BHUBANESWAR

Army Chief calls Operation Sindoor an 88-hour trailer

SC terms liquor tetra packs dangerous and deceptive

LUCKNOW

BHOPAL

DELHI

Jobs cause a possible stock effect



RANCHI

German Goverment lifts arms ban on Israel

HYDERABAD

DEHRADUN

India needs good coaches of football: Lothar



PIONEER IN SHORT

MURUGAPPA GROUP EX-CHAIRMAN DIES

Arunachalam Vellayan former chairman of the Murugappa Group and chairman emeritus of **Coromandel International** passed away at the age of 72 after a prolonged illness. He is survived by his wife, Lalitha Vellayan, sons Arun and Narayanan Vellayan and grandchildren. Over several decades, Vellayan played a pivotal role in guiding the Murugappa Group's diversified businesses, contributing significantly to its growth and establishing it as one of India's most respected conglomerates. He served on the boards of several group companies, including Coromandel International and EID Parry, as well as other firms such as Kanoria Chemicals, EXIM Bank and Indian Overseas Bank. Beyond corporate leadership, he led multiple industry and trade organisations, including the Southern India Chamber of

Hasina sentenced to death in Dhaka

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Dhaka

PUBLISHED FROM:

Bangladesh's deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina was on Monday sentenced to death in absentia by a special tribunal for "crimes against humanity" over her Government's brutal crackdown on student-led protests last year.

In its verdict that followed a months-long trial, the country's International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) described the 78-year-old Awami League leader as the "mastermind and principal architect" of the violent repression that killed hundreds of protesters. It also handed the death sentence to former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal on similar charges.

Hasina has been living in India since she fled Bangladesh on August 5 last year in the face of the massive protests. She was earlier declared a fugitive by the court.

In her reaction, Hasina said the judgement has been made by a "rigged tribunal established and presided over by an unelected Government with no democratic mandate."



politically motivated. In their within the interim distasteful call for the death penalty, they reveal the Bangladesh's last elected brazen and murderous prime minister, and to

"They are biased and intent of extremist figures Government to remove

In their distasteful call for the death penalty, they reveal the brazen and murderous intent of extremist figures within the interim Government - SHEIKH HASINA. FORMER PM OF BANGLADESH

CHANDIGARH

a political force," she said in

Hasina said she was not afraid to face her "accusers" in a proper tribunal where the evidence can be weighed and tested fairly.

'That is why I have repeatedly challenged the interim Government to bring these charges before the International Criminal Court (ICC) in the Hague." The verdict comes months

before parliamentary elections in Bangladesh. Hasina's Awami League party has been barred from contesting the elections scheduled to be held in February

Reading out the judgment before a heavily guarded courtroom in Dhaka, the ICT said the prosecution proved beyond a reasonable doubt that Hasina was behind the deadly crackdown on studentled protests in July-August

Hasina was handed the

nullify the Awami League as death penalty for ordering the use of deadly force against unarmed protesters, making inflammatory statements and authorising operations that led to the killing of several stu-

dents in Dhaka and sur-

rounding areas. "They can see that the trials conducted by the socalled International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) were never intended to achieve justice or provide any genuine insight into the events of July and August 2025,' Hasina said.

Rather, their purpose was to "scapegoat" the Awami League and to "distract the world's attention" from the failings of Yunus and his ministers, she charged.

"Under his aegis, public services have fallen apart. Police have retreated from the country's crime-ridden streets and judicial fairness has been subverted, with attacks on Awami League adherents going unpunished," she alleged.

45 Indians feared dead in Saudi accident

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE New Delhi

VIJIAYAWADA

At least 45 Indian pilgrims lost their lives when a bus transporting them between the holy cities of Mecca and Medina caught fire in Saudi Arabia on Wednesday, according to Hyderabad Police Commissioner VC Sajjanar.

The vehicle was carrying 46 passengers at the time of the incident. The lone survivor, a man from Hyderabad, has been admitted to the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) of a local hospital, officials said.

Most of those on board were from Hyderabad in Telangana and on their way for Umrah, a pilgrimage performed by Muslims throughout the year and considered shorter than the annual Hajj. The tragedy occurred as

the group was travelling from Mecca to Medina. While the exact cause of the accident remains unclear, Commissioner Sajjanar confirmed that an oil tanker collided with the bus, triggering the fire.

India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed his condolences on X, calling the incident "deeply distressing"



AIMIM Karwan MLA Kausar Mohiuddin meets family members of those who lost their lives

and assuring that Indian authorities were coordinating closely with Saudi officials. The Indian Embassy in Riyadh and the Consulate in Jeddah are "providing all necessary assistance," he said.

Vice President CP Radhakrishnan, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and Union Minister of Parliamentary Affairs Kiren Rijiju also expressed their heartfelt condolences to the

The ByStander

Governors of IIM Kozhikode.

Commerce, Fertiliser

Indian Sugar Mills

Association. He also

chaired the Board of

Association of India and



DELHI-SHANGHAI AI FLIGHTS TO RESUME Air India will resume direct

flights between Delhi and Shanghai from February 1, 2026, marking its return to mainland China after nearly six years. The airline had suspended Shanghai services in early 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic while still Government-owned. Now under the Tata Group. Air India plans to also launch non-stop flights between Mumbai and Shanghai in 2026, pending regulatory approvals. Delhi-Shanghai flights will operate four times weekly using Boeing 787-8 aircraft with 18 business and 238 economy seats. Shanghai will become Air India's 48th international destination.

SR TO BEGIN IN ASSAM

The Election Commission of

India has ordered a Special Revision (SR) of electoral rolls in Assam, with January 1, 2026, set as the qualifying date. Positioned between the annual specia summary revision and the Special Intensive Revision (SIR), the SR aims to ensure clean, updated and accurate voter lists. Doorto-door verification will be conducted from November 22 to December 20, followed by publication of the integrated draft electoral roll on December 27 and the final roll on February 10, 2026. **Assam Chief Minister** welcomed the decision, pledging full State cooperation for a transparent, timely process.

Power talks begin in Bihar

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE Patna/New Delhi

Hectic lobbying began on Monday among NDA allies to finalise cabinet positions ahead of the swearing-in ceremony of the new Bihar Government on Thursday.

While major stakeholders, the BIP and the ID(U), are engaging directly, smaller allies — like the LJP, led by Chirag Paswan, Hindustani Awam Morcha (HAM) of Jitan Ram Manjhi and Rashtriya Lok Morcha (RLM) led by Upendra Kushwaha — held separate meetings with Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan in the national Capital.

"Met Union Minister and BJP in-charge Dharmendra Pradhan and BJP general secretary Vinod Tawde, who worked tirelessly to ensure a massive victory of the NDA in the Bihar Assembly elections, 2025, and congratulated them," Manjhi, posted on social media post following his meeting.

Although newly elected MLAs of the JD(U) met on Monday evening, a source said the party will elect Nitish Kumar as the legislature party leader on Wednesday, after which he will tender his resignation as incumbent CM.

Meanwhile, BJP chief Dilip laiswal informed that the party legislators will meet on Tuesday. The last Cabinet meeting of the outgoing NDA Government in Bihar on Monday authorised CM Kumar to dissolve the Assembly.

Delhi notes Hasina verdict

ASHOKE RAJ ■ New Delhi

India on Monday acknowledged a tribunal ruling on a former Bangladesh prime minister Sheikh Hasina and reaffirmed its commitment to supporting the neighbouring nation's peace, democracy, inclusion and constructive

"India has taken note of the verdict on former Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina announced by the International Crimes Tribunal (Bangladesh). As a close neighbour, India remains committed to the best interests of the people of Bangladesh, including peace, democracy, inclusion, and stability. The country has reiterated its intent to engage constructively with all stakeholders in Bangladesh to that end," read a statement from the Ministry of External Affairs.

absentia by the ICT for "crimes against" unarmed protesters.

humanity" linked to her Government's violent crackdown on student-led protests last year. The tribunal described the 78year-old Awami League leader as the "mastermind and principal architect" of the brutal suppression, which reportedly left hundreds of protesters dead.

Hasina has been living in India since fleeing Bangladesh on August 5, 2024, and was previously declared a fugitive by the court. In a statement from exile, she rejected the verdict, calling the tribunal biased and politically motivated.

She described the death sentence as part of a broader attempt by the interim Government to eliminate the Awami League, and challenged the Government to bring her case before the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague.

The tribunal found Hasina guilty of ordering the use of deadly force, includ-Hasina has been sentenced to death in ing helicopters and firearms, against

Bangladesh seeks ex-PM extradition

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Dhaka

Bangladesh on Monday urged India to extradite Sheikh Hasina and her former aide Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal. hours after a special tribunal sentenced them to death in absentia for "crimes against humanity".

"We urge the Indian Government to immediately hand over these two convicted individuals to the Bangladeshi authorities," the Foreign Ministry said in a statement, according to the State-run BSS news agency.

It said the existing bilateral extradition agreement between Bangladesh and India marks the transfer of the



Bangladeshi Army soldiers stand guard outside the Supreme Court in Dhaka ahead of the verdict against ex-PM Sheikh Hasina

two convicts as a "compulso-victed of crimes against ry responsibility" for New Delhi. It also said that grant- ered an "unfriendly act" and ing shelter to individuals con-

humanity would be consida disregard for justice.

Technical aide linked to Delhi blast arrested

MOHIT KANDHARI/RAJESH KUMAR ■ Jammu/New Delh

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has arrested another suspect in the Delhi blast case, while Amir Rashid Ali, arrested on Sunday, was remanded to the agency's custody for 10 days.

The NIA arrested Jasir Bilal Wani, son of a dry fruit seller, in Srinagar in connection with the blast which claimed 13 lives in the national Capital. A resident of Anantnag,

Wani allegedly provided technical support for carrying out terror attacks by modifying drones and



Security at Patiala House Court Complex as the NIA produces Amir Rashid

NIA said in a statement.

Qazigund in Anantnag Umar un Nabi, to plan the district of Jammu and terror carnage," the NIA

attempting to make rockets Kashmir, was an active coahead of the deadly blast, the conspirator behind the attack and had worked "The accused, a resident of closely with the terrorist,

statement read. This is the second major arrest by the NIA in the case. On Sunday, the agency had arrested Ali. The car involved in the attack was registered in his name the agency has claimed.

Jasir lived in the neighbourhood of Dr Muzaafar Rather, brother of Dr Adeel Ahmad Rather. Dr Adeel was arrested by the Jammu and Kashmir police from Saharanpur on November 6, after which the terror module was unearthed during a joint operation by the Delhi, the Haryana, the Uttar Pradesh police teams led by the Jammu and Kashmir police.

Police issue summons to Al Falah's founder

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE New Delhi/Indore

The Delhi Police Crime Branch has summoned the chairman and founder of Al Falah University over alleged irregularities and forgery flagged by the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC). Meanwhile, the MP police arrested his brother from Hyderabad in 25-yearold fraud cases.

Javed Ahmed Siddiqui has been asked to appear before

House. Among MLAs who re-

the Crime Branch with documents related to accreditation and funding of the Al Falah Charitable Trust, which operates nine organisations including the Al Falah Medical Research Foundation, where blast accused Umar Nabi and Muzammil Ganai were employed.

The summons was sent after investigative agencies found that Siddiqui's statement was crucial for clarifying several inconsistencies linked to the functioning of the university and the activities of individuals associated with the institution.

Women only form 12 per cent of Bihar Assembly despite higher fielding newly elected Assembly tells icant role in shaping the new

ASHOKE RAJ ■ New Delhi

The results of the election to the 18th Bihar Legislative Assembly, declared on November 14, have not only set the stage for another term of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) but have also revealed a distinct shift in the social and demographic profile of the State's lawmakers, according to a fresh analysis by PRS Legislative Research.

The NDA returned to power with a sweeping majority, strengthening its position across the State. But beyond the electoral outcome, the

a deeper story about representation, experience, and evolving political trends in Bihar. Only 12 per cent of the new lawmakers are women, reflecting a persistent gender imbalance even as parties fielded a higher number of female candidates compared to previous elections. The age composition of the Assembly continues to shift

Analysts note that this trend

upward, with the proportion of MLAs aged 55 or above rising from 34 per cent in 2015 to 40 per cent in 2020 and reaching 46 per cent in 2025.

29 women elected in 2025, higher than in 2020 (26) \$16% ₩14% of Women N 10% 8% 6% Percentage 0% 1980 1985 1990 1977 Year of the election to Assembly

underscores increasing voter preference for senior leaders or those perceived to have administrative experience.

