of the reform process at the WTO. She said that India's economy is growing at a healthy pace and it is a leader in areas such as technology. She said that there is a need to look at areas in the WTO which are not working and discuss ways to correct that.

"...and here India can be a leader, India should be a leader in the reform process at the WTO. India should be a leader in making sure that we do not stay in a system that becomes more power based instead of rules based," Director-General of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala said here at



CIJ's partnership Summit 2025. She added that India is a fast growing economy and has the scale and credibility to provide leadership not just in this region but globally.

Referring to high tariffs imposed by the US, she said the member nations should pay attention to the concerns flagged by America.

India too has flagged concerns on issues like public stockholding, she said adding repeating past grievances will not help to

build a strong global trading system. She appealed to all the members of the WTO to work together to strengthen the global trading system. The US has raised concerns over the way WTO arms are functioning and has called for reforms in the WTO including in its dispute redressal mechanism.

WTO is a 166-member Geneva-based multilateral body that deals with trade related issues. India has been a member since 1995. The WTO also said that a country may need bilateral trade agreements to push their growth but "you also need a multi-lateral system to move forward."

"That is why the WTO is important," she said, adding the world is witnessing huge disruptions in global trade at present.

FROM THE WORLD

UAE

Kerala teen dies in Dubai

A Kerala teen, who was visiting Dubai, died after falling from the top of a building in Deira, local media reported.

Mohammed Mishal, 19, from Kozhikode district of Kerala, was visiting his cousins and had been in Dubai for about 15 days, *Gulf News* reported.

The incident occurred on November 7 when Mishal reportedly went to the terrace of a multi-storey building to take photographs of flights.

"He was staying with his cousins while his parents remained in Kozhikode. He had been in Dubai for about 15 days," Haneefa K K, a family friend, told.

Mishal was rushed to Rashid Hospital immediately after the accident, but could not be saved, *Khaleej Times* quoted M K as saying.

"He had several internal injuries," MK said, adding that Mishal was alive until he reached the hospital but died soon after.

INDONESIA

Landslides in Java, 2 dead

Landslides triggered by torrential rains in Indonesia's Java island killed two people and left 21 others missing. Rescuers are still searching for the 21 reported missing. Several days of heavy rainfall in the region caused the landslides that hit dozens of houses in three villages in Indonesia's Central Java province on Thursday evening, officials said in a statement.

"The unstable ground conditions posed a challenge for the search and rescue team in searching for victims during the golden hour. Nevertheless, the joint team continued their search and rescue efforts on Friday morning," said National Disaster Management Agency spokesperson Abdul Muhari in the statement. He added that heavy equipment was deployed to speed up the operation.

Russian drone, missile attack on Kyiv kills 5

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kyiv

Russia unleashed a major missile and drone barrage on Kyiv early in Friday, killing five people, starting fires and scattering debris as the sound of explosions boomed across the city, Ukrainian authorities said. A pregnant woman was among at least 34 people injured.

Emergency crews responded to multiple strikes during the night, said Tymur Tkachenko, head of Kyiv's military administration.

Russia used at least 430 drones and 18 missiles in the attack that left gaping holes in some city buildings, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said.

Russia has waged a devastating aerial campaign against Ukraine since its all-out invasion of its neighbor nearly four years ago. U.S.-led diplomatic efforts this year to stop the fighting have so far come to nothing.

Friday's aerial assault, which also targeted Odesa in the south and Kharkiv in the northeast, was mostly aimed at Kyiv, where drones and missiles smashed into high-rise apartment blocks, according to Zelenskyy.

It was "a specially calculated attack to cause as much harm as possible to people and civilians," he said in a post on Telegram. Moscow denies targeting civilian



Rescuers working on the scene of a building damaged after a Russian attack in Kyiv Ukraine

AP

areas, with the Russian Defense Ministry saying Friday it carried out an overnight strike on Ukraine's "military-industrial and energy facilities." Ukrainian officials scoff at those claims, showing repeated damage to homes and public buildings.

The attack was the biggest on Kyiv in almost three weeks. Most recent Russian aerial attacks have aimed at electricity infrastructure around the country ahead of

the bitter winter months. Ukraine used its American-made Patriot air defense systems to repel the attack and shot down 14 missiles, Zelenskyy said.

The Ukrainian leader has pleaded with foreign supporters to send more of the sophisticated systems. In the Odesa region, Russian drones struck a busy street in Chornomorsk, killing two people and injuring seven others, regional military

administration chief Oleh Kiper said. Mariia Kalchenko said it was a miracle she survived after her building was hit. "I didn't hear anything, I just realized that my hair was on fire," the 46-year-old volunteer rescue dog handler told The Associated Press.

She turned on her flashlight and saw that her dog had moved away in fright. "I turned around and saw that there was no wall, and there was a neighbor's apartment,

the neighbor was screaming, there was no door, and the flames were going from the front door into the apartment," she said.

Oleh Hudyma, 59, said she became aware of the attack and intended to go to a bomb shelter but she wasn't quick enough. "I got up, got dressed, went out, and there was an explosion. I couldn't hear the (drone) engine running, just an explosion, flames, everything flew," she

said. "I was in the kitchen and just fell to the floor."

City authorities warned that power and water outages are possible.

Eight of the capital's 10 districts reported damage. Emergency crews fought fires in apartment blocks, debris from explosions was strewn across yards and cars parked in the streets were set ablaze.

In the wider Kyiv region, Russian strikes damaged critical infrastructure and private homes, injuring at least one civilian, the head of the regional military administration, Mykola Kalashnyk, said. A 55-year-old man in Bila Tserkva suffered burns and was hospitalized, he said. Fires broke out in private houses in the capital's suburbs.

The strike came as European Union officials warned this week that Ukraine must continue to crack down on corruption following a major graft scandal that has put top nuclear energy officials under scrutiny. But they also offered assurances that aid will continue to flow as Kyiv strains to hold back Russia's invasion. Russia accuses Ukraine of hitting civilian sites

Ukraine has responded by launching its own domestically developed drones and missiles against targets on Russian soil, especially oil refineries and depots that

provide Moscow with income and manufacturing plants that supply the armed forces.

The Russian Defense Ministry said Friday that its air defense forces shot down 216 Ukrainian drones overnight over a number of Russian regions, including the annexed Crimea. It did not mention missiles.

However, Zelenskyy said Ukraine used a modification of domestically produced Neptune missiles to strike targets deep inside Russia. The Russian Defense Ministry accused Ukraine of hitting civilian facilities and claimed the overnight strike on Kyiv came in response to that.

Over 60 Ukrainian drones were intercepted over the southern Krasnodar region that borders Crimea, according to the Defense Ministry. A total of 45 drones were destroyed over the Saratov region deeper inside Russia, while another 19 were shot down over Crimea.

In Novorossiysk, a port city in the Krasnodar region, the attack damaged an oil depot at the Sheskhari transshipment complex, as well as unidentified "coastal structures," local authorities said.

According to the Meduza independent news outlet, Sheskhari is one of the largest oil loading complexes for transshipment of oil and oil products in the south of Russia.

Jaishankar meets UN Chief Guterres in New York

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

United Nations

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar met UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres here and said he valued the UN chief's assessment of the current global order and its implications for multilateralism and also thanked him for consistent support for India's growth.

"Good to meet with UNSG @antonioguterres in New York today. Valued his assessment of the current global order and its implications for multilateralism. Also appreciated his perspectives on various regional hotspots," Jaishankar said in a post on social media on Thursday (local time). Jaishankar met Guterres in the UN headquarters and was accompanied by India's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador P Harish, Deputy Permanent



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar with Secretary-General of the United Nations António Guterres during a meeting in New York

AP

Representative to the UN Ambassador Yojna Patel and officials from the Permanent Mission of India to the UN. Jaishankar said he thanked Guterres "for clear and con-

sistent support for India's growth and development" and he looks forward to welcoming the UN Chief in India.

Jaishankar was in Canada

for the G7 Foreign Ministers Meeting where he had met US Secretary of State Marco Rubio and held bilateral meetings with other global counterparts.

China, Thailand pledge closer ties

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Beijing

China's leader Xi Jinping and Thai King Maha Vajiralongkorn pledged closer ties on Friday during the first-ever visit to China by a reigning Thai monarch.

Xi and his wife, Peng Liyuan, greeted Vajiralongkorn and his wife, Queen Suthida, at Beijing's vast Great Hall of the People. The visit was intended to mark the 50th anniversary of the countries establishing diplomatic ties.

Xi described China and Thailand as "truly good relatives, good friends and good partners," according to the state-run Xinhua news agency. Beijing was looking forward to boosting agricultural imports from Thailand and advancing cooperation in fields such as railway development, artificial intelligence and aerospace, Xi said.



Thailand's King Maha Vajiralongkorn and Chinese President Xi Jinping review the honour guard during a welcoming ceremony in Beijing

AP

Vajiralongkorn described his country's relationship with China as "brotherly cooperation" and expressed his desire to deepen exchanges in various areas.

The Thai royals were scheduled to visit a Buddhist temple and an aerospace development hub in Beijing, as well as attend a state banquet. Besides a trip to Bhutan in April, the visit to

China was Vajiralongkorn's only second official trip abroad since his ascension to the throne, in 2016, signalling a warming of ties with China.

Thailand remains an official military ally of the United States, but China is the kingdom's biggest trading partner and increasingly a source of military equipment.

Ordinance on referendum unconstitutional: Jurists

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dhaka

Bangladesh overnight issued an ordinance in line with interim Government chief Professor Muhammad Yunus proposed referendum on a political charter, drawing immediate rebuttal from jurists who called it "unconstitutional".

President Muhammad Shahabuddin on late Thursday signed into ordinance the "July Charter Implementation Order" while the document was drafted by Yunus-headed National Consensus Commission after protracted consultations with several political parties excluding deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina's now disbanded Awami League.

In a nationwide televised address Chief Adviser Yunus on Thursday said plebiscite would be staged simultaneously with the planned national election in February



FILE PHOTO

next year to elicit peoples mandate for the charter.

"Most of the decisions taken in the July Charter, including those in the gazette, are contrary to the current Constitution. Since the Constitution is still in force, the President cannot legally sign this gazette," leading constitutional expert and former law professor Shahdeen Malik said in a newspaper interview.

Bangladesh Constitution kept no provision for referendum or plebiscite while its Article 93 of says no ordinance could be promulgated "for altering or repealing any provision of this Constitution".

The charter contained over 80 proposals including issues requiring amendments to the Constitution but Yunus said the proposals were synopsisized in four issues while the voters would just need to

say "yes" or "no" in a question covering the four issues. Malik told Bangladesh's the Business Standard newspaper that the referendum "would have been acceptable if the Constitution had been annulled or suspended under martial law (but) since neither has happened, everything should proceed according to the existing Constitution".

He feared the voters would be unable to make an informed decision on the referendum issues and will "leave their ballots blank" on the referendum and vote for their chosen MP candidates alone. "The public first needs to understand the issues they are voting 'Yes' or 'No' on", he said.

The ordinance stipulated the next parliament must complete constitutional reform, as outlined in the charter and by the referendum's result, within 180 working days from the date of its first sitting.

Iran seize oil tanker: says US

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dubai

Iran seized a Marshall Islands-flagged oil tanker as it travelled through the narrow Strait of Hormuz on Friday, a US official said, turning the ship into Iranian territorial waters in the first such interdiction in months in the strategic waterway. Iran did not immediately acknowledge the seizure, though it comes as Tehran has been increasingly warning it can strike back after facing a 12-day war in June with Israel that saw the US strike Iranian nuclear sites.

The ship, the Talara, had been travelling from Ajman, United Arab Emirates, onward to Singapore when Iranian forces intercepted it, said the US defence official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss intelligence matters. A US Navy MQ-4C Triton drone

had been circling above the area where the Talara was for hours on Friday observing the seizure, flight-tracking data analysed by The Associated Press showed. A private security firm, Ambrey, described the assault as involving three small boats approaching the Talara.

The British military's United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations centre separately acknowledged the incident, saying a possible "State activity" forced the Talara to turn into Iranian territorial waters. The ship's Greek owners did not respond to requests for comment.

The Navy has blamed Iran for a series of limpet mine attacks on vessels that damaged tankers in 2019, as well as for a fatal drone attack on an Israeli-linked oil tanker that killed two European crew members in 2021. Those

attacks began after US President Donald Trump in his first term in office unilaterally withdrew from Iran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers. The last major seizure came when Iran took two Greek tankers in May 2022 and held them until November of that year.

Those attacks found themselves subsumed by the Iranian-backed Houthis assaults targeting ships during the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip, which drastically reduced shipping in the crucial Red Sea corridor.

The years of tensions between Iran and the West, coupled with the situation in the Gaza Strip, exploded into a full-scale 12-day war in June. Iran long has threatened to close off the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow mouth of the Persian Gulf through which 20 per cent of all oil traded passes.

Tourists bus crashes in Bali, killing 5 passengers

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Denpasar

A minibus carrying Chinese tourists sped out of control and crashed Friday morning on the Indonesian resort island of Bali, killing five of the passengers and injuring eight others. The minibus was travelling from the southern side to the northern side of the island on a winding, downhill road. The driver lost control and the vehicle veered off the road and into a garden, striking a tree, said Ida Bagus Widwan Sutadi, police chief in the Buleleng regency.

"Due to the driver's lack of caution when turning and descending, he veered off the asphalt road and into a community garden, causing a traffic accident," Sutadi said in the statement. The national road in the Padangbulia village area was dry at the time of the crash.



China begins sea trials of amphibious assault ship

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Beijing

China on Friday began the sea trial of Sichuan, a large amphibious assault ship fitted with an electromagnetic aircraft launch system (EMALS) to operate fighter planes, helicopters and drones, according to the Chinese Navy. The launch follows the commissioning of the country's third aircraft carrier, the Fujian, by Chinese President Xi Jinping earlier this month. The aircraft carrier is stated to be the most modern warship equipped with EMALS, which is used only by the American aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford. The first hull of Sichuan, China's Type 076 amphibious assault ship, set off from a port of Hudong-Zhonghua Shipyard in Shanghai and sailed toward the relevant sea area for its maiden sea trial, an official statement by the Chinese Navy said.



After a decade, Syria reopens embassy in London

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Beirut

Syria's foreign minister officially reopened the country's embassy in London on Thursday after more than a decade-long closure, the latest step in Syria's reintegration into the international community after the ouster of former President Bashar Assad. The visit by Foreign Minister Asaad al-Shibani to the UK came after a historic visit to Washington by interim President Ahmad al-Sharaa, the first by a president from Syria since the country's independence in 1946. Al-Shibani, speaking at an event held by the London-based Chatham House international affairs think tank, said that his meeting with his British counterpart, Foreign Secretary Yvette Cooper, was "successful." "Relations between Syria and Britain are advanced relations and we are not talking about opening a new page."

Bodies of 15 Palestinians returned by Israel, say Gaza health officials

ASSOCIATED PRESS
■ Khan Younis

Israel returned the bodies of 15 Palestinians to Gaza on Friday, officials at Nasser hospital in Khan Younis said, in the latest step to fulfilling the terms of the fragile US-brokered ceasefire agreement.

The bodies were returned after militants late Thursday handed over the body of one of the last four remaining Israeli hostages taken during the October 7, 2023, attack that launched the war in Gaza. Israel identified the returned body as that of Meny Godard, who was abducted from Kibbutz Be'eri in southern Israel.