Educational qualifications among MLAs have also risen, with a greater number of legislators holding postgraduate degrees compared to those elected in 2020. While this marks a positive development for legislative capacity, PRS noted that nearly half of the women MLAs do not possess a college degree, highlighting a contrasting divide that persists within the Assembly.

Incumbency played a signif-

contested their seats, 58 per cent succeeded in returning. Experience appears to have been a major factor for voters, as reflected in the performance of those who held ministerial portfolios during the previous term. Of the 68 MLAs and MLCs who served as ministers in the 17th Assembly, 49 chose to contest in 2025, and 39 of them emerged victorious. This strong return

rate underscores the electoral advantage of ministerial visibility and

administrative credentials.

continues to be dominated by individuals who list politics, social work, and agriculture as their primary occupations, reflecting broader socio-economic patterns in the State.

The 2025 election witnessed robust public engagement, contributing to one of Bihar's highest voter turnouts in decades. While the political outcome signals continuity the demographic and educational shifts within the Assembly point to a gradual but meaningful evolution in the composition of Bihar's elected representatives.

Dentist attacked over Bihar poll

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

A dentist was attacked in Chinhat on Saturday night,

allegedly for asking the number of seats the Bharatiya Janata Party had won in the Bihar assembly elections. The incident occurred in

Malhaur, in the Chinhat police station area. The victim, Dr Shravan Kumar Tiwari lodged a complaint at the Chinhat police station. He runs a dental clinic in Nizampur in Malhaur area.

On Saturday night, Dr Tiwari was going to his home after closing the clinic when he met an acquaintance near his clinic and started talking to him on Bihar election

moved to the drubbing Rashtriya Janata Dal received and the BJP's victory and the seats it won in Bihar elec-

It is alleged that Chandra Prakash Yadav, who runs a medical store next to the clinic, came there on hearing the debate between Dr Tiwari and his acquaintance and started abusing the dentist, asking why he was taunting the BJP by asking the number of seats it had

When the victim tried to reason with him, the accused attacked him with a stick and

The next day, Chandra Prakash, along with his friend Jaswant Yadav, arrived

in an inebriated state and started abusing Dr Tiwari. When he tried to pacify them, the accused threatened to evict the dentist from the shop as it belonged to him, despite the fact that he owed Rs 50,000 to the victim, and kill him.

Inspector Dinesh Chandra Mishra said that a case had been registered and investigation was being done.

YOUTH'S BODY **FOUND HANGING**

The body of a youth was found hanging from a tree near Durgapuri Metro station in Mawaiya, in Alambagh police station area on

The local residents ets and climb it.

the youth's body. The police sent the body for postmortem. The deceased was identified as Ram Murthy of Udhnapurkala village in the Hargaon police station area of Sitapur. Police said a mobile phone was found near the body and the identity of the deceased was ascertained with its help.

"No injury marks were found on the body of the deceased. The forensic team investigated the spot," the police said. The local residents, however, did not seem convinced with police's claim of suicide. They said it was very difficult for a man to reach the tree near the drain due to thick-

Akhilesh reiterates 'vote chori' chatge against ECI

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow

Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav, on Monday, reiterated his charge of "vote chori" against the Election Commission of India.

"It was not just vote 'chori' but 'dacoity'. It's not chori. Chori is a small theft. It's a dacoity. Openly done," Yadav alleged.

"The Election Commission of India is an institution whose responsibility is to ensure free and fair elections in the country. It is their duty to ensure that every citizen gets to vote and that they help every voter. Why isn't the Election Commission saying that we will not let anyone's vote be suppressed...?" the SP chief

About Uttar Pradesh, he alleged, the double-engine government resorted to communal politics".

Double-engine refers to the Bharatiya Janata Party's rule at the Centre as well as in Uttar Pradesh. On the discord in the

the SP chief said it was an internal matter of the family and such things take place in every home. Meanwhile, senior SP leader and MLA Ravidas Mehrotra said after the dismal performance of the

name to lead the INDIA bloc. He said that Akhilesh

Congress in Bihar elections,

Akhilesh Yadav had

emerged as a significant

family of Lalu Prasad Yadav,

Yadav should take charge of the INDIA bloc as the SP had organisational strength and grassroot support among the people.

Mehrotra said that the SP was strong enough to form a government on its own in Uttar Pradesh.

Mehrotra, the MLA from

Lucknow Central assembly constituency, asserted that the INDIA bloc would have given a better performance in Bihar if ballots had been used fir voting instead of electronic voting machines.

Mehrotra quoted last year's Lok Sabha election results, saying that Akhilesh Yadav's party was in a better position to lead the larger anti-BJP front as it had won

The Rashtriya Janata Dalled Mahagathbandhan managed to win only 35 seats. The RJD bagged 25 seats, Congress six, the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) Liberation two, and the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and Indian Inclusive Party one

ties across the city would

He also affirmed that the

planned development of

the city and wherever

continue.

Municipal

Police register murder case

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

A murder case was registered late Sunday night in connection with the mysterious death of a teenager, whose mutilated body was recovered from the railway track in Dubagga on Saturday night. The murder case was registered after the family of the victim staged a protest. The family of the victim

A police spokesman, while confirming the registration of a murder case, said the police were hunting for the prime accused, Alok, who is out on bail after being arrested

alleged that Alok and his

three unidentified accom-

plices were involved in his

charges of raping the minor sister of the deceased some time back. It is alleged that Alok and his family were pressuring the victim and his family to take back the rape case. The victim had refused to withdraw the case. The body was found on the railway track, with extensive wounds from feet to head. Although initially the police considered it an accident. they filed a murder case after strong protests from the

family of the deceased. On Saturday evening, the victim had left home alone and at around 8:30 pm, his mutilated body was found on the railway line.

The post-mortem report stated the cause of death being intensively examined,' was "shock and hemor- he said.

A police spokesman said a field unit conducted an inspection of the crime scene, scanned the CCTV footage and recorded the statement of the train's loco pilot.

According to the police spokesman, the loco pilot, in his statement to the police, said he saw a youth sitting on the railway track and blew horn but the youth lay down on the tracks instead of going away and was run over.

The police spokesman said the investigation in the case so far did not hint at the murder of the youth.

"Still the allegations which the deceased's family leveled against the accused were

School van rams into motorcycle

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE Lucknow

Children of a prominent school and two others were injured when a school van and a motorcycle collided head-on on Naubasta rail over bridge in Kakori on Monday.

The motorcycle riders suffered serious injuries. Police have detained the van driver. The impact of the collision was so strong that the motorcycle was completely damaged. The injured riders have been identified as Ranjeet Kumar and Satyam, who was on the pillion, both of Hardoi.

Some children in the van suffered minor injuries and were sent home after first aid. Police have taken both vehicles into custody and are investigating the cause of the accident.

In another incident, a 21year-old undergraduate student died in a road accident in Vibhuti Khand police station area of Gomti Nagar late Sunday night.

The victim was identified as Amar Pratap Singh of Basti district. He was staying at a rented accommodation in Chinhat and was returning to his room after dropping his friends in Vibhuti Khand when speeding car hit his car, injuring him greviously. He was to Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital where he was declared dead.

In Mohanlalganj, a youth working at a warehouse in Jangli Khera died after his motorcycle was hit by a truck. The deceased, identi-Jabarauli in Mohanlalganj, was returning home on his motorcycle when the truck hit his two-wheeler near Bhagu Kheda intersection. He was admitted to the Apex Trauma Center and died during treatment. Police have registered an

FIR against the truck driver.

In a separate accident, a 23-year-old employee of a private company died after he was hit by a moving train in Sarojini Nagar on Monday.

The victim was identified as Chandan Singh of Gonda district who lived with his family in Sector F of Sarojni Nagar. He was crossing the tracks around 10 am on Monday when he was hit by the train.

In another incident in Malihabad, a 20-year-old youth identified as Vikas Kumar of Mahmood Nagar died after he was hit by a moving train on Monday evening.

LMC frees govt land from encroachment

Lucknow

A special team of the Municipal Lucknow Corporation removed longstanding illegal occupation on government land at Ghaila village in Sadar tehsil on Monday.

ed in a peaceful and orderly

LMC team was dispatched under the supervision of municipal corporation's Property In-charge Officer Rameshwar Prasad and Tehsildar (LMC) Arvind Pandey. Naib Tehsildar Rajendra Kumar, along with Revenue Inspector Pradeep Giri and lekhpals Shailendra Pratap Singh and Ravindra Singh Bisht, played an important role in ensuring the success of the entire campaign.

incident, local police and remained vigilant through-

According to officials. nearly 1,500 square feet of land having an estimated market value of Rs 50 lakh was freed by the LMC team.

Municipal corporation

encroachments were found, they would be removed without delay. The LMC also carried out large-scale and multi-level anti-encroachment drives in Zones 5 and 7.

In Zone 5, temporary encroachments from Naderganj crossing to Patri Daroga Kheda and in the Sarojini Nagar Industrial Area were removed on

The LMC team removed carts, kiosks, counters and makeshift Encroachers were strictly

warned against repeating such violations.

crossing

Police arrest two chain-snatchers PIONEER NEWS SERVICE crime during interrogation. Sarita Jain, at Amrapali cross-Lucknow ing in Ghazipur locality.

A joint team of Ghazipur and Lucknow east zone police, on Monday, arrested two youths who had snatched the gold chain of a woman recently.

Those arrested were identified as Shivam Singh (30) of Khiro in Raebareli and Pintu Yadav (21) of Deva, Barabanki. Both confessed to their

NOTICE

I have changed my name from MALADEVI TO MALA for

future purposes, Mala W/o

Harish Kumar Sahani Add:-

8/201, Arya Nagar Kanpur Nagar-208002

NOTICE

MIG-2 barra kanpur nagar

really misplaced it's original

16/01/1992. Whose used will

be invalid. Anita Senger w/o

NOTICE

My daughter's name has been recorded as

RUDRÁKSHI PAL in Aadhar Card whereas her correct name is ANANYA PAL. Henceforth.

she will be known & identified

as ANANYA PAL D/o NIRAJ

Maikupurwa, Cantt., Kanpur.

NOTICE

In my Son's Akash Tiwari

recorded to his name is

Whoes correct name is Akash

Tiwari. Kaushal Kishor son of

Sahdev R/o Vill. Atiya, mazra

NOTICE

In the Aadhaar card of Lala Ram

Havildar Susheel Kumar, the date o

birth is erroneously mentioned a

01-01-1959 whereas the correct date of birth is 22-07-1960. Similarly, in

wife Lala Ram, the date of birth is

01-01-1962 whereas the correct date of birth is 20-06-1963. Correct date

of birth should be mentioned in both

the Aadhar cards. Lala Ram son late

Ram, resident of Budheli Nankar Po

Hyderabad, Teh. Gola Gokarnath, District- Lakhimpur Kheri

Roshannagar, Police

mentioned

the Aadhar card of Mata Om

erroneously

father of Army Number 18006237H

Maitha, disst. Kanpur Dehat.

mistakenly

TIVARI.

card

ANASTASIAH

nunaribahadarpur,

aadhar

PAL,

allotment

Anil Pratap Senger.

house no. D-611 yojna

letter

dated

They disclosed that they had come to Lucknow to sell the snatched gold chain and

Ayush Jain, a resident of Prakash Lok Extension in Indira Nagar, had lodged a complaint that on October 7, two miscreants had snatched

were arrested and also revealed the names of some other chain-snatchers.

the gold chain of his mother,

I have changed my name from

Mohammad Hasim Ansari to

Mohd Hashim Ansari, In

future I Shall be known as

Mohd Hashim Ansari S/o

Abdul Hadi R/o H.G.19, Rail

सूचना

सर्वसाधारण को सूचित किया जाता है कि

त्रुटिवश कुछ अभिलेखों में मेरा नाम

अखिलेश कुमार दर्ज हो गया जबकि मेरा

सही नाम अखिलेश कुमार त्रिपाठी है।

अखिलेश क्मार व अखिलेश कुमार त्रिपाठी

एक ही व्यक्ति का नाम है। अखिलेश कुमार

त्रिपाठी पुत्र स्व० अशोक कुमार त्रिपाठी

निवासी—128 ओरो सिटी, जानकीपुरम

सूचना

सर्वसाधारण को सचित किया जाता है कि

Bazar, Cantt, Kanpur Nagar.

without a helmet. The Dioneer CLASSIFIEDS **NOTICE**

ARRESTED

One of the accused in an over two-year-old case of defrauding ornaments worth Rs 4 crore, usurping of landed property and issuing threats was arrested by the Gomti Nagar police on Monday.