His wife, Ayelet, was killed during the attack. The armed wings of Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad said Godard's body was recovered in southern Gaza.

The remains of 25 hostages have been returned to Israel since the ceasefire between Israel and Hamas began on October 10. There are still three more in Gaza that need to be recovered and handed over. Hamas returned 20 living hostages to Israel on October 13.

For each hostage returned, Israel has released the remains of 15 Palestinians, an exchange central to the ceasefire's first phase. Overall, the number of bodies of Palestinians received so far



Red Cross convoy carrying the body of a person believed to be a deceased hostage handed over by Hamas militants makes its way toward the border crossing with Israel, to be transferred to Israeli authorities in Deir al-Balah, central Gaza Strip

is 330, of which only 95 have been formally identified, according to Gaza Health Ministry officials.

Health officials in Gaza have said identifying the remains handed over by Israel is complicated by a lack of DNA testing kits.

The exchanges have gone ahead even as Israel and Hamas have accused each other of violating other terms of the deal. Israel has accused Hamas handing over partial remains in some

instances and staging the discovery of bodies in others, while Hamas has accused Israel of opening fire at civilians and restricting the flow of humanitarian aid into the territory.

The next parts of the 20-point plan call for creating an international stabilization force, forming a technocratic Palestinian Government and disarming Hamas. The fragile agreement aims to wind down the war that was triggered by

the Hamas-led attack on southern Israel that killed about 1,200 people and saw 251 taken hostage.

Israel responded with a sweeping military offensive that has killed more than 69,100 Palestinians in Gaza, according to Gaza's Health Ministry. The ministry, part of the Hamas-run Government and staffed by medical professionals, maintains detailed records viewed as generally reliable by independent experts.

Palestinians held for 12 hours on South Africa plane

ASSOCIATED PRESS
■ Johannesburg

South African authorities faced heavy criticism on Friday after they held more than 150 Palestinians, including a woman who is nine months pregnant, on a plane for around 12 hours due to complications with their travel documents.

A pastor who was allowed to meet with the passengers while they were still stuck on the plane said it was very extremely and that children were screaming and crying.

The Palestinians landed on a charter plane at Johannesburg's OR Tambo International Airport on Thursday morning after a stopover in Nairobi, Kenya, South Africa's Border Management Authority said in a statement.

The Palestinian passengers did not have exit stamps from Israeli authorities, did not indicate how long they would be staying in South Africa and had not given local addresses, leading immigration authorities to deny them entry, the statement said.

The 153 passengers including families and children were allowed to leave the plane on Thursday night after South Africa's Ministry of Home Affairs intervened and a local non-governmental organization called Gift of the Givers offered to accommodate them. The Border Management Authority said 23 passengers had since travelled on to other countries,

THE PALESTINIAN PASSENGERS DID NOT HAVE EXIT STAMPS FROM ISRAELI AUTHORITIES

leaving 130 in South Africa.

Gift of the Givers founder Imtiaz Sooliman said it was the second plane carrying Palestinians to land in South Africa in the last two weeks and that the passengers themselves did not know where they were going. He said both planes were believed to be carrying people from war-torn Gaza.

It was not immediately clear who organized the charter plane. A South African pastor who was given access to the plane while it was on the tarmac told national broadcaster SABC that many of the Palestinians now intended to claim asylum in South Africa. South Africa has long been a supporter of the Palestinian cause and the treatment of the travellers has sparked anger.

"It's dire," Nigel Branken, the pastor, said in an interview with SABC on Thursday from the plane as he described the conditions. "When I came onto the plane it was excruciatingly hot. There were lots of children just sweating and screaming and crying."

"I do not believe this is what South Africa is about. South Africa should be letting these people into the airport at the very least and letting them apply for asylum."

Security forces kill 26 terrorists in Pakistan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Peshawar

Pakistani security forces killed 26 terrorists in multiple intelligence-based operations in the restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, officials said on Friday.

The three operations were conducted in the Bajaur, Kohat and Karak districts on Thursday. The operation in Bajaur was conducted after receiving credible information about the presence of a large number of terrorists in the Gaddar village.

"As soon as the information was received, the forces carried out an extremely effective and targeted operation, during which 22 terrorists



were killed," a security official said. The terrorists were hiding in the village which the locals had already evacuated with the cooperation of tribal elders.

"At the time of the military operation, all the houses around the target were empty, due to which no civilians

were harmed," the security official added. "The nation of Pakistan and its security agencies are united to completely eliminate this scourge of terrorism, and these operations will continue until the last terrorist is eliminated," the official added. Separately, according

to District Police Officer (DPO) Kohat, Shehbaz Ilahi, the station house officer of Saddar police station was on a routine patrol with his team when the terrorists opened fire on them near Bazid Khel.

Police retaliated immediately and engaged the attackers in a gun battle, which resulted in the death of all three of them on the spot. In another incident, acting on intelligence, police launched an operation in Mir Kalam Banda area in Karak district.

One terrorist, wanted in multiple serious cases, was killed during the intense exchange of fire, a spokesperson for the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) said.

Druze group, Syria force clash in Sweida



ASSOCIATED PRESS
■ Damascus

A new round of clashes between Druze armed groups and Government forces in the province of Sweida in southern Syrian had subsided Friday but left fears of another escalation.

Clashes on Thursday led to both sides blaming each other for violating a ceasefire that ended several days of violent fighting in July. There were reports of people wounded on both sides, but no deaths reported. The National Guard, the de facto military in Sweida, accused Government forces of launching an attack on the town of al-Majdal Thursday, "employing heavy and medium weapons and attack drones, in an aggressive attempt to breach our defence lines and target vital locations."

"Our forces bravely and with high combat efficiency repelled this attack, inflicting heavy losses on the attacking forces in terms of equipment and personnel," it said in a statement.

The Government in Damascus accused the Sweida factions of violating the ceasefire first. Mustafa al-Bakour, the Damascus-appointed governor of Sweida province, said "some factions and the so-called

National Guard" launched "attacks on de-escalation points." The attacks, he added, "constitute a clear violation of international agreements and obstruct efforts to rebuild and prepare for the return of residents to their villages."

Saber Abou Ras, a political analyst who lives in Sweida city, said Thursday's clashes "were very intense and violent" and included attacks with drones, anti-aircraft machine guns and mortar shells. He said Israeli warplanes could be heard over the city of Sweida, but it was not clear if they launched any strikes.

Abou Ras said he believes the Government forces had launched "a retaliatory attack" after the police chief of the local governmental body in Sweida, along with a "large group of officers" took over a checkpoint formerly controlled by Syrian Government security forces in the northern countryside of the province.

Foreign Minister Asaad al-Shibani, speaking at an event held by the Chatham House international affairs think tank during a visit to London said there had been "mistakes made by all sides" in Sweida. meeting. "Please consider Indonesia your second home and Indonesia respects you highly."

Jordan, Indonesia strengthen ties

ASSOCIATED PRESS
■ Jakarta

Jordan's King and Indonesia's leader on Friday held talks as the two longtime friends agreed to strengthen military cooperation and economic ties between the two Muslim-majority nations.

King Abdullah II and President Prabowo Subianto share a long-standing personal relationship as alumni of the US Fort Benning military academy that dates to 1995 when both were still serving as military officers in their respective countries.

Three years later, Subianto sought self-exile in Jordan amid allegations of his involvement in the 1998 abductions of political activists during the dark days of Indonesia's military dictatorship. Despite his stateless status at the time, he was welcomed by then monarch King Hussein,

Abdullah's father. Subianto lived in Amman for several years before returning home in 2008. Abdullah's state visit to Indonesia, the world's most populous Muslim-majority country and Southeast Asia's largest economy, was the fourth stop on his tour to Asian nations that includes Japan, Vietnam, Singapore and Pakistan.