The accused was identified as Sanjeev Kumar Singh (50) of Hasanganj. He was arrested at Chinhat on a tip-off.

The case was registered on the complaint of one Arun Kumar Sarkar of Ghaziabad on October 7, 2023.

CLASSIFIEDS

मेरे दिल्ली विकास प्राधिकरण द्वारा आवंटित फ्लैट सं. 26, फर्स्ट फ्लोर, पाकेट-03, ब्लॉक ए-5, सेक्टर जी- 8 नरेला दिल्ली से संबंधित आवंटन / पजेशन के मूल कागजात कहीं खो गए हैं जिस किसी को मिले तो कृपया निम्न पते पर सूचित करने का कष्ट करें। पता– रचना future purposes पत्नी पंकज कुमार सिंह चौहान, चौहान भवन 52 न्यू कॉलोनी चौगुर्जी इटावा

NOTICE

Jamaluddin and Syed Jamal Warsi both are my names. May I be known and read by both the above names. Jamaluddin alias Sved Jamal Warsi S/O Siraiuddin permanent resident M.No.-11/664 near Gayatri Market Sector-11 Indiranagar Lucknow-226016

NOTICE

My son's name has wrongly been recorded as SHREYAN PAL in Aadhar Card whereas his correct name is ISHAN PAL. Henceforth, he will be known & identified as ISHAN PAL S/o NIRAJ KUMAR PAL, 59, Maikupurwa, Cantt.,

The police teams scanned the footage of CCTV cameras installed in the area and interrogated several suspects.

During checking at the Polytechnic intersection in the night on Sunday, two youths were seen going on a motorcycle and the youth riding the two-wheeler was

Seeing the police, they tried to turn their motorcycle and flee but lost control and fell down. Both were apprehended and they disclosed their identities as Shivam Singh and Pintu Yadav. A stolen gold gold chain was recovered from them.

NOTICE

It is hereby informed that I have changed my name from Sanjay Kumar to Saniav Chauhan S/o Bhola Chauhan R/o E-2/387, Awas Vikas Naubasta Kanpur Nagar for

NOTICE

Aditi Ahuja D/o Satish Arora, born Kumar 31/12/1979 residing at 7, Havelock Road, Sarojini Naidu Marg, Lucknow, have changed my name to Aditi Arora vide affidavit IN-UP43461651755648X dated 15/11/2025 in Lucknow.

NOTICE I,Maheshvari Deen Sahu F/o

No 4578162Y Hav Pintoo at House No: 699/486, Gautam Budh Degree College, Sidharth Nagar, Bingwa, Naubasta PO: Galla Mandi Naubasta, Teh: Kanpur Nagar, Distt: Kanpur Nagar (UP) and my son serving in Indian army have changed my name in my son service document from Maheshwar Deen to Maheshvari Deen Sahu.

fied as Anmol Yadav of

Two fires keep officials on toes PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow Two incidents of fire late on Sunday night in Chowk and

Itaunja kept the fire officials

on their toes. As per reports, a fire broke out at a mobile shop in Mahmood Nagar near the Akbari Gate in Chowk late on Sunday night. The fire soon escalated. Since the shop was closed at the time of the incident, the Chowk police broke the

lock and entered. On information, two fire brigade vehicles reached the spot and firefighters brought the flames under

A police spokesman said no casualty took place in the incident but most of the goods of the shop were reduced to ashes.

In another incident, the BKT fire station control room received information from the Itaunja police station around 12:22 am that a kiosk had caught fire and was spreading rapidly.

On information, the fire officials reached the scene with two tanker vehicles. Upon arrival, it was found

that the fire had engulfed five-six kiosks and the flames were advancing rapidly. The team immediately began extinguishing the fire using hose pipes from both vehicles.

Shortly after, a water hose from Chowk fire station also arrived at the scene and the fire was brought under control.

COP'S WIFE ROBBED

Three conwomen on Sunday robbed the wife of a constable posted in the UP SSF of her jewellery and cash from her bag in Krishna Nagar.

The woman, Kalpna Singh, had returned to Lucknow after attending her brother's wedding in Kannauj and took an e-rickshaw to reach home.

She said all her ornaments and cash were in her purse till she got off the

Kalpana said that she took an e-rickshaw from Nahariya intersection to go to Krishnanagar and three women were already there. When she reached near her house and checked her was being taken.

girl's chain, a pair of silver toe rings and Rs 15,000 cash missing. The victim has filed a case at the Krishnanagar

purse, she found a pair of

gold earrings, a pair of

bangles, a ring, a chain, a

police station. The police have started an investigation based on CCTV footage.

FIGHT CREATES CHAOS IN MARKET

A fight broke out between shopkeepers, creating chaos in Khujauli market near the police station in Mohanlalganj, on Sunday.

Lavkush Yadav, a resident of Katra in Nagaram, had set up a shop in the market. Anil, a resident of Bakkha Khera, had also set up a shop nearby. A dispute broke out between them

over selling fish. It is alleged that Anil and his son Dheeraj, thrashed Lavkush and his cousin Aditya with sticks. The fight created chaos in the market.

Station House Officer DK Singh said that Lavkush had lodged an FIR against Anil and Dheeraj, and action

Scientific study begins at Salkhan Fossil Park

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

A two-day scientific study has begun at Salkhan Fossil Park in Sonbhadra, where some of Earth's oldest traces of life lie exposed on sunlit rock surfaces. A team from the Birbal Sahni Institute of Palaeosciences (BSIP), Lucknow, is documenting stromatolites, layered structures formed by ancient cyanobacteria that are considered among the earliest fossils on the planet. The visit is part of the MoU between the UP Eco-Tourism Development Board and BSIP, Tourism and Culture Minister Jaiveer Singh said.

BSIP's Centre for Promotion of Geoheritage and Geotourism led by Dr Shilpa Pandey recorded stromatolite formations nearly 1.4 billion years old. These natural patterns capture the shift from a lifeless Earth to the emergence of living systems. During the visit, Dr Pandey explained to

mations at Salkhan are chemical and biolog-

ical markers of early life and not mere rock

textures. She engaged with villagers and

With the support from the DFO Kaimur,

tourists, highlighting why this site is globally significant and needs careful conservation. Team member Dr Sanjay Singh guided university students through the park, explaining how stromatolites formed, their scientif-



ic importance and their rarity worldwide. The interaction aimed to spark curiosity among young learners about geoheritage. Minister Jaiveer Singh said that Salkhan

Fossil Park, set amid Sonbhadra's natural landscapes, is one of India's most important geological heritage sites. The UP Eco-Tourism Development Board

has recently developed interpretive signages, fencing, a nature trail, resting points and drinking water facilities to balance visitor access with protection of delicate fossil forest officials and local visitors that the forsurfaces.

Salkhan Fossil Park is already on the global map. In June 2025, it was added to UNESCO's Tentative List under the Natural Heritage category and efforts are underway to advance its nomination to the UNESCO World Heritage List, which would bring international recognition to this rare prehis-

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE remove encroachments from government proper-

Commissioner Gaurav Kumar praised the action and reiterated that illegal occupation of government land would not be tolerated under any circum-The action was conductstances. LMC was committed to a

For the operation, the

The action began in the morning and was completed within the scheduled time.

To prevent any untoward municipal out the operation.

A special anti-encroachment drive was conducted in Zone 7 from Polytechnic crossing to Kamta police

outpost up to BBD University Temporary structures spread over drains, sidewalks, and both sides of the officials said the drive to road were removed.

AXIS BANK LTD. RETAIL LENDING AND PAYMENT GROUP (LOCAL OFFICE/BRANCH): XXIS BANK LTD. 1ST FLOOR, G-4/5, B, SECTOR-4, BOMTI NAGAR EXTENSION, LUCKNOW, U.P. 225010 ROAD, AIROLL. NAVI MUMBA! — 400708, REGISTERED OFFICE: "THISHU!", 3RD FLOOR OPP. SAMMATHESHWAR TEMPLE LAW GARDEN. ELLISBRIDGE AHMEDABAD — 380006. E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE ASSETS UNDER THE SECURITISATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT 200 READ WITH PROVISO TO RULE 8(6) OF THE SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULE, 2002. NAME OF THE SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULE, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property is mortgaged/charged to the secured creditor in physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Secured Creditor with physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Secured Creditor with so sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", "Mhatever there is" and "Mh Recourse Basis" on 24.12.2025 for recovery of Rs. 1,22,62,717 (Rupees One Crora Twenty-Two Lacs Stity-Two Thousand Seven Hundred Seventeen only dues as on 80.41.1.2025 with future interest and costs due to the secured creditor from The Lantern (Applicant), Ashish Jain, Virendra Kumar Jain, Switch Kumar Alan, Nith Kumar Jain, Naveen Kumar Jain, Pittiben Jain, Jain Nirjaben Mikesh Kumar and Rani Jain (Co-Applicants). Please refer the appended auction schedule for necessary details: KNOWN ENCUMBRANCES (IF ANY) NA

RESERVE PRICE (IN RS.)

NA
1.25,95,100/- (Rupees One Crore Twenty-Five Lakh Ninety-Five Thousand One Hundred Only)
Rs 12,59,510/- (Rupees Twelve Lakh Fifty-Nine Thousand One Hundred Only) through DD/PO in favor of 'Axis bank Itd.

(IN RS.)

Dine Hundred Only) through DD/PO in favor of 'Axis bank Itd.'
payable at Lucknow.

Rs. 20,000/- (Rupees Twenty Thousand only)

LAST DATE, TIME AND VENUE TIII 23.12.2025 latest by 05:00 P.M. Axis Bank Ltd, 1st Floor, FUNDER WITH EMD

285010 addressed to Mr. Amod Singh

DATE, TIME, AND VENUE FOR On 24.12.2025, between 11.00 A.M and 12.00 Noon, with unlimited extensions of 5 minutes each at web portal https://www.bankeauctions.com.e-auction tender documents containing e-auction bid form, declaration etc., are available in the website of the Service Provider as mentioned above.

SCHEDULE-DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: All Such Pieces Or Parcels Of A Diverted Land/

Sd/-, (Authorized Officer), Axis Bank Ltd

in the website of the Service Provider as mentioned above.

SCHEDULE-DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: All Such Pieces of Parcels Of A Diverted Land/
Property Admeasuring Area 1330 Sq. Ft. Or 123.69 Sq.mt. Situated At Part Of Khasra No. 525.
Property Magar Nigam No. 3/2A-C, Mohalla-Jain Nagar, Mauja-Datoji, Tehsil & Dist, Firojabad, U.F.
Bounded By- East: Pot Of Smit. Meera Devi & Ors. West: Rasta & Gall Thereafter House Of Rajendra Kr. Jain, North: Rasta Common, South: Land Of Guptaji
For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in the secured creditor's website Le. https://www.axisbank.com/auction-retail and the Bank's approved service provider M/s.C1 India Private Limited at their web portal https://www.bankeauctions.com. To any other assistance, the intending biodiers may contact Mr. Amod Singh, Mobile. No. + 91-7766914955, Amod 1.Singhco axisbank.cum Authorized officer of the Bank during office hours from 10 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Date: 18.11-2025. Place:-LIUCKNOW

AXIS BANK LTD. RETAIL LENDING AND PAYMENT GROUP (LOCAL OFFICE/BRANCH): AXIS BANK LTD. 1ST FLOOR, G-4/5, B, SECTOR-4, GOMTI NAGAR EXTENSION, LUCKNOW, U.P-22601 AXIS BANK LTD. 3RD FLOOR, GIGAPLEX, NPC – 1, TTC INDUSTRIAL AREA, MUGALSAN ROAD, AIROLI, NAVI MUMBAI – 400708, REGISTERED OFFICE: "TRISHUL", 3RD FLOOR OPP. SAMARTHESHWAR TEMPLE LAW GARDEN, ELLISBRIDGE AHMEDABAD – 380006.