Abdullah received a warm welcome in Indonesia's capital, Jakarta, with his royal plane escorted by two fighter jets. He was welcomed on the tarmac by Subianto at Halim Perdanakusuma Air Force Base. The king rode with Subianto in a motorcade to the Merdeka palace, where the two leaders held talks.

"I have an emotional bond with Jordan, His Royal, His Majesty and (then) His Majesty King Hussein who kindly received me 27 years ago.

US lawmaker to introduce bill to fully eliminate H-1B visa programme

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ New York/Washington

An American lawmaker will be introducing a bill to "completely eliminate" the H-1B visa programme and take away the pathway to citizenship that it offers, "forcing" individuals to "return home" when their visa expires.

"My dear fellow Americans, I'm introducing a bill to completely eliminate the H-1B visa programme, which has been riddled with fraud and abuse and has been displacing American workers for decades," Congresswoman from Gerogia, Marjorie Taylor Greene said in a video posted on X on Thursday. She said that there will only be one exemption in her bill, which will allow for a 10,000 per year cap on visas issued to medical professionals like doctors and nurses who



Congresswoman from Gerogia, Marjorie Taylor Greene

provide life-saving care to Americans. Greene however noted that even this 10,000 per year cap will be "phased out" over 10 years to "allow us time to build our own pipeline of American doctors and physicians." Greene added that her bill will also

UN human rights body holds special session on Sudan



ASSOCIATED PRESS
■ Geneva

The UN's top human rights body was holding a one-day special session Friday to highlight hundreds of killings at a hospital in Sudan's Darfur region and other atrocities committed last month by paramilitary forces fighting the army. The Human Rights Council was also debating a draft resolution calling on an existing team of independent experts to carry out an urgent inquiry into the killings and other rights violations in the city of el-Fasher by the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) paramilitary. "The atrocities that are unfolding in el-Fasher were foreseen and preventable, but they were not prevented. They constitute the gravest of

crimes," said Volker Turk, the UN human rights chief. Last month the RSF seized el-Fasher, the capital of North Darfur, and rampaged through the Saudi Hospital in the city, killing more than 450 people, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO). RSF fighters went house to house, killing civilians and committing sexual assaults.

Turk said "none of us should be surprised" by reports, since the RSF took control of the city, of "mass killings of civilians, ethnically targeted executions, sexual violence including gang rape, abductions for ransom, widespread arbitrary detentions, attacks on health facilities, medical staff and humanitarian workers, and other appalling atrocities."

Nepal's green election code of conduct for March 5 polls

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Kathmandu

Ban on plastic and other non-biodegradable materials during campaign; use of EVs instead of fossil-fuel vehicles, and disposal of waste after rallies or marches are some of the things that Nepal's poll body expects from political parties ahead of the March 5 general elections. Media reports on Friday said the Election Commission (EC) has introduced a 'Green Election' code of conduct aimed at ensuring that the March 5 House of Representatives (HoR) election is conducted in an environmentally responsible manner. "The provision, outlined in Chapter 6 of the newly issued code of conduct, requires all election-related activities to be carried out in ways that minimise harm to the environment," said news portal MyRepublica. The Election Commission (EC) released the draft election code of conduct on Thursday, seeking feedback from the

political parties and the general people to revise it before bringing it to force, The Kathmandu Post said. According to the draft, political parties, candidates, sister organisations and all categories of election representatives – including polling and counting agents – must comply with eco-conscious standards and contribute to pollution control, MyRepublica said. It explicitly prohibits the use of plastic, polythene, and other non-biodegradable materials in campaign events. "It also urges political actors to discourage the use of fossil-fuel vehicles and promote electric alternatives wherever possible," the news portal said. In addition, the draft provisions require organisers to collect and properly dispose of waste generated during rallies, marches, and other election programmes, ensuring that such events leave no adverse environmental impact, it added.



Royal gun salutes for King Charles 77th birthday

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ London

King Charles III's 77th birthday on Friday was marked with the traditional royal gun salutes alongside the announcement of 231 King's Awards for Voluntary Service (KAWS), including several charities of Indian heritage working within communities across the UK. In honour of the royal birthday, Buckingham Palace released a new photograph of the British monarch taken by photographer Millie Pilkington and depicting the gardening enthusiast Charles at his Sandringham estate in Norfolk, holding a shepherd's crook. The King is spending his special day in Wales with wife, Queen Camilla at a special reception. Meanwhile, the Government's Department for Culture, which honour groups transforming lives through mental health support and community initiatives.



Sri Lanka's budget gets Parliament nod

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Colombo

Sri Lanka's 2025-26 budget was adopted in parliament through a majority vote on Friday. A total of 160 parliamentarians of the 225-member House voted in favour, while 42 opposed it. Eight members abstained. A notable feature of the vote was the support extended by at least three opposition MPs representing the Indian-origin Tamil plantation worker community, who voted alongside the government. The three Tamil opposition MPs supported the proposal to raise the daily wage of plantation workers to LKR 1,750. President Anura Kumara Disanayake, who also holds the finance portfolio, had presented the budget on November 7, focusing on strengthening tax collection and increasing state revenue.

PROSPECT

Parliamentarians pays floral tributes to Jawaharlal Nehru



Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Minority Affairs Kiren Rijiju; Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge, Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi, KC Venugopal, Rajiv Shukla, JP Agarwal, Deputy Chairman, Rajya Sabha Harivansh; Members of Parliament, former Members and other dignitaries paid floral tributes at the portrait of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, former Prime Minister, in the Central Hall of Samvidhan Sadan, on his birth anniversary, on Friday.

Secretary General of Lok Sabha Utpal Kumar Singh and Secretary General of Rajya Sabha PC Mody also paid floral tributes on this occasion. The portrait of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was unveiled by the then President of India, Dr S. Radhakrishnan, in the Central Hall of Samvidhan Sadan (then Parliament House) on 05 May 1966.



Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma is speaking while inaugurating a new office building for BDO of Ramcharini block, Kamrup Metro

STAIRS foundation launches swimming programme

The STAIRS Foundation – The Society for Transformation, Inclusion and Recognition through Sports – a National Sports Promotion Organisation (NSPO) recognised by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, announced today that Rajkumar, Senior Vice President of the Swimming Federation of India, will serve as the discipline mentor for its flagship National Swimming Development Program (NSDP).

The initiative marks a major step in the foundation's mission to transform India's swimming ecosystem from grassroots to the global stage. The National Swimming Development Program aims to establish an inclusive, sustainable and structured pathway for swimmers across India. By integrating advanced coaching techniques, modern training frameworks and access to quality infrastructure, the program seeks to nurture talent capable of competing at the Olympics, World Championships and Asian Games.



Anil Ambani offers virtual appearance before ED

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has issued fresh summons to Reliance Group chairman Anil Ambani to appear before it on Friday in a FEMA case after he skipped his scheduled date on Friday. Ambani offered “virtual means” and officials said the agency rejected his offer to depose through virtual.

In a statement, a spokesperson of the 66-year-old businessman said he has written to the federal probe agency assuring “full cooperation” in the probe.

The agency had asked Ambani to appear before it in person on Friday and get his statement recorded under the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA). The investigation pertains to the Jaipur-Reengus highway project.

In an earlier statement, the ED had said that after recently attaching assets worth ₹7,500 crore belonging to Ambani and his



companies under the anti-money laundering law, a search carried out against Reliance Infrastructure Ltd found that an alleged ₹40 crore was “siphoned” from the highway project.

“Funds moved through Surat-based shell companies to Dubai. The trail has unearthed a wider international hawala network exceeding ₹600 crore,” the agency had said. The ED has recorded the state-

ment of various persons, including some alleged hawala dealers, following which they decided to summon Ambani, said officials. “The matter (FEMA case) is 15 years old, dates to 2010. It concerns

issues associated with a road contractor,” statement said issued by Ambani Group. In 2010, Reliance Infrastructure Ltd awarded an EPC (engineering, procurement and construction) contract to build the JR Toll Road (Jaipur-Reengus highway), it said.