E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE ASSETS UNDER THE SECURITISATION AND Reconstruction of Financial Assets and enforcement of Security Interest act 200: Read with Proviso to Rule 8(6) of the Security Interest (enforcement) Rule, 2002. READ WITH PROVISO TO RULE 8(6) OF THE SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULE, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property is mortgaget/charged to the secured creditor, by his provided the secured creditor will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", "Whatever there -is" and "No Recourse Basis" on 24.12.2025 for recovery of Rs. 72,15,551/- (Rupees Seventy-Two Lakh Fitteen Thousand Six Hundred Fifty-One Only) dues as on 05.01.2019 with future interest and costs due to the secured creditor from Khateeb Ashraf (Applicant), Hamda Ashraf (Co-Applicant). Please refer the appended auction schedule for necessary details:

KNOWN ENCUMBRANCES (IFANY) NA

RESERVE PRICE (IN RS.)

RESERVE PRICE (IN RS.)

Date: 18.11.2025, Place:-LUCKNOW

Rs. 68,86,430/- (Rupees Sixty-Eight Lakhs Eighty-Six Thousand Four Hundred Thirty Only)

Rs 6,88,643/- (Rupees Six Lakh Eighty-Eight Thousand Six Hundred Forty-Three Only) through DD/PO in favor of 'Axis

hank ltd. 'payable at Lucknow.

BID INCREMENTAL AMOUNT
LAST DATE, TIME AND VENUE TILI 23.12.2025 latest by 05:00 P.M. Axis Bank Ltd, 1st Floor, POR SUBMISSION OF BIOS (6-4/5, 8, Sectio-4, Gomti Nagar Extension, Lucknow, U.P. 226010 addressed to Mr. Nitin Kumar

POR SUBMISSION OF BIDS / G-4/5, B, Sector-4, Gomti Nagar Extension, Lucknow, U.PTENDER WITH EMD

226010 addressed to Mr. Nith Kumar

DATE, TIME, AND VENUE FOR On 24.12.2025, between 11.00 A.M and 12.00 Noon, with unlimited extensions of 5 minutes each at web portal https://www.bankeauctions.com. e-auction tender documents containing e-auction bid form, declaration etc., are available in the website of the Service Provider as mentioned above.

SCHEDULE-DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: All such pieces or parcel of a diverted land/ property admeasuring area 137.83 sq.mt, situated A-302, 3rd Floor, Jewel Apartment, 6 Way Road Built on Plot no. 27/14-8 (Jopling Road). Lucknow, u.p.-22601, which IN THE NAME OF Khateeb Ashraf.
BOUNDARIES: EAST- Corridor, WEST- Drive Way, NORTH- Flat no. A-301, SOUTH- Lift/Ramp
For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in the secured reditor's website 1e. https://www.abshank.com/acution-retail and the Bank's approved service provider M/S C1 India Private Limited at their web portal https://www.absnkeauctions.com
The auction will be conducted online through the Bank's approved service provider M/S C1 India Private Limited at their web portal https://www.hankeauctions.com
The auction will be conducted online through the Bank's approved service provider M/S C1 India Private Limited at their web portal https://www.bankeauctions.com for any other assistance, the intending bidders may contact Mr. Nitin Kumar, Mobile. No. + 91-7706000010 Authorized officer of the Bank during office hours from 10 A.M. TO 4:00 P.M.

Date: 18.11.2025, Place:-LUCKNOW

Sd/-, (Authorized Officer), Axis Bank Ltd

Date: 18.11.2025, Place:-LUCKNOW

Monday.



Institutions must instill values along with tech education: CM

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow

Minister Yogi Adityanath, while addressing the convocation ceremoshould seek new avenues across diverse fields.

Akhilesh Das Gupta, the his role in the freedom moveconsistently offers opportuni- founder of the university. He ties to learn and individuals appreciated the academic

and sports-related achievements of the institution since The chief minister stressed its establishment in 2011.

> as a hub for modern and future-ready technologies. He urged students to think ten steps ahead of the world. 'If we stay ahead, the world

will follow us," he said.

ment, and his aspirations for

Uttar Pradesh in indepen-

a degree-awarding institu-

tion, the chief minister said

the university was emerging

Calling BBD more than just

dent India.

Reflecting on India's development journey over the past 11 years, Chief Minister Yogi noted that global perceptions have transformed

The shift from frustration and despair to hope and enthusiasm became visible after 2014," he said.

He praised BBD Academy for maintaining an impressive balance of scale and skill and emphasised the need to build further on this.

Highlighting the growing significance of artificial intelligence, he said, "AI has become essential in every field, but it must remain under human direction."

He added that India has made substantial progress in robotics and that engi-

proactively adopt emerging technologies. He drew attention to the challenges faced by sewer workers and stressed the need to use

robotics to prevent loss of life. During the convocation ceremony, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath conferred medals and degrees upon the students.

Award recipients included Muskan Sahu, Peshwani Sharma, Sumi Gaur, Jeevida Shukla, Smarika Saxena, Insha Imran, Madhulika, Rishita Asthana, Naina Singh, Vibhav Dubey, Pallavi Rai,

Vartika Gupta, Vaishnavi Yadav, Shubham Shukla, Vaishnavi Srivastava and Sara Mehndi. Those awarded doctorate degrees included

Shweta Singh, Usha Arunima, Alok Sharan, Sameeksha Gupta, Ojaswini Pal, Shailja Pandey, Neha Sharma, Afreen Hasan, Farheen Azad, Sara Mayank Jaipuria, Amrita Zaidi and Anukriti Mishra.

RS. 94, 67. 150/- (Rupees Ninety-Four Lakh Sixty-Sever Thousand One Hundred Fifty Only)

RS. 9. 46, 715/- (Rupees Nine Lakh Forty-Six Thousand Sever Hundred Fifteen Only) through DD/PO in favor of 'Axis banl Itd.' payable at Lucknow.

Rs. 20,000/- (Rupees Twenty Thousand only)

HID INCREMENTAL AMOUNT

Rs. 20,000/- (Nupees Twenty Thousand only)

LAST DATE, TIME AND VENUE

FOR SUBMISSION OF BIDS / B. sector-4, Gomin Nagar Extension, Lucknow, U.P. 2001 (P.M. Axis Bank Ltd, 1st Floor, FOR SUBMISSION OF BIDS / B. sector-4, Gomin Nagar Extension, Lucknow, U.P. 2001 (P.M. Axis Bank Ltd, 1st Floor, FENDER WITH EMD

DATE, TIME, AND VENUE FOR On 24,12,2025, between 11.00 A.M. and 12.00 Noon. with U.P. 2001 (P.M. Axis Bank Ltd, 1st Floor, PUBLIC E-AUCTION

DATE, TIME, AND VENUE FOR On 24,12,2025, between 11.00 A.M. and 12.00 Noon. with U.P. 2001 (P.M. Axis Bank Ltd, 1st Floor, 1st Public E-AUCTION)

SCHEDULE-DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: All That Piece And Parcel of Property/Plot Area 113,22 So, Meters Situated At Ward No. 62. Mohalla Kotwali Nagar, Flesii 8, Distf. Moradabad Topethr With The Right To Use Common Areas of The Building, The Right To Use Water Closet, Drainage, Lavatories And Other Conveniences And Facilities. Amenties in 0r Upon Or Pertaining To Or Connected To The Flat/Unit/ Office Premises, Both Present And Future And Easementary Rights And Togather With All Fotures And Fittings. Bounded As Under in The Name Of Mr. Amil Kumar Chhabra East — As Per Deed, West — As Per Deed, North — As Per Deed
For detailed terms, and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in the secured creditor's website Le. https://www.banksauction.retail and the Bank's approved service provider My.S.CT India Private Limited at their web portal https://www.banksauctions.com. For any other assistance, the intending biodetes may contact Mr. Amod Singh, Mobile. No. +91-7766914955. Amod Singh@ axisbank.com/ Authorized Officer of the Bank during office hours from 10 A.M. TO 4:00 P.M.

Date: 18.11.2025, Place: -LUCKNOW

ny of Babu Banarasi Das University on Monday, guided the youth in the role of a mentor.

He encouraged them to strive continuously, emphasising that sincere effort makes anything possible.

Highlighting the two paths in life, he said that those who focus on solutions find success, while those who repeatedly dwell on problems do not progress.

"Concentrate on solutions. When we work together, solutions naturally emerge," that no one is inherently incompetent; what society truly needs are capable leaders.

Institutions, mentors, teachers, parents and individuals all have the potential to become role models for future generations, he added.

"If we move forward with determination, patience and balance, success will surely follow," he added.

Chief Minister Yogi also paid tribute to former chief minister Babu Banarasi Das and former Union Minister

The chief minister said that the event reflected not just a convocation but the spirit of a transforming India. He expressed confidence that the graduating students would, through their vision and leadership, shape the future of the nation and the state. He urged institutions to equip youth with both technological skills and strong values, as these two pillars

will help build a Viksit Bharat. Chief Minister Yogi also recalled the struggles and vision of Babu Banarasi Das,

CBC 21253/12/0007/2526

भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान दिल्ली Indian Institute of Technology Delhi Hauz Khas, New Delhi-110 016. Website: www.iitd.ac.in Advt. No. E-II/16/2025 (Deputation) dated October 13, 2025

ONLINE Applications are invited from the Indian Nationals for filling up for the following posts on

S. No.	Name of the post	Section/Unit	Group	No. of vacancy	Pay Matrix as per 7th CPC	Age limit
01	Institute Engineer	Estate & Works	Λ	01	Level 14	57 years
02	Executive Engineer (Civil)			01	Level 11	56 years

How to apply: For further details/ information regarding qualification, experience, general instructions etc., kindly visit the Institute website, viz. https://home.iitd.ac.in/jobs-iitd/index.php (Group- 'A', 'B' & 'C' positions under Non-Academic positions tab). The last date for submission of application through ONLINE MODE is 26.11.2025.

> (Recruitment Cell) IIT Delh

'People insensitive to traffic rule violations in city'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE Lucknow

Daily one lakh people, including both fourwheeler drivers and two-wheeler riders, violate traffic rules in the city.

Giving this information, a senior Traffic Police official said that these violations included crossing the stop line, going through one way, violating traffic lights, not wearing helmets, not wearing seat belts etc.

He said that what was unfortunate was the growing insensitivity of the people as they were not repentant about violating traffic rules and were also ready to pay a hefty amount imposed as penalty but not ready to mend their ways.

"This is a matter of concern because the people are not considering the violation of traffic rules as any kind of violation anymore and they don't mind paying hefty penalties," he said.

Incidentally, he said that people had a mindset that the proper flow of the traffic was the responsibility of only the Traffic Police and it was the lack of the traffic constables which affected the traffic, which was not the case.

"We maintain coordination with other departments because for smooth traffic management the cooperation of other departments is vital. There are a lot of points in the state capital where we need a flyover: there are several points where the road has to be widened; there are several points where cuts have to be introduced; and there are several points where the cuts have to be closed. This makes the involvement of the other departments necessary to maintain proper flow of traffic," he said. The official said that after Hazratganj, now their focus was to improve the traffic flow at Burlington crossing.

He said that the arrangements made at Hazratganj for the smooth movement of the traffic were also made at Burlington crossing.

'This did not prove to be successful because it would lead to traffic jams at the Rana Pratap crossing. We ran this arrangement for one week but had to retract later though people had much appreciated the effort saying that such efforts were being made after 20 years," he said. He said that they were also working towards improvement of the traffic flow at Charbagh, Aminabad and Chowk.

The official admitted that they were successful when they imposed the same arrangements at the Engineering College crossing.

He said that they had tried to tackle the traffic snarls occurring at the point where bigger vehicles move from Kisan Path to Ayodhya road.

"The road engineering is defective there and we have informed the department concerned about it," he added.

Road sweeping vehicle injures 5-yr-old child

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE Lucknow

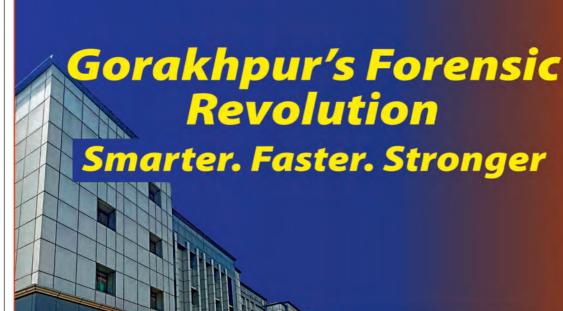
A 5-year-old boy was grievously injured by a road

sweeping vehicle on Monday. Lucknow Municipal Corporation officials informed that the accident occurred near the Green Corridor under Zone-6 around 2 pm on Monday when a road sweeping vehicle of Lucknow Swachhata Abhiyan Private Limited ran over 5-year-old Mohammad Hasnain, son of Raju Ali, and he sustained serious injuries.

A team from LMC and Lucknow Swachhata Abhiyan Private Limited rushed the child to the

nearest hospital for treatment. The agency has clarified that all expenses related to the child's medical treatment will be borne by them. The agency's team is in constant touch with the hospital administration and the child's family and is providing all necessary assis-

Municipal Commissioner Gaurav Kumar expressed deep concern over the "unfortunate" incident. He has ordered an inquiry into the mishap.







Newly Upgraded G+6 Building of the Regional Forensic Science Laboratory, Gorakhpur (Cost: ₹72.78 Crore)



Yogi Adityanath

Chief Minister, Uttar Pradesh

In the august presence of



Vipin Singh

Ravi Kishan Shukla MP, Gorakhpur

Fateh Bahadur Singh MLA, Caimpiyarganj

Mahendra Pal Singh MLA, Pipraich

MLA, Gorakhpur Rural

Shriram Chauhan Rajesh Tripathi MLA, Chillupar MLA, Khajani

Pradeep Shukla MLA, Sahajanwa

Dr. Vimlesh Paswan MLA, Bansgaon

Er. Sarvan Kumar Nishad MLA, Chauri Chaura

and other dignitaries —

Date: 18th November, 2025 | Time: 11:00 AM | Venue: Forensic Science Laboratory, Shastri Chowk, Gorakhpur

— Next-level Forensic Investigations —

- Data storage and recovery from mobile phones, laptops, CCTV, etc.
- Audio analysis Application of forensic principles in engineering
- Lie detection in criminal investigations
 Analysis of explosive materials
 - Firearms and ballistic examinations









Kaam Damdaar Double Engine Sarkar



Information & Public Relations Department, Uttar Pradesh

Live Telecast DD NEWS & Youtube.com/DDNEWS Youtube.com/dduttarpradesh

under the rubble, Sonbhadra

Superintendent of Police (SP)

Robertsganj MP, Chotelal

Kharwar, alleged that the

mine was illegally run by the

mafia in collusion with local

12 to 15 people are trapped

under the stones. Tribals

are being killed in many

ways, and large-scale illegal

mining is being carried out

in this area. One or two

such incidents occur every

month in this region," he

The MP alleged that illegal

mining is being carried out

in collusion with the police

and administrative officials.

Kharwar claimed he was

stopped by the police from

meeting the kin of the

lakh in compensation for

the victims' families and a

government job for each

He also demanded Rs 50

trapped mine workers.

'There is a possibility that

Abhishek Verma said. The three accused are yet

Samajwadi

police.

schemes run by the Labour

be carried out into the inci-

dent, involving the police, the Mining Department, and

the district administration,'

he said. Jaiswal said strict

action will be taken against

those found guilty of illegal

mining or violation of safety

UP minister and local MLA

Sanjeev Kumar Gond, who

visited the spot in the Billi

Markundi mining area after the collapse on Saturday evening, said, "Around a

dozen labourers might be

trapped under the debris".

Additional Director

General of Police (ADG),

Varanasi Zone, Piyush

Mordia on Sunday said clear-

ing the rubble is taking time

due to the presence of

The police have booked

the owner of Krishna Mining

Works and his business part-

ners, Madhusudan Singh and

Dilip Keshari, both residents

of Obra, on a complaint by

Parsoi Tola resident Chhotu

Yadav, who said his two

several heavy stones.

"A three-tier probe will

Department.

standards.

Death toll in stone quarry collapse climbs

to 6, more workers still feared trapped

"One body was recovered

in the night. The deceased

was identified as Indrajit

(30), a resident of Panari,

Obra. The other deceased

persons have been identified

as Santosh Yadav (30),

Ravindra alias Nanak (18),

Ramkhelavan (32) and

The body of Raju Singh (30)

UP minister Ravindra

aiswal, who met the victims'

families, said a three-tier

inquiry will be conducted

Jaiswal met the families of

the victims at the post-

mortem house and

expressed his condolences.

He said he had come on the

directions of Prime Minister

Narendra Modi and Chief

Minister Yogi Adityanath to

meet and console the

The minister said each

deceased worker's family

will receive around Rs 20

lakh from the government.

He added that all injured or

affected labourers will be

fully supported under

Adityanath arranges for infant's treatment after mother complains of hardships

official statement said.

received prompt medical care, an

districts gathered for the Janta

Darshan, where Adityanath heard

their grievances – ranging from land

disputes to police and electricity-

related issues - and instructed the

concerned officials to address them,

the statement said. When the infant's

mother, a resident of Rajendra Nagar

in Lucknow, shared that she lived in

a rented house with very limited

means, Adityanath directed the con-

cerned officials to arrange for the

When a paramilitary soldier from

child's treatment, it said.

More than 60 citizens from various

bereaved families.

was recovered earlier on

Kripashankar."

into the incident.

Over 60 chartered flights likely to land at Ayodhya airport on Nov 25

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Ayodhya

Nearly 60 chartered planes will land in Ayodhya on November 25 when the flag hoisting ceremony will be held at Ram Mandir, which will be attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other VVIPs, officials said on

More than 100 additional CISF personnel will be deployed at the Ayodhya airport for heightened security, airport director Dhirendra Singh said.

"Considering the VVIPs arriving in their chartered planes, land management has been done for about 60 chartered planes. But the parking of the planes will be done at nearby airports,' Singh said.

Alongside a special lounge for PM Modi, six VIP lounges are being prepared for other dignitaries including the governor and the chief minister, the officials said.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath will review arrangements for the event on Tuesday, they said.

Sri Ram Janmbhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust has requested invitees to Ayodhya November 24, officials of the Trust said.

The Trust has acquired 1,600 rooms in different hotels along with tent cities to accommodate the invitees, they said.

Temple Trust general secretary Champat Rai said that all guests have been asked to arrive on November 24 and entry for the event will be allowed between 7:30 am and 9:00 am on November

Fifty beds in the Ayodhya medical college have been reserved and around two dozen doctors, supported by a large team of paramedical staff, will be on duty, Ayodhya

DM Nikhil Tikaram Funde

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Five more bodies have been

recovered from the rubble of

a stone quarry that collapsed

in Uttar Pradesh's Sonbhadra

district, taking the death toll

trapped under huge boul-

ders at the quarry have gone

on for nearly 48 hours now,

with several people still

believed to be under the

debris. UP minister Sanjeev

Robertsganj MP Chotelal

Kharwar have claimed that

around a dozen workers

could be trapped in the

rubble after a portion of the

quarry operated by Krishna

Mining Works collapsed on Saturday evening.

announced a three-tier

probe into the incident by

the police, mining and dis-

Magistrate BN Singh said

five bodies were recovered

on the intervening night of

District

trict administration.

Sunday and Monday.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi

Adityanath on Monday arranged for

the medical treatment of an infant suf-

fering from a heart ailment after his

mother complained of financial hard-

ships and sought assistance at a

'Janta Darshan' event here, officials

said. After listening to the woman, the

chief minister arranged for an ambu-

lance to send the seven-month-old

child to the King George's Medical

University (KGMU), where the vice-

chancellor, on the instructions of

Adityanath, ensured that the child

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Under the Uttar Pradesh

Government's flagship initia-

tive Mission Shakti 5.0, a

special awareness campaign

was conducted in the

Ganganagar Zone of

Prayagraj Commissionerate

The drive aimed to ensure

the safety, dignity and self-

reliance of women and girls,

and was carried out by

Mission Shakti teams across

all police stations of the

Prayagraj

on Monday.

Lucknow

Sonbhadra

The state government has

Gond

Efforts to rescue labourers

Lucknow/Sonebhadra

to six, officials said.

Kumar

Ayodhya MLA Ved Prakash Gupta said that preparations for the event would be discussed with Trust officials and public representatives at a meeting in the Ram Janmabhoomi complex in presence of the chief minister on Tuesday.

Minister calls for to quality

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Lucknow

Access to quality education, proper facilities, and a safe learning environment must be prioritised, Uttar Pradesh Basic Education Minister Sandeep Singh told officials on Monday, while stressing that hurdles in any student's learning or development

progress at Yojana Bhawan here, he demanded dedicated effort from all staff, standard facilities for girls, and fair treatment of teachers.

There is no substitute for hard work, and comfort can become a silent obstacle, the

Education Department to ensure that Rs 1,200 much reach every parent for their children's uniforms through

Highlighting the government's special focus on Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas, the minister said girls should not face any dif-

activities is mandatory. Women officers should communicate separately with girls. Vacant posts in the schools should be filled on priority," he said.

officials not to issue showcause notices to teachers for a delay of 15-20 minutes, and decisions should be made only after hearing the logical

> Special emphasis was laid on cyber safety, with teams advising young women and

Cyber threats: Preventive steps explained students to remain cautious while using social media platforms. Demonstrations and brief interactions were held to explain common cyber threats and preventive

> The campaign was executed under the direction of the police commissioner and additional police commissioner and supervised of deputy commissioner of police (Ganganagar) and

additional (Ganganagar). Women police personnel from the Mission Shakti units conducted extensive field visits across their respective juris-

During the campaign, teams reached out to women and girls in major markets, educational institutions, religious places and other crowded public locations. They informed them about their legal rights, safety measures and a range of welfare schemes being

empowerment. Mission Shakti personnel also highlighted the grievance-redressal system available to women in distress. They urged them to immediately contact Dial-112 or directly approach the Mission Shakti team in case

operated by the state gov-

ernment for women's

Participants were briefed on various emergency and helpline numbers, including: Police Emergency Service -- 112, Women Power Line -- 1090, Women Helpline -- 181, CM Helpline -- 1076, Cyber Helpline -- 1930 and Mission Shakti Centres Pamphlets were distributed across public areas to strengthen awareness and

any form of trouble.

encroachment on his land, Adityanath

instructed the officials to investigate

and resolve the matter quickly, the

statement said

ensure wider outreach. The campaign received positive response from local residents and reinforced the Commissionerate's commitment to women's safety and

Complete SSF second battalion construction before monsoon: CM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Minister Yogi Adityanath on Monday evening conducted an onsite inspection of the con-Pradesh Special Security Force (UP SSF) second battalion here and directed PWD officials to speed up the construction work

As monsoon would affect progress after June, he instructed the PWD department to complete the project four months before its October 2026 deadline, a statement issued here said.

Adityanath reviewed the architectural model of the project, inspected the site and sought details on capacity, layout, manpower deployment and physical

Officials informed him that the project has a capac-



has achieved 10 per cent progress so far, with 500 workers currently engaged.

accelerate work, increase machinery, and aim to complete administrative buildings, barracks and essential infrastructure by June 2026.

tion to address waterlog-

He directed officials to

asked the district administraging concerns by constructing a pumping station near

regulator.

The SSF complex, spread over 50 hectares, is being built at a cost of Rs 343 crore and will feature high-rise residential towers, administrative offices, an indoor gym, hospital, dog kennel, parade ground and rainwater harvesting, the statement

The chief minister also said.An approach road of 2

km is also under construc-

CM Adityanath visits Basti to pay homage to Nanda Baba

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Monday visited Basti to pay homage to Nanda Baba, who passed away on the night of November 3-4. He was widely respected for his devotion and religious service, an official statement issued here said.

The chief minister arrived by helicopter at the helipad on the Sri Krishna Pandey Inter College grounds and then proceeded to Nanda Baba's ashram at the South Gate, where he offered tribute before Nanda Baba's portrait.

Nanda Baba was known for installing the idol of Goddess Durga in the Durga Pandal near the district hospital in 1970, and for serving devotees during the month of Sawan, the statement said.

He also shared a deep and longstanding association with the Gorakhnath



After paying homage, the chief minister met with the saints and sages who had gathered for the condolence meeting and recalled Nanda Baba's contributions to the welfare and strengthening of Sanatan

ensuring access education for all

would not be tolerated.

Reviewing departmental

minister said.

'Quality education, smooth facilities, and a safe learning environment must remain top priorities. Hurdles in any student's learning or development will not be tolerated," Singh said

He told officials of the Basic direct benefit transfer.

'Regular inspection of

The minister instructed reason for the delay.

Action should be taken only when the cause for delay is unreasonable, he said, emphasising that under no circumstances should teachers' morale go down.

Singer regales audience

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

NTPC Rihand celebrated NTPC Limited's Golden Jubilee and 51st Raising Day with great pomp and show through a musical

programme on Sunday. The chief guest for the event was Regional Executive Director Goutam Deb. Upon arrival at Sonshakti Stadium, the Rihand Project Head welcomed him and other project heads with a bouquet of flowers.