“This was a purely domestic contract with no foreign exchange component involved whatsoever. The JR Toll Road has been fully completed and from 2021 onwards, has been with the National Highways Authority of India,” the statement said, adding that Ambani is not a member of the Board of Reliance Infrastructure.

“He served the company for about 15 years, from April 2007 to March 2022, only as a non-executive director, and was never involved in day-to-day management of the company,” it said.

The businessman has once been questioned by the ED in a money laundering case linked to an alleged ₹17,000 crore worth bank fraud against his group companies.

Jachep Tso adventure trek shows spirit of courage and endurance



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Itanagar

The Jachep Tso Adventure Trek was successfully conducted in the high-altitude regions of Eastern Arunachal Pradesh, reflecting the adventurous spirit and unwavering determination of Indian Army personnel.

The expedition aimed to promote physical fitness, endurance and environmental awareness while nurturing a sense of teamwork and self-reliance among participants.

Trekking through rugged



mountain terrain and extreme weather conditions, the team demonstrated exceptional resilience and discipline.

The initiative also sought to highlight the importance of adventure activities as a vital component of military training, strengthening mental robustness and adapt-ability in challenging environments.

The trek further reinforced the Army's commitment to promoting adventure sports and fostering a spirit of exploration in the remote

and scenic landscapes of Arunachal Pradesh.

Such initiatives not only build character but also inspire local youth towards fitness, environmental conservation and national pride.

During his visit to the region, the General Officer Commanding, Dao Division, lauded the participants for their spirit of adventure and perseverance, commending their efforts in exemplifying the Army's ethos of courage, camaraderie and resilience in every endeavour.



SSB-Nepal Police Force meeting concludes successfully

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The 9th Annual Coordination Meeting between the Indian delegation headed by the Director General, Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB), India and the Nepali delegation led by Inspector General, Armed Police Force (APF), Nepal, concluded successfully in New Delhi today, reaffirming the mutual commitment of both nations to further strengthen cross-border security cooperation and coordination.

The Indian delegation was led by Shri Sanjay Singhal, Director General, SSB and comprised senior officials from the Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of External Affairs and SSB. The Nepali delegation was headed by Shri Raju Aryal, Inspector General, APF and included representatives from the APF, Nepal Police, National Investigation Department, Nepal and the Embassy of

Nepal in New Delhi.

During the meeting, both sides reviewed the implementation status of decisions taken during the 8th Annual Coordination Meeting and assessed the prevailing security scenario along the Indo-Nepal Border (INB). The discussions centered on enhancing intelligence sharing mechanisms and intensifying joint efforts to curb trans-border crimes such as narcotics trafficking, smuggling of wildlife and forest produce, circulation of Fake Indian Currency Notes (FICN) and human trafficking.

Both delegations also deliberated on effective measures to regulate the movement of third-country nationals, address issues related to encroachment in No Man's Land and expedite the repair and maintenance of boundary pillars.

Emphasis was placed on expanding the scope of coordinated patrols, conducting

joint training and disaster management exercises and promoting exchange programmes between SSB and APF personnel to foster greater mutual understanding and operational synergy. SSB also reiterated its commitment to extend training and capacity-building support to APF officers in specialised areas of border management.

The meeting concluded with both sides expressing satisfaction over the outcomes and reiterating their resolve to maintain seamless cooperation for ensuring peace and security along the Indo-Nepal Border.

After the successful completion of 9th India-Nepal coordination meeting the Nepali delegation members called on Shri. Govind Mohan, Home Secretary to the Govt. of India. The 10th Annual Coordination Meeting between SSB and APF will be hosted by Nepal in 2026.

Exhibitors from 11 countries at 14-day ITF

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Exhibitors and traders from 11 countries including those from Sweden, China and South Korea are showcasing their products at the India International Trade Fair (IITF) which was inaugurated at Bharat Mandapam here on Friday.

The 44th edition of the global trade fair will continue until November 27, with the first five days (November 14-18) earmarked as business days for B2B interactions, followed by the days for general public beginning November 19. This trade fair has emerged as one of the



Folk artists at the India International Trade Fair, at Pragati Maidan, in New Delhi on Friday

biggest events for not only India but for the entire South Asia, Jitin Prasada, Minister of State for Commerce and

Industry, said in his address after inaugurating the fair. He said this is not just an exhibition but a showcase of

India's power, stressing upon its role in supporting MSMEs. Reflecting the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi for a “Viksit Bharat by 2047”, this year's fair is themed “*Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat*”.

The theme celebrates India's diversity, entrepreneurial energy and the nation's commitment to *Aatmanirbhar Bharat*, aligning deeply with the ethos of the *Swadeshi movement* promoting local enterprise, indigenous innovation and sustainable economic growth, according to an official statement. The fair, organised by the India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO), is a platform for busi-

ness collaborations, technology exchange and investment partnerships. As many as 11 countries including Thailand, Malaysia, Sweden, China, South Korea, Turkey, Egypt, UAE, Iran, Lebanon and Tunisia are presenting their products and innovations at the International Pavilion, the statement said.

Besides, participating states and Union Territories are also showcasing their distinct strengths, crafts and innovations across thematic halls. Bihar, Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh are the Partner States, while Jharkhand has been designated as the Focus State, it said.

Singapore-based man held in Delhi bank fraud case: CBI

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The CBI has arrested a Singapore-based man from a hotel near Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport in connection with a ₹32-crore bank fraud, officials said on Friday.

The man, identified as Rajesh Bothra, was traced and picked up by the agency following a tip-off about his arrival in Delhi. The fraud case stems from a complaint by the Punjab National Bank

(PNB), which alleged that ₹31.60 crore were swindled by Frost Infrastructure and Energy Pvt Ltd (FIEL), its directors, unidentified public servants, among others, according to a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) statement.

The agency said the FIEL siphoned off Letter of Credit (LC) proceeds by submitting forged bills of lading, fraudulently depicting trade between the FIEL and two firms — FAREAST and Gulf Distribution Ltd —



which belonged to Bothra. It was alleged that the company defrauded the bank by availing the Foreign

Letter of Credit (FLC) limit from the bank, it said. “Investigation so far has revealed that Bothra played

an active role in the conspiracy with the company FIEL and its directors, by providing bogus bills of lading and falsely showing sale and purchase transactions of the FIEL with FAREAST and Gulf Distribution Ltd,” a CBI spokesperson said.

The bogus bills were submitted by the FIEL to the bank, through which the company siphoned off the LC proceeds, causing a “wrongful loss of approximately ₹32 crore to PNB”, according to the spokesperson.

AVG LOGISTICS LIMITED
Regd Office: 25, DDA Market, Savita Vihar, Delhi-110092
Corporate Office: 102, 1st Floor, Jhilmil Metro Complex Delhi-110095
CIN: L60200DL2010PLC198327; email- praveen@avglogistics.com
Website: www.avglogistics.com; Ph: +91 8527291062

Publication of Unaudited Financial Results (Standalone and Consolidated) for the Quarter and Half year ended September 30, 2025

Board of Directors of the Company at the meeting held on November 13, 2025 considered and approved the unaudited financial statements of the Company for the Quarter and Half year ended September 30, 2025.

Financial Results alongwith Limited Review Report and Investor Presentation have been hosted on the website of the Company and can be accessed by scanning the below QR code.

For AVG Logistics Limited
Sd/-
Sanjay Gupta
Managing Director
DIN:00527801

Date: 13.11.2025
Place: Delhi

कार्यालय नगर निगम, देहरादून				
(ई-निविदा सूचना)				
नगर निगम देहरादून द्वारा केंदरपुरम स्थित कांजीहाउस (देहरादून) व शंकरपुर (सेलाकुई) स्थित गौसदन पर आश्रित निराश्रित गौवशीय पशुओं को खिलाने के लिये खाद्य सामग्री की आपूर्ति करने हेतु निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है तथा निविदा से सम्बन्धित समस्त विवरण ई-निविदा पोर्टल www.uktenders.gov.in से प्राप्त किये जा सकते हैं।				
कार्य का विवरण	आगणन धनराशि (रुपये में)	निविदा शुल्क (18% जी०एस०टी० सहित)	घरोहर राशि निक्षेप (EMD @ 2% of Estimated Cost)	निविदा डाले जाने की प्रारम्भिक एवं अंतिम तिथि
1. केंदरपुरम स्थित कांजीहाउस (देहरादून) व शंकरपुर (सेलाकुई) स्थित गौसदन पर आश्रित निराश्रित गौवशीय पशुओं को खिलाने के लिये मूसा एवं अन्य पशु खाद्य सामग्री की आपूर्ति करने हेतु।	1,60,00,000/-	5,900/- (पाँच हजार नौ सौ रुपये)	3,20,000/-	17.11.2025 से 01.12.2025 अपराह्न 5:00 बजे तक।
2. केंदरपुरम स्थित कांजीहाउस (देहरादून) व शंकरपुर (सेलाकुई) स्थित गौसदन पर आश्रित निराश्रित गौवशीय पशुओं को खिलाने के लिये सावुत हरी घास की आपूर्ति करने हेतु।	1,10,00,000/-	5,900/- (पाँच हजार नौ सौ रुपये)	2,20,000/-	17.11.2025 से 01.12.2025 अपराह्न 5:00 बजे तक।

Sunrisers Hyderabad are set to trade out-of-favour India pacer Mohammed Shami to Lucknow Super Giants ahead of the 2026 Indian Premier League (IPL). SRH had acquired the services of the 35-year-old pacer for ₹10 crore at the auction last year.

"Both franchise have agreed to the trade," a source in the know of things said

Shami endured an underwhelming season last year with SRH. In nine outings he managed just six wickets at an average of 56.16 with an economy rate of 11.23. Once India's pace spearhead, Shami has also been unable to make the national team due to fitness concerns. He last played for the 'Men in Blue' in the final of the Champions Trophy in March this year.

The deadline to submit the list of players the franchises want to release from their squad is November 15.

If there is one thing that does not bother Harikrishna much, it's the endgame. The

draw without much ado while Armenian Gabriel Sargissian also got a same result with Nodirbek Yakubboev of Uzbekistan. In another drawn game among the eight rounds,

Caruana Fabiano of United States, Anish Giri of Holland and Matthias Bluebaum of Germany have already qualified for the event while Indian R Praggnanadhaa is

Available results round 5
game 1: Javokhir Sindarov
playing Frederic Svane; Arjun
Erigaisi playing Levon
Aronia; Sam Shankland
playing Daniil Dubov;
Alexander Donchenko drew
with Liem Le Quang; Gabriel
Sargisian drew with
Nodirbek Yakubboev;
Andrey Espenkov drew with
Aleksey Grebnev; Sevan
Samuel playing Wei Yi; Jose
Eduardo Martinez Alcantara
drew with P Harikrishna.

“They have a long vision about their future, their

The FIH Junior Men's World Cup will be co-hosted by Chennai and Madurai from November 28 till December 10. The 37-year-old legendary goalkeeper has seen it all during his illustrious career be it success, failure, pressure or disappointments. As a coach, he is trying to help the youngsters understand how to cope up with these things.



"We will have a strikers camp, goalkeepers camp and

"She will work remote mostly, sometime online and sometime on the field. Starting December she is going to work with us till World Cup and Asian Games. It's a online skill session which the players have to

“The ideal goal is to win the

World Cup, every tournament we go to, we want to win. Realistically we need to see where we are ranked in the world, right now we are seventh in the world, so we also have to make some improvements in the next 6 months to be competitive on the world stage," he said.

"But at the same time we want to win every tournament," he said.

Having stamped their authority in Asia with the Asia Cup title in August this

"What we have to do is to work on defence, in and around the D and obviously final third, our attacking play. We need to convert our chances more, we are one of the best pressing teams in the world."

It is the second time in his career that the 22-year-old Alcaraz has ended the year at the top of the rankings. The Spaniard became the youngest player to finish a

Spain's Carlos Alcaraz serves the ball to Italy's Lorenzo Musetti during their singles tennis match of the ATP World Tour Finals in Turin, Italy PTI

chance as he swept aside Musetti despite a partisan home crowd, sealing the result on his third match point. That was his third win in the Jimmy Connors group

De Minaur advances. The victory also sent Alex de Minaur through to the semifinals after the Australian earlier claimed a first ATP Finals victory. De Minaur beat Taylor Fritz 7-6 (3), 6-3 for his first victory in six matches at the tournament, following his debut last year. "I finally won here in Torino," said De Minaur, who needed a straight-set win to stay in contention for a semifinal spot.

FIFA disciplinary rules demand a ban of “at least two matches for serious foul play” or “at least three matches for violent conduct.”

Bans of two and three games for serious foul play were imposed on players who were sent off last month in World Cup qualifiers. Qatar defender Tarek Salman got a two-game ban for a serious tackle on a

Ronaldo deserved credit, Martinez suggested, for not being sent off previously in an international career now in its 23rd season.

"He is just a captain that has never been sent off before in 226 games,"

Ronaldo, who turns 41 in February, is aiming to play at a record sixth World Cup tournament. His great rival Lionel Messi also is due to play at his sixth World Cup. Messi was sent off on his debut for Argentina in 2005 in a friendly against Hungary.

Mbappé sent the penalty straight down the middle to break the deadlock in the 55th minute before Olise turned inside the penalty area to curl home the second goal in the 76th at Parc des Princes in western Paris. Mbappé poked in France's third goal from close range in the 83rd following a goal-mouth scramble.

India lead against South Africa in Test

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Kolkata

Jasprit Bumrah turned a rare four-spinner gamble into his personal stage, producing a mesmerising exhibition of seam, swing and control as India skittled out South Africa for 159 on the opening day of the first Test on Friday.

On a surface that drew pre-match scrutiny for its dry look, prompting India to field four spinners for the first time since 2012, it was India's pace star who made the ball talk the loudest, returning a superb 14-2-27-5, his 16 five-wicket hauls in 96 innings.

Bumrah produced a masterclass across little over two sessions, as South Africa crashed from a commanding 57 for no loss in 10 overs to lose all 10 wickets for just 102 runs in next 45 overs, with their innings lasting just four hours and 13 minutes after opting to bat.

It's South Africa's second-lowest total after a fifty-plus opening stand in men's Tests since their readmission. The lowest is 130 in their second innings in the 2018 Cape Town Test, also against India after a 52-run opening stand.

India ended the day at 37 for one in 20 overs, with a resolute KL Rahul (13 batting from 59 balls) and Washington Sundar (six batting; 38 balls) steady at the crease after Yashasvi Jaiswal (12) dragged Marco Jansen onto his stumps while playing close to his body.



India's Jasprit Bumrah celebrating with teammates after taking his fifth wicket during the first day of the first Test cricket match between India and South Africa at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata

The duo looked in no hurry on a pitch offering spice and variable bounce as they cut the deficit to 122 runs in front of a sizeable Eden crowd of 36,000-plus.

As light faded, South Africa crowded the bat with close-in fielders, hoping for a late breakthrough and used five bowlers. But Rahul and Sundar stayed calm and assured, seeing out the final overs without further damage.

South Africa, missing their

lead pacer Kagiso Rabada due to a rib injury, had looked primed for a big score after Aiden Markram (31 from 48 balls; 5x4, 1x6) and Ryan Rickelton's (23 off 22b; 4x4) brisk opening stand.