The programme began with the lighting of a lamp by Goutam Deb, Project Head Anil Srivastava and other distinguished guests from various NTPC Northern Region projects.

The NTPC song was then presented instilling pride and unity in everyone's hearts. Renowned Bollywood

playback singer Sneha Shankar enthralled the audience with her captivating performance.

The cultural evening reflected a spirit of togetherness, commitment and pride that reflects the sustainable growth of the NTPC family and its commitment to national development.

Pathak highlights development under PM Modi's leadership

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Varanasi

Deputy Chief Minister Brajesh Pathak said that under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, the last 11 years have seen remarkable development

as well as the preservation

of heritage.

"On one hand, the poor and needy are benefiting from the government's public welfare schemes and on the other hand, 25 crore people have been lifted out of the poverty line", he said while addressing the crowd gathered at Ramlila Maidan near Lanka before the Ekta Yatra here on Monday.

The yatra was to commemorate the 150th birth anniversary of Iron Man Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, which was organised by the MLA of Varanasi Cantt Saurabh Srivastava in his constituency.

Apart from Pathak, Uttar Pradesh Finance Minister and Varanasi In-charge Minister Suresh Khanna, city Bharatiya Janata Party president Pradeep Agrahari and Mayor Ashok Tiwari walked at the forefront of the Ekta Yatra, carrying the tricolour.



Behind them, students from various schools, BJP workers and others joined the procession, holding placards and chanting slogans like 'Sardar Patel Amar Rahe.' The yatra began at Ramlila Maidan and concluded at IP Vijaya Mall.

Pathak said that the Kashi Vishwanath Corridor, the grand Shri Ram Temple of Lord Ram Lalla in Ayodhya, the Shri Mahakal Lok in Ujjain, and the Vindhya Corridor in Mirzapur have all been completed in these 11 years. the deputy chief minister said that PM Modi, upon taking the oath of office in 2014, made Sardar Patel's pledge of 'One India, Best India' the government's pledge. He said that the role played by Sardar Patel in building modern India is inspiring for every citizen. UP Finance Minister

Suresh Khanna threw light

on Sardar Patel's personali-He said that despite Sardar Patel's great per-

sonality, the Congress party did not give him the respect he deserved. "Nehru, through Mahatma Gandhi, prevented Sardar Patel from becoming the President of the Congress and the Prime Minister of India", he added.

'Provide forms to left out voters by setting up camps' allocation proposal, the DEO intensive revision campaign

Varanasi

Following the publication of the polling station schedule, a meeting under the chair-District Magistrate/ District Election Officer (DM/DEO) Satyendra Kumar was held in the Collectorate auditorium here on Monday.

During the meeting, the DEO listened carefully to each complaint and suggestion from the representatives present and directed the EROs/AEROs of the respective area to resolve them.

During the meeting, regarding the polling station

informed all representatives of recognised political parties that if they had any claims or objections regarding the current booths, they should submit them in writing to the District Election Office and the office of the sub-divisional magistrate concerned. Some people submitted written complaints on the spot, which he assured them of immediate resolution. He urged all political parties to activate their booth-level agents. He directed all EROs/AEROs to ensure that complaints and suggestions regarding the management any BLO or supervisor found of polling stations, the special

etc are resolved by creating WhatsApp groups for each constituency, including the BLO-1 and other coordinators of political parties.

Following suggestions from party representatives, the DEO directed that counting forms be provided to left out voters by setting up camps at polling stations on Saturdays and Sundays. He stated that the camps would also help raise awareness among the general public. He directed all

EROs/AEROs to immediately

take necessary action against

negligent during the elec-

On the occasion, Deputy District Election Officer Vipin Kumar, EROs/AEROs, and representatives of major political parties were present. Earlier in compliance with

the Election Commission of India's directives, District Magistrate Satyendra Kumar on Sunday visited Padma Shri awardee and Hindustani classical singer Dr Rajeshwar Acharya residence in Bhadaini as part of the ongoing Special Intensive Revision campaign to ensure accurate, error-free and upto-date voter manual in preparation for the upcoming

Knp Metro: ASS-cum-TSS energised successfully well as for various electrical from the ASS located at Corridor-2 trains. The

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

As part of the ongoing devel-

opment in Kanpur Metro's Corridor-2 (CSA-Barra-8), the 33kV Auxiliary-cum-Traction Substation (ASS-cum-TSS) at the under-construction depot located inside the CSA University campus has been successfully energised. This will supply power for the testing of metro trains as equipment inside the depot, including lighting

The energisation marks a major milestone, as uninterrupted power supply is essential for commissioning and testing activities.

Kanpur Metro receives power from UPPTCL. For the energy requirements of the Corridor-2 depot, a 33kV supply line has been drawn nance and operations of targeted milestones."

Geeta Nagar metro station. The newly energised ASScum-TSS at the depot is equipped with two auxiliary and two traction transform-**UPMRC Managing Director**

Sushil Kumar said, "An advanced and fully equipped depot is being developed inside the CSA campus for the mainte-

trains for Corridor-2 will also take place at this depot. Third-rail installation and track construction works are currently progressing at high speed. A state-of-the-art workshop will also be developed here for metro train maintenance. The Kanpur Metro team is working with full dedication to achieve all

unloading of upcoming

Commitment to development helps us win elections: PM



Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said the Bihar election results have sent a clear message to all state Governments that their development policies will determine the future of their parties, whether they belong to "left, right or centre".

1.36 lakh devotees visit Sabarimala as season opens

Over 1.36 lakh devotees have completed darshan at the Lord Ayyappa Temple since the hill shrine opened on Sunday evening for the 'mandala-makaravilakku' pilgrimage season. The auspicious first day of the Malayalam month of 'Vrischikam' marks the start of the annual season. Nearly 55,000 pilgrims arrived for darshan on the opening day alone, ADGP S Sreejith said on Monday.



Statue of former six-time CM Virbhadra unveiled in Shimla



Public Works Minister Vikramaditya Singh on Monday unveiled the statue of former six-time CM of Himachal Pradesh Virbhadra Singh in Shimla district's Rohru. The minister said that it were the efforts of Virbhadra that shaped the development of Rohru as well as the entire state.

Congress stands united, would not split: Robert Vadra

businessman husband of Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi on Monday ruled out any potential split in the Congress in the wake of the drubbing received in the Bihar assembly elections, and asserted unity among party leaders and the Opposition bloc. "Whatever the PM says....There will be no split in the Congress. Everyone in the Congress and the Opposition alliance is united." Vadra.



Regional strength along with national progress is Govt's clear goal: Amit Shah



Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Haryana CM Nayab Saini during the 32nd Northern Zonal Council meeting in

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE Faridabad

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday said the Modi Government's goal is very clear — regional strength along with national progress and India's global leadership in every field.

Addressing the 32nd meeting of the Northern Zonal Council here, Shah also said that all states should work in mutual coordination to resolve water resource management and waterrelated problems.

al strength along with national progress and India's global leadership in every field, which will lead us towards the creation of a great India,"

Chief Ministers Nayab Singh Saini (Haryana), Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu (Himachal Pradesh), Bhagwant Mann (Punjab), Bhajan Lal Sharma (Rajasthan), Rekha Gupta (Delhi), Omar Abdullah (Jammu and Kashmir), Punjab Governor and Administrator

of Chandigarh Gulab Chand "Our goal is clear — region-Kataria, Lieutenant Governors Manoj Sinha (Jammu and Kashmir), V K Saxena (Delhi) and Kavinder Gupta (Ladakh) attended the meeting, officials said. The Home Minister said

poverty is being eradicated and employment is increasing through cooperation, agriculture and fisheries.

Referring to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's mantra of Sahkar Se Samriddhi (Prosperity through Cooperation), he said the coopera-

PUNJAB CM REITERATES CLAIM ON CHANDIGARH, PU

Faridabad: Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Monday reiterated state's claim over Chandigarh, Panjab University and river waters before Union Home Minister Amit Shah at the 32nd meeting of the Northern Zonal Council here. Mann also advocated genuine federal structure in the country at the meeting chaired by Shah.

Flagging the issues, the Chief Minister said the Constitution clearly demarcates areas in which the Union and the states have to function to exercise their respective authority. Unfortunately, there has been a trend towards centralisation of authority in the past 75 years, he said.

Pleading for handing over Chandigarh to the state of Punjab, Mann said that the Rajiv-Longowal Accord, signed on July 24, 1985, between then prime minister Rajiv Gandhi and Sant Harchand Singh Longowal, reaffirmed that Chandigarh will be transferred to Punjab.

However, Mann bemoaned that despite all promises, Chandigarh was not transferred to Punjab, which has "bruised the psyche of every Punjabi". He said that the Centre's recent attempts to restructure the Panjab University's governance have been seen as interference in Punjab's rights and to its state identity and autonomy.

tive sector holds immense potential for employment.

He said that only through growth in employment especially self-employment along with Gross Domestic Product (GDP) can the country realise the dream of a developed India.

Shah said the GDP alone is not an indicator of a country's prosperity; true prosperity is achieved only when every individual rises above the poverty line.

He said the Ministry of Cooperation has initiated 57 measures across the country to strengthen the sector. These include computerisation of Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS), establishment of three new national-level cooperative societies, and the setting up of Tribhuvan Sahkari University, he said.

The Home Minister said the original spirit and the role of zonal councils is advisory, but in the last decade, they have been accepted as action-oriented platforms and have delivered results.

Army Chief warns Pakistan, calls Operation Sindoor an 88-hour trailer

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE New Delhi

Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi on Monday warned Pakistan, saying Operation Sindoor was an '88-hour trailer' and next time it will be

taught to behave responsibly

with a neighbour. Giving this stern message, he also said the situation in Iammu and Kashmir has improved significantly since the abrogation of Article 370 in 2019.

Making these assertions in his address at the Chanakya Dialogue, the Army chief listed the lessons learnt from Operation Sindoor and highlighted how the action and capabilities of the armed forces gave a reality check to the hostile neighbour.

"Operation Sindoor was just a trailer which ended in 88 hours. We are prepared for any circumstances in future. If Pakistan gives a chance, we will teach it how to behave responsibly with a neighbouring nation," he said.

On lessons learnt from the operation. General Dwivedi underlined three main points — integration between forces, ensuring proper supplies for a drawnout battle, and ensuring decisions are taken at every level of the command chain. "Whenever some opera-

tion happened we learn from it, this time too we



Chanakya Defence Dialogue in New Delhi on Monday

learned things. One of the things we learned was that the decision we have very less time to take any decision, and take a decision at every level on time," he said.

The Army chief stressed on integration among the forces, "because today's battles are multi-domain".

"Just the army cannot fight a battle, everyone has to fight together," he said, mentioning the air force and navy.

"We also cannot say how long a battle will last even today. This time we fought for 88 hours; next time it could be four months too or even four years. Looking at that, do we have enough supplies and weapons to fight that? If we do not have, then we need to prepare for that," he added.

Talking about how India has "set a new normal" after

on April 22, he said, "When a country encourages statesponsored terrorism, it becomes a matter of concern for India. India talks about progress. If someone creates obstacles in our course, then we will have to take some action against them. When we talk about the new normal, we have

said that talks and terror

the Pahalgam terror attack

can't go together.' General Dwivedi added, "All we are asking is to adopt a peaceful process, which we will cooperate with. Until then, we will treat terrorists and their sponsors alike." He further highlighted the security situation in Jammu and Kashmir, saying that there has been a decline in terrorist incidents in the area following the abrogation of Article 370. "After this, political clarity

has come." he said.

MP expands dog vaccination to protect tigers

GIRISH SHARMA ■ Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh has intensified disease-prevention measures around its flagship tiger landscapes, launching an expanded vaccination campaign for stray and community dogs to curb the spread of Canine Distemper Virus (CDV) and seven other infectious diseases that pose a direct threat to big cats. Forest officials confirmed

that the drive has already begun in multiple districts and will continue in phases across buffers and wildlife The initiative covers villages

and settlement zones around Panna Tiger Reserve (PTR), Kuno National Park and other sensitive habitats where domestic and wild carnivores frequently interact. The objective is clear: reduce the reservoir of canine infections that can spill over into tiger and leopard populations, undermining conservation gains achieved over two decades.