Markram, after 23 dot balls, opened up with a straight drive and a flowing cover drive, later twice punishing Axar Patel and unfurling a deft late cut past backward point.

He also launched Axar for a wristy six over midwicket

as the run-rate surged above five an over. At the other end, Rickelton's hit-and-miss 22 off 23 (4x4) added to India's frustration.

But just before the drinks break in the opening session, Bumrah from the Clubhouse end turned the morning on its head with two wickets in five balls across successive overs in his first spell that read 7-4-9-2.

A 140 kmph length ball straightened late to uproot Rickelton's off stump, and

minutes later a short-of-length delivery leapt spitefully to take Markram's glove — the contrast in bounce summing up the pitch's variable nature. He returned after lunch to trap Tony de Zorzi (24) in front with one that skidded through, before closing out the second session with reverse swing that split open the tail. Simon Harmer's stumps were sent cartwheeling, and three balls later Keshav Maharaj was pinned plumb in front.

Having leaked 34 runs from six overs in the first session, Mohammed Siraj (2/47) delivered a sharp twin strike in the second session, removing Kyle Verreynne and Marco Jansen in four balls in his 10th over.

Verreynne (16) burned South Africa's last review after being struck pad-then-bat, while Jansen was breached by a reversing length ball that darted in.

Kuldeep Yadav (2/29) chipped in with the key wicket of skipper Temba Bavuma, snared smartly at leg slip by Dhruv Jurel, and later removed a compact-looking Wiaan Mulder (24).

After the early losses of Bavuma and the openers, Mulder and Tony de Zorzi tried to steady the innings with circumspect batting.

Mulder applied himself for more than 50 balls, looked compact against India's four-pronged spin attack, but lost focus 15 minutes into the second session.

Asian Archery Championship: Ankita, Dhiraj win gold in recurve events



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Dhaka

Ankita Bhakat capped a sensational day, stunning Paris Olympics silver-medallist Nam Suhyeon of South Korea 7-3 while Dhiraj Bommadevara also won his final as India clinched gold medals in both men's and women's event at the Asian Archery Championship on Friday.

Dhiraj defeated compatriot Rahul 6-2 in the final to make it a 1-2 for India.

Ankita had earlier knocked out her longtime senior teammate, former World No. 1 Deepika, in the semifinals. Locked at 5-5, both archers shot a nine in the shoot-off, but Ankita's arrow was closer to the centre, sending her into the

title clash. Ankita began the final in commanding fashion, firing two 10s to take the opening set 29-27. The second set ended in a scrappy 27-27 draw as both archers faltered. Ankita slipped to an 8 while Nam dropped to a 7.

Nam levelled the match by claiming the third set 28-26, with Ankita unable to find a single 10. But the Indian hit back brilliantly in the fourth, nailing two 10s in a superb 29-28 effort to lead 5-3.

Showing steely composure in the decider, Ankita once again delivered two 10s to clinch the gold, completing a breakthrough triumph against one of Asia's most consistent performers. India also secured the women's recurve bronze

after Sangeeta edged out veteran five-time Olympian Deepika Kumari 6-5 in a dramatic shoot-off.

Indian contingent ended its campaign with 10 medals — six gold, three silver and one bronze medal to top the standings.

In the men's final, having lost the first set, Dhiraj was near flawless to knock out 33 year-old veteran Jang Chaehwan 6-2 to enter the final.

The Indian lost the first set by one point, but came back strongly with three 10s and take the second set and bring it 2-2 level. He continued his menacing form with two successive 10s and one 9 to take the third set 29-27 and make it 4-2. He drilled in another hat-trick of 10s to seal the win.

Lakshya Sen cruises into semifinals of Japan Masters

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Kumamoto (Japan)

Top Indian shuttler Lakshya Sen registered an upset straight-game win over former world champion Loh Kean Yew of Singapore to storm into the semifinals of the \$475,000 Kumamoto Masters Japan on Friday.

Commonwealth Games champion Sen, seeded seventh, produced a superlative performance to out-class world number 9 Loh 21-13 21-17 in 40 minutes, extending his dominance over the Singaporean with a seventh win in 10 career meetings. Sen, who endured a lean patch before rediscovering his touch with a runner-up finish at the Hong Kong Open followed by quarterfinal appearances at the Denmark and Hylo Open, will now face Japan's sixth seed and world number 13 Kenta Nishimoto in the last four stage.

Coming in with a 6-3 head-to-head lead, Sen, the 2021 World



Championship bronze winner, displayed impressive all-round control to dismantle Loh, who has been struggling for some time.

The two were tied 4-4 early in the opening game before Sen broke away to take an 11-8 lead at the interval. He reeled off six straight points after the

break to move 18-9 ahead and comfortably closed out the game.

Loh showed better resistance in the second game, staying level with Sen at 9-9, but the Indian once again pulled ahead to 15-9. The Singaporean narrowed the gap to 17-18, but Sen held firm to seal the match.

PCB gives option of six cities to pick two new PSL teams



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Lahore

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has given the option of six cities to parties interested in bidding for the right to own the two new teams in the Pakistan Super League (PSL) for the next 10-years.

The PCB said after a meeting between the PSL CEO Salman Naseer and the existing franchise

owners/representatives that bidders for the two new teams can choose from Hyderabad, Sialkot, Faisalabad, Muzaffarabad, Gilgit and Rawalpindi.

Tenders will be issued for the two new teams in the next few days according to the PCB and the process to sell ownership rights would be completed by next month.

The PCB also said that the process for indepen-

dent valuation of the existing franchises and the two new teams and other commercial assets had been completed by the international auditors.

Bangladesh beats Ireland in the first cricket Test

ASSOCIATED PRESS
■ Sylhet (Bangladesh)

Opener Mahmudul Hasan Joy and captain Najmul Hossain Shanto scored centuries as Bangladesh defeated Ireland by an innings and

47 runs in the first cricket Test on Friday.

Joy's career-best 171 and Shanto's 100 guided Bangladesh to 587-8 (declared) before Ireland was bowled out for 286 in its first innings.

Ghazanfar targets MI retention after injury

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ New Delhi

Having made rapid strides in international cricket over the past 12 months, Afghanistan mystery spinner AM Ghazanfar is hoping to be retained by Mumbai Indians for the 2026 IPL and irrespective of what future holds for him with the storied franchise, words of encouragement from Hardik Pandya will stay with him for a long time. Ghazanfar was supposed to make his IPL debut with the Mumbai Indians last season but a back injury ruled him out of the tournament. With the retention deadline on Saturday, he is keeping his fingers crossed.

"Despite the injury, Hardik bhai remained in touch with me and motivated me a lot. Even with Tilak I had long chats about the game. I hope this year too Hardik bhai is my captain," Ghazanar, who would be representing Afghanistan in Rising Stars Asia Cup in Doha, told PTI.

Having made debut across formats in the last 18 months, the 19-year-old is featuring in the tournament for the second year in a row.

He rose to prominence with his mystery spin in the local T20 league back

home and in no time found himself representing the country, an indication of the rich spin talent available in Afghanistan.

It is a busy year for Ghazanfar who literally lived out of a suitcase playing franchise cricket around the world. Last December, he got a call to make his Test debut against Zimbabwe, which also happened to be his maiden first class game. His body could not take the load of Test cricket as he sent down more than 30 overs on a placid pitch.

"I played lot of a cricket ball to back last season. It was one tournament to another and seven to eight tournaments in total. When the Test match came my body was not ready for the extra load. I have fully recovered now and a lot wiser." As a mystery spinner, Ghazanfar relies a lot on backspin, googly and carrom ball for wickets. On purpose, he hardly bowls off-spin and he has his reasons for that.

"I don't look at myself as an off-spinner as I don't bowl off spin a lot. T20 is a batter's game now, spinners don't get a lot of help on pitches. Perfect example is IPL where you don't get a lot of spin tracks.

"Off break easily comes

to bat. Leg break can be tricky and with mystery, the balls skids and you can vary your pace. Mystery is better," he said.

Any specific reason why Afghanistan keep unearthing mystery spinners?

"If you look, some countries have good fast bowlers, some have good batters, similarly we have a lot of spinners in domestic cricket. That is why we are strong at the international level," Ghazanfar reasoned.

Growing up, he learned a lot by watching videos of Sunil Narine and R Ashwin. He was fortunate to meet Ashwin during a stint with KKR in the IPL.

"He is a very experienced bowler. He shared his rich experience with me. Thankful him for that. IPL taught me to perform under extreme pressure even though I did not get to play." Having made an accidental Test debut, Ghazanfar wants to play more red ball cricket but he doesn't hide his love for the shortest format.

"I like Tests but I want to play T20s more," he added.

(Watch DP World Asia Cup Rising Stars 2025 - Sri Lanka A vs. Afghanistan A on 15th November 2025 from 5 PM IST live on Sony Sports Ten 1 SD & HD).

C-1435



No. 7261 /Dt. 10.11.2025

OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL: JAGATSINGHPUR

INVITATION FOR BIDS

COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Procurement

Bid Reference No. EO/JSPURM-S/03/2025-26

Bid Identification No.2025_ORULB_121061

1. Name of the work for which Tender invited – "Supply of 08 nos of LCV Compartmentalized Vehicles including Drivers & Loaders on Hiring Basis to Jagatsinghpur Municipality" through QCBS Method for Door To Door Waste Collection from Ward No.1 to 21 within Municipality Area

2. Eligible Intending Registered & Financially Sound Manpower Service Provider Agency/Firms/Trust/NGOs having similar nature of work experience of at least Five to Ten years and fulfilling the other criteria as given in the DTGN.

3. The Bid documents will be available in the web-site i.e., <http://www.tendersodisha.gov.in> from 11:00 hrs of Dt. 12.11.2025 to 17 :00 Hrs of Dt. 29.11.2025 for online bidding.

4. Last date & time of receipt of Bid through online 17.00 of Dt. 29.11.2025.


5. Opening of Bid on Dt. 03.12.2025 at 11 :00 Hrs.

6. The bidder has to participate in online bidding only.

For further detail information any one can visit the procurement portal of the Govt. of Odisha i.e., <http://www.tendersodisha.gov.in>

Executive Officer
Jagatsinghpur Municipality

C-1470



OFFICE OF THE NOTIFIED AREA COUNCIL, PADAMPUR

DIST.-BARGARH (ODISHA) PIN-768036,Email:nacpadampur@gmail.com, Ph.06683-223436

Bid Reference No. 3212 /NACP, Dated. 14.11.2025

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

The Executive Officer, NAC, Padampur, Bargarh (Odisha) on behalf of NAC, Padampur invites Expression of Interest (EOI) for "Const. of Market Complex near Taxi Stand under Padampur NAC / Const. of Multi-Purpose Hall near Satarbandh / Others" from Registered and Eligible Firm / Consultant / Architect for tendering their bids through offline mode only. This EOI is valid for the period of one year.

1. Intending bidders have to participate through "Off-line" bidding only.

2. The bid documents will be available at the office of Executive Officer, Padampur NAC, Padampur from 10.00 AM of 15.11.25 to 1.00 PM of Dt.26.11.25.

3. The intending tenderer shall procure the tender documents from the office of the undersigned by paying a non-refundable fee of Rs.5,000/- in shape of Demand Draft.


4. The Last date and time for receiving Bids is 1.00 PM of Dt.27.11.25.

5. The tenderer shall submit the bids in 2 sealed Envelopes, 1st for Technical Proposal (Superscribed Technical Proposal) and 2nd for Price Bid (Superscribed Price Bid), both the envelopes would be put together in the third outer envelope superscribing "Providing Engineering Consultancy Services for Preparation of DPR for "Construction of Town Hall at NAC, Padampur".

6. The envelope should have been sealed with the documents may be submitted by Registered Post / Speed Post / Speed Post / By Hand only.

7. Bids received will be opened in the presence of Bidders at 4.00 PM on Dt.27.11.25 in the office of the Executive Officer, Padampur NAC.

Executive Officer
NAC,Padampur



OFFICE OF THE NOTIFIED AREA COUNCIL, BARPALI

At/Po- Barpali, Dist.-Bargarh, Pin-768029

Mail – barpalinac@gmail.com, website- www.nacbarpali.in

C-1441

No. 2413 / Dt. 11.11.2025

QUOTATION CALL NOTICE

Sealed quotations are invited from registered, experienced, and reputed consultants/architects possessing valid Income Tax and GST registration certificates for selection of a "Consultant for preparation of Detailed Project Report (DPR), Providing Project Management Consulting Services & Supervision at stages for implementation of different Developmental Projects under Barpali NAC". Eligible applicants must have prior experience in preparing plans, designs, detailed estimates, and rate analyses for projects. Interested consultants may apply to the undersigned for engagement in various development projects of BARPALI NAC through a two-cover bid system.

The first cover (Technical Bid) shall contain all relevant technical documents, while the second cover (Financial Bid) shall include the price quotation. Only the financial bids of technically qualified bidders will be opened after the evaluation of technical bids.

The bidder must have qualified architect and a registered member of the Council of Architecture. Additionally, the consultant must have prior experience in similar nature of projects and possess original CAD software for drawing preparation.

Eligible bidders must have annual turnover of not less than ₹2 crore in any one year within the last three financial years. Preference will be given to consultants who have previously provided similar services to various Urban Local Bodies under the Odisha State Government and produce completion certificate from the respective ULBs.

Tender documents can be obtained from the NAC office on payment of ₹6,000/- (Rupees Six Thousand)only (non-refundable) and Rs. ₹10,000/- (Ten Thousand) for EMD Cost in shape of M.R/D/B.C. The sealed quotations must be submitted from dt.12.11.2025 to 20.11.2025 up to 1.00 PM and the technical bid will be opened on same day at 4.00 PM in presence of the bidders or their authorised representatives.

Financial bid will be opened on dt.24.11.2025 at 11.00 AM in presence of the successful bidders who have qualified in Technical evaluation. The approved rate will be valid for 3 years and agreement will be made with the L1 bidder which will be valid for 3 years from the date of the agreement.

The undersigned reserves the right to accept or reject any or all quotations without assigning any reason.

Executive Officer
NAC Barpali



DSPL-354



ବୟନିକା

ଦ୍ୱାରା ଆୟୋଜିତ

ରାଜ୍ୟ ହସ୍ତତନ୍ତ ମେଳା

STATE HANDLOOM EXPO

ସ୍ଥାନ: ସରକାରୀ ଉଚ୍ଚ ବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟ ପଡ଼ିଆ, RTO ପାଖ, କୋରାପୁଟ

ଶୁଭ ଉଦ୍ଘାଟନ

୧୫ ନଭେମ୍ବର ୨୦୨୫

ସମୟ: ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟା ୬.୦୦ ଘଣ୍ଟା

ଏହି ଉତ୍ସବରେ ଯୋଗ ଦେବା ନିମନ୍ତେ ବିନମ୍ର ଅନୁରୋଧ ।

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ସମୟ ପୂର୍ବାହ୍ନ ୧୧.୦୦ ରୁ ରାତ୍ର ୯.୦୦ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ।

ପ୍ରାୟୋଜକ : ହସ୍ତତନ୍ତ ଉତ୍ସବ ଆୟୋଗ, ବସ୍ତ୍ରପରିଶିଳ୍ପ, ଭାରତ ସରକାର

ଆୟୋଜକ: ବୟନିକା ହସ୍ତତନ୍ତ, ବୟନ ଓ ହସ୍ତଶିଳ୍ପ ବିଭାଗ, ଡିଫ୍ଟା ସରକାର