The forest department's renewed urgency stems from a history of CDV-linked incidents. In 2015, the Indian Veterinary Research Institute in Bareilly confirmed CDV in tissue samples from a deceased big cat in Panna. Subsequent years brought new warnings. In 2024, a tiger efforts, more than 1,200



exhibited symptoms consistent with CDV. Surveillance teams also detected viral signatures among stray canids and small wild carnivores in adjoining landscapes, highlighting a dangerous disease pathway connecting villages, buffer zones and protected

Officials said this year's drive is the most comprehensive yet. Unlike previous rounds, which largely focused on CDV and rabies, the current campaign covers eight diseases including distemper, parvovirus, adenovirus, leptospirosis and rabies - offering broader protection to both domestic animals and wildlife. The vaccination strategy uses a mix of parenteral injections for community dogs and baitbased delivery for freeroaming strays. During earlier vaccine baits were deployed in buffer areas: the new campaign is expected to exceed that number substantially. Deputy Director of Panna

Tiger Reserve Mohit Sood told The Pioneer that the initiative is central to safeguarding the State's big cat populations. "Domestic dogs are the primary disease reservoir in landscapes where villages and forests overlap. If we want to protect tigers, we must first secure the health of dogs living around them," Sood said, adding, "Even a single CDV outbreak in a tiger corridor can undo years of conservation work. This campaign gives us a critical shield against that risk.'

Canine distemper is a highly contagious viral infection that affects the respiratory, gastrointestinal and neurological systems of dogs, foxes, jackals and large felids. While it poses

no danger to humans, it spreads quickly through direct contact, contaminated food or water and aerosol droplets. When contracted by tigers or leopards, CDV can cause fatal neurological damage, impaired hunting ability and rapid population decline particularly in small or reintroduced groups. For Madhya Pradesh, where

tiger numbers are stabilising and new populations are being nurtured in Panna. Satpura and Kuno landscapes, disease pressure remains a critical management concern. Officials emphasise that vaccination is only one component of a wider biosecurity strategy. Continuous surveillance, community awareness, reporting networks and regular sampling of wild carnivores are all part of the department's integrated approach.

Sood said the PTR has already mapped out high-risk corridors, including areas where domestic dogs follow villagers into forest edges or scavenge near water sources used by wildlife. "We are prioritising zones where interaction is highest. The success of this programme depends not just on vaccination numbers but on closing transmission loops between villages and the forest," he said.

Bengal Governor Bose leads bomb squad to search at Raj Bhavan

SAUGAR SENGUPTA

In a daylong drama hitherto unheard off in Bengal, State and central security forces including bomb disposal squads on Monday conducted a thorough search operation inside the Governor's House in Kolkata following orders from Governor CV Ananda Bose.

Bose's order came after Trinamool Congress MP Kalyan Banerjee accused him of harbouring criminal elements from the BJP and supplying them with arms and ammunition to commit violence in the

The Governor personally led the live-broadcast search operations inside the colonial Raj Bhavan his official residence after all the staff of the Governor's House were asked to live the campus.

At the end of the twohour search operation the Governor said "the honourable MP (Kalyan Baneriee) had alleged that I harbor criminals and supply them with guns and bombs... this was



A security officer conducting searches at Raj Bhavan in the presence of West Bengal Governor CV Ananda Bose in Kolkata on Monday

required since I want to establish that the accusation made against me is baseless and false. I will certainly take legal action against (Banerjee)," even as sources in his office said Bose was contemplating legal steps besides writing a letter to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla.

Banerjee poked fun at the entire incident calling it a "childish affair," wondering whether anyone would keep the bombs while conducting the

"This is a childish affair . Will anyone keep bombs in his house when he calling the police to search one's house?... He is doing all this to draw the attention of (Home Minister) Amit Shah... his marks have gone down before Amit Shah... he wants them to increase them... He could even have called the American President or even the FBI," Banerjee

When told that the Governor was planning to

Banerjee welcomed the move saying, "a Governor's affairs cannot be discussed inside the House ... but let him do that ... if he does so then it will give us an opportunity to have a debate on the Governor ... all the political parties will leap up this opportunity ...I am ready to go to jail 50 times for speaking against someone like him... because he always acts like a sidekick of the BJP.'

In a previous transaction Bose said in reference to Bihar elections that elections should be based in Bengal, "on the ballot, not the bullet... a transition which is required urgently in the state," leading Banerjee to advise the Governor to first stop providing shelter and arms to the BIP's criminals.

"First, tell the governor not to shelter the BIP's criminals in Raj Bhavan. He is keeping offenders there, giving them guns and bombs, and telling them to attack Trinamool workers. Let him stop this first," the MP said calling Bose an "incompetent Governor" who was acting like a

Protest erupts in Kolkata over teachers' job scam

celled 2016 panel where

SAUGAR SENGUPTA Kolkata

With the State elections barely six months away there was more trouble for the Mamata Baneriee Government with a new 'variety' of recruitment scam exploding in its face.

Thousands of school job seekers on Monday descended on the streets demanding cancellation of just conducted school services examinations where additional ten marks were allotted for experience to the candidates who had lost their jobs after serving for about ten years following a SC order in the cash-for-job case.

These teachers were appointed in the now-can-

genuine and tainted candidates could not be separated by the SSC despite repeated Court orders. About 26,000 teachers lost their jobs and had to sit for a new recruitment examination - following the Supreme Court order

- along with the new candidates. However, in the new scheme of things the SSC allowed additional ten marks to the dismissed teachers for experience. Even as thousands of examinees descended on the streets jamming the SSC building some said, "this is a strange scheme that the Government has designed, while full marks is 70 of which

10 is given for academics and 60 for MCQ tests, many of us have scored 70 out of 70 but strangely the candidates from the previous panel are getting 75 out of total 70 marks on account of the 10 marks they have been pre-allotted for 'experience' ... this is a complete anomaly.

The BJP and the Left prompt-/ lapped up the issue saying they would back the job seekers as "this is a new scam this Government has started to hoodwink the SC many tainted teachers have found their way in the new merit list despite the Court order that no tainted person should be allowed to appear in the exams.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Rampur (UP)

Less than two months after he was released from Sitapur iail. SP leader Mohammed Azam Khan went back behind bars on Monday when a court convicted and sentenced him to seven years' imprisonment in a 2019 case related to obtaining two PAN cards using different dates of birth.

The special MP-MLA court here also sentenced Azam Khan's son Abdullah Azam to seven years' imprisonment in the same case.

After the sentencing, Khan was taken from the Rampur court to the district jail under heavy security. While being taken to prison, he said, "What is there to say now? It is the court's decision."

Asked about the court awarding a seven-year sentence each to him and his son, the 77-year-old leader replied, "It is fine. If they have considered me guilty, they have given the punishment." Delivering the verdict.

Special Magistrate (MP/MLA Court) Shobhit Bansal held both father and son guilty after examining documentary evidence and witness testimonies, Prosecution Officer Rakesh Kumar Maurya, who represented the prosecution along with advocate Swadesh Sharma, told reporters.

Azam Khan, son Abdullah convicted in dual PAN card case

The veteran SP leader was released from the Sitapur jail on September 23 after 23 months. Before this, he was in jail for 27 months.

According to the prosecution, Khan's seven-year jail term has been decreased by the number of days already spent in judicial custody in this case.

Maurya also said the prosecution would review the judgment and may consider

filing an appeal if it feels the punishment is inadequate. Asked whether Azam Khan and Abdullah would be taken into custody following the conviction, Maurya responded, "Yes, absolutely".

The case was lodged in 2019 at Rampur's Civil Lines police station by BJP leader Akash Saxena under IPC sections 420 (cheating), 467 (forgery of valuable security), 468 (forgery for cheating), 471 (using forged document) and 120-B (criminal

School certificates

conspiracy). According to the prosecu-For cheating under Section tion, Abdullah obtained a PAN card from the Income Tax Department mentioning January 1, 1993 as his date of birth, which matched the date in his school and High

The same date was also used in the records of his State Bank of India account operated by him.

The court held that Abdullah had procured the forged PAN card "in conspiracy with his father" and submitted it in official records.

Maurya said the court awarded varying prison terms under different sections of the IPC.

420, the court sentenced both accused to three years' simple imprisonment along with a fine of ₹10,000, with an additional three months' imprisonment in case of non-payment.

States Focus

The Dioneer Dioneer Lucknow | Tuesday | November 18, 2025



HARYANA BOOSTS ANTI-TERROR GRID AFTER MODULE BUST

Haryana DGP OP Singh on Monday said the anti-terrorism apparatus in the state's National Capital Region has been further strengthened, a week after a "white collar" terror module was busted with the recovery of explosives mainly from Faridabad.

He underlined that alert citizens can play an important role in the fight against terrorism by becoming the eyes and ears of the police.

The director general of police (DGP) said central intelligence agencies, Delhi Police, and police officers from Uttar Pradesh engaged in anti-terrorism operations attended a meeting held in Faridabad on Sunday.



DEFENCE SECRETARY VISITS CENTRAL SECTOR POSTS

Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh, undertook a comprehensive visit to forward locations in the Central Sector from November 15 to 17, defrence ministry said. At Pithoragarh, the Defence Secretary was briefed on major operational matters by the General Officer Commanding, Uttar Bharat Area and Commander 119 (I) Infantry Brigade Group on operational aspects. During his visit to Navidang, he interacted with the concerned Battalion Commanders and Chief Engineer Project Hirak of the Border Roads Organisation (BRO). They apprised him on operational aspects and the progress of critical border infrastructure projects aimed at enhancing strategic mobility and strengthening National security. During the visit, the Defence Secretary was accompanied by Director General Border Roads (DGBR).

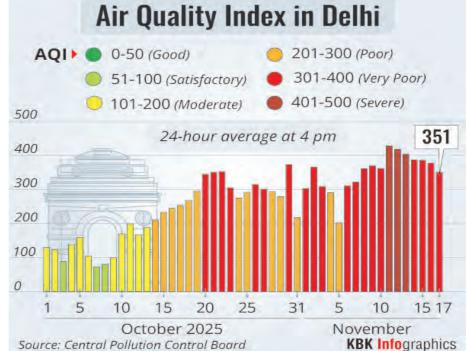
As Delhi chokes, Supreme Court calls for long term fixes PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi

Batting for a long-term solution for air pollution in Delhi-NCR, the Supreme Court on Monday refused to impose year-round restrictions on all activities prohibited under the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) a set of emergency measures to control pollution.

The court asked the Punjab and Haryana Governments to strictly follow the directions of the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) on the issue of stubble burning.

"If the CAQM's suggestions to Punjab and Haryana are implemented, then stubble burning can be adequately tackled. Thus, we direct both States to have a combined meeting and ensure that the CAQM's suggestions are scrupulously implemented," a bench comprising Chief Justice B R Gavai and Justices K Vinod Chandran and



"It is also stated that the Union environment minister held a meeting on November 11 and that within a day, appropriate instructions could be taken to find out appropriate steps to be taken to deal with the menace of pollution," it said. Additional Solicitor General (ASG) Aishwarya Bhati was asked to apprise the court of the complete plan of action on November 19, the next date of hearing, when the court will also issue directions. At the outset, the bench said that from time to time, several orders have been passed to deal with the high level of air pollution.

"However, we are of the view, which is agreed by amicus (curiae) and the ASG, that the issue cannot be looked at with a temporary solution and a long-drawn solution needs to be looked at," it said.

Senior advocate and amicus

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Senior BIP leader Suvendu

Adhikari on Monday

criticised the TMC

Election Commission's

efforts to weed out "fake

Addressing a press con-

ference at the state BJP

headquarters, Adhikari

said the SIR exercise had

triggered "panic" within

the TMC, prompting

"abusive comments and

open threats", and accused

the administration of

resisting the EC's scrutiny.

Bengal, he alleged that the

revision process had been

met with hostility ever

since enumeration began..

"began hurling abuses",

including remarks such as "we will tie them up to a

tree", and Mamata

Banerjee publicly objected

to 1,000 Booth Level

Officers being trained by

the Election Commission

'without her consent", he

The Leader of Opposition

systematic

in West Bengal Assembly

attempts to derail the

process on the ground,

claiming a "close nexus

between I-PAC, some BLOs

He said the Tamluk BDO

and certain BDOs"

alleged.

alleged

The Chief Minister and

Keeping the focus on

voters, illegal migrants".

Kolkata

curiae Aprajita Singh said that though Punjab's affidavit said that stubble burning incidents have gone down, there is no reduction in pollution levels.

Noting the submissions of senior advocate Gopal Sankarnarayanan, appearing for one of the parties, the bench said he stated that Delhi has become a gas chamber and that all activities prohibited from GRAP 1 onwards should be prohibited for the entire year.

"The restriction to be imposed on activities in Delhi in (a) graded manner taking into consideration AQI standards has been finalised by the expert(s) in the field on scientific data. We do not possess expertise to deal with the same. We are therefore not inclined to act on the submission of Mr Sankarnarayanan that all activities (prohibited from GRAP 1 onwards) be stopped in Delhi," the CII said

was "misleading BLOs

regarding dead and

shifted voters", and that in

North 24 Parganas district,

the SIR in-charge was

"forcing BLOs to distribute

ECI orders special revision of Assam voter list, final roll on February 10, 2026

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi

The Election Commission of India on Monday ordered 'Special Revision' of electoral rolls in Assam and the final voter list will be published on February 10, 2026.

According to instructions issued by the poll panel for the Chief Electoral Officer of Assam, January 1, 2026 will be the qualifying date for the state to carry out the Special

According to officials, the Special Revision stands somewhere between the annual special summary revision and the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls. "It is in a way an upgrade of special summary revision... Instead of enumeration forms, Booth-Level Officers will verify electors on a pre-filled register," a senior functionary explained.

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma wel-Election Commission's decision to

undertake Special Revision of the electoral rolls in the state and assured the Government s full cooperation.

"The Govt of Assam welcomes the Election Commission of India's decision to undertake a Special Revision of the electoral rolls with 01.01.2026 as the qualifying date," the Chief Minister posted on X.

"This will help ensure clean, updated and accurate electoral rolls for all eligible citizens. Assam will extend full cooperation to the @ECISVEEP to complete

and time-bound manner," he added.

According to the schedule, the door-to-door verification will take place from November 22 to December 20. The integrated draft electoral roll will be published on December 27 and the final roll on February 10 next year.

For field verification, the booth level officers (BLOs) will be given a pre-filled BLO register containing the details of existing electors in their respective part for a house-tohouse field visit.

The household is the basic unit for conducting the

house-to-house survey and to get the said details verified or corrected from the elector or the head of the household.

It said the details of D-Voters (doubtful voters) will not be included in the register, as no verification is required in their case.

D-Voters are a category of voters in Assam who are disenfranchised by the Government on account of their alleged lack of proper citizenship credentials. D-Voters are determined by special tribunals under the Foreigners Act, 1946, and the person declared as a D-Voter is not given a voter card.

All related particulars, such as name, age and photograph, of the D-Voters will be carried forward to the draft electoral roll without any change.

Any modification, including removal or deletion, will be done "upon receipt of an order from the competent Foreigners' Tribunal or an appropriate court of law", it

her party colleagues

Government over the forms even at vacated ongoing Special Intensive addresses". He urged the West Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, alleging a "deep nexus Bengal Chief Electoral involving a section of BLOs Officer (CEO) to open a and BDOs" aimed at helpline as "many BLOs helping the Trinamool Congress "sabotage" the are not providing enumeration forms for political

Suvendu slams TMC over

SIR, alleges BLO-BDO nexus

reasons". BLOs must report death and shifted voters as "unaccounted" on the BLO app, he insisted, demanding that all withheld forms be delivered within 48 hours "so that not a single

legal voter is left out". He claimed the BJP had submitted a list of 13.25 lakh "fake voters" and alleged that in 20 Assembly constituencies, 50 to 150 "death voters" were found in each booth. Reiterating the party's position on citizenship, he said: "Legal refugees will be given CAA citizenship. Infiltrators will

have their names deleted". He claimed falsification of birth certificates was being facilitated by "some BMOHs and pradhans" and urged the poll panel

The EC, he said, should cross-check burial ground records, data from the 'Samabyathi' app and pension rolls to determine the "actual number of

"A fair voter list must come out. Free and fair elections are what the people of Bengal demand," he added.

death voters".

BLOs boycott SIR work across Kerala after officer's suicide

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

The Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise in Kerala was affected across the state on Monday as Booth-Level Officers (BLOs) boycotted work following the suicide of an officer allegedly due to work strain.

Aneesh George (44), a BLO in Payyannur, Kannur, was found hanging at his house on Sunday. Family members and residents alleged that he took the extreme step because of work-related pressure linked to the SIR exer-

Various trade unions of State Government employees, including the Action Council of State Government **Employees and Teachers and** the Joint Committee of Teacher Service Organisations, held protests at the Chief Electoral Officer's office in Thiruvanathapuram

sive pressure on BLOs and consider postponing the SIR. NGO Kerala Association also staged protests across the state,

demanding that SIR proce-

and district collectorates,

demanding that authorities refrain from exerting excesdures be stopped to prevent further suicides.

Meanwhile, the body of George was handed over to his relatives after the postmortem on Monday. George's family reiterated that he had been under severe work pressure related to the SIR. "He did not even get time to have food and sleep properly. He was under severe strain to complete work assigned as part of the SIR exercise," Saiju, George's brother-inlaw, told reporters. Saiju added that George

was frequently contacted by senior officers for updates. "Seeing the severe workload. George's father told him not to worry even if he loses his job," he said.

Leader of Opposition VD Satheesan said that a preliminary probe indicated that the role of CPI(M) workers in George's suicide should also be examined.

'We came to know that George was threatened after a Congress booth-level agent accompanied him for enumeration," he alleged. He also alleged that both the BIP and CPI(M) were attempting to keep traditional Congress voters off the rolls. "While the



Kerala Government employees stage a protest outside the ECI office over the alleged stress-induced suicide of a Booth Level Officer involved in the Special Intensive Revision in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala on Monday

forward in Kerala. We will oppose it strongly, legally and politically," he said.

Satheesan urged the state Government and the Election Commission of India (ECI) to ensure the safety of BLOs and conduct a thorough investigation.

"A majority of BLOs are women. There are around BJP is implementing SIR with 700–1,200 voters in a booth,

ill intent, CPI(M) is carrying it and BLOs have to visit each house multiple times to meet targets in a short period," he added

Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) president Sunny Joseph said a telephonic conversation by George revealed that he was threatened by CPI(M) workers for accompanying Congress booth-level agents during

"The conversation revealed that CPI(M) threatened to file a false complaint against George, accusing him of distributing Congress pamphlets at houses. Apart from work strain, this political threat led to his suicide," Joseph said. He added that the Congress party fully supports the protesting BLOs.

"We hope that the protest by BLOs will compel the

Election Commission to open its eyes. Despite our repeated requests, the Commission decided to conduct SIR at a time when the local body election had already been announced," he said.

Joseph said the party would approach the Supreme Court against the SIR process. By considering the 2002 voters' list, even I don't have voting rights. Several political leaders will not figure in the voters' list. The Government of India and the Election Commission are eliminating the basic democratic rights of citizens," he alleged.

The Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) has also decided to approach the Supreme Court seeking a postponement of the Social Impact Register (SIR) process.

IUML leader PK Kunhalikutty said the SIR was being carried out in haste, which raised doubts about the exercise.

"The procedures that must be conducted with care are being rushed. Even Rahul Gandhi had raised suspicion in Bihar. Why this rush?" he asked.

CPI(M) leader EP Jayarajan denied the allegation that party workers had threat-

Ex-Maoists, victims unite to run café in Bastar

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Jagdalpur (Chhattisgarh)

Men and women, who once lived through conflict, either as victims of Naxal violence or as former members of the banned Maoist movement, have come together to run a café in Chhattisgarh's Bastar district. Surrendered cadres who have returned to the mainstream and victims of Naxal violence are employed at the 'Pandum Café' in Jagdalpur, in a joint effort towards reintegration and social healing, officials said.

Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai on Monday inaugurated the Pandum Café at the

Police Lines, set up by the police and district administration under the state Government 's Surrender and Rehabilitation Policy, an official statement said.

Sai said the café symbolises the positive socio-economic transformation underway in Bastar and aims to provide a dignified and sustainable livelihood to those who have renounced violence.

"Pandum Café reflects hope, progress and peace. Those working here, victims as well as surrendered cadres, are now moving forward on

the path of peace," he said. The staff have been trained

Poona Margham Complex in in hospitality, café operations, hygiene, food safety and entrepreneurship. As per the statement, Sai

interacted with the café team members, including Fagni from Narayanpur, Pushpa Thakur and Birendra Thakur from Sukma, and Ashmati and Premila Baghel from Bastar, and wished them success. Several workers shared emotional accounts of rebuilding their lives.

"We lived in darkness in the past. Today, serving society through this café feels like being reborn. Replacing explosives with coffee and earning through honest work has given us dignity," the release quoted a former Maoist cadre working at the café as saying. Another staff member said the initiative has enabled

them to support their families and "dream of a respectful

"We thought returning to the mainstream would be difficult, but the training and trust shown to us changed everything. Working alongside victims of violence has given us a chance to correct our past and contribute to peace," another colleague said.

Officials said the café is being developed as a sustainable socio-economic model and may pave the way for similar rehabilitation initia-

Haryana to begin work on 400-bed hospital PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Gurugram

Haryana Health Minister Kumari Aarti Singh Rao on Monday announced that the construction of a state-ofthe-art 400-bed hospital in Gurugram will begin soon. The state Government is preparing to invite tenders for the project.

She added that provisions for an additional 200 beds will also be incorporated during the construction phase to allow future expansion.

The minister was speaking at the inauguration ceremony of a solar power plant at the Rotary Blood Bank Centre located on Sector-10 Kadipur Road. During her visit, she

inspected the facility, reviewed its services, and interacted with children suffering from thalassemia. She also announced financial assistance of ₹11 lakh for the Rotary Club.

Addressing the gathering, the Health Minister said that the Government is committed to strengthening Gurugram's healthcare infrastructure.

As part of this initiative, 30 new Urban Arogya Centres will be established across the district. She added that the state recently recruited 1,100 doctors to improve HARYANA HEALTH MINISTER VISITED THE FACILITY, MET **THALASSEMIA PATIENTS** ANNOUNCED ₹11 LAKH AID FOR **ROTARY CLUB**

healthcare services, and more appointments will follow in the coming months.

Highlighting progress in social indicators, she noted that Haryana's sex ratio has shown significant improvement in recent years and expressed gratitude to the public for their support in

Earlier in the day, the minister also inaugurated an ultrasound machine at Sohna Civil Hospital and a digital X-ray machine at Farrukhnagar Civil Hospital. Speaking at the event,

achieving this milestone.

Gurugram MLA Mukesh Sharma praised the Health Minister, calling her a sensitive and decisive leader who prioritises the concerns of citizens and ensures timely solutions He said the steps being

taken by the minister are directly benefiting lakhs of people across the state by strengthening healthcare



Your Trusted Management **Advisory**

www.transglobeadvisors.in



SC orders status quo on **CPI's flagpoles on Tamil** Nadu public land



plea filed by the Communist Party of India challenging a Madras High Court order for the removal of permanent flagpoles of political parties from public places in Tamil Nadu. A bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta issued notices to the Tamil Nadu Government and others, seeking their responses on the plea and directed that status quo be maintained. The Madras High Court had upheld the order passed by its single judge directing all political parties and community and religious organisations to remove within 12 weeks permanent flagpoles erected by them at public places

The CPI has approached the Court against the High Court's Full Bench order of August 13. CPI submitted that the sweeping directions issued by the High Court amounted to "impermissible judicial legislation" and violated Articles 19(1)(a) and 19(1)(c). The CPI has further said that the High Court issued its directions without hearing political parties.

Karisma Kapoor shifts stand on Sunjay Kapur's will, alleges forged signatures

The legal battle over late industrialist Sunjay Kapur's will took a dramatic turn as the complainant's counsel, representing Karisma Kapoor and her children, abruptly shifted their stance in court. After Senior Advocate Rajiv Nayar, appearing for Priya Kapur, described their claims as "bogus and baseless," the plaintiffs have now pivoted from saying "there was no Will" to alleging "forged signatures."

Delhi High Court has sought the response of Priya Kapur, the wife of late Sunjay Kapur, on a plea by the children of actor Karisma Kapoor, seeking inspection of the original of the alleged will of their father. Joint Registrar (Judicial) Gagandeep Jindal issued notices to Priya Kapur and Shradha Suri Marwah, the executor of the alleged will, on the plea and asked them to file their replies within three weeks. The matter has now been listed for December 16. In the earlier hearing, Nayar had stated clearly: "A Will cannot be called fake because of spelling errors and they haven't even disputed Sunjay





SC terms liquor tetra packs dangerous and deceptive

What is this — a juice packet? Should liquor in tetra packs be permitted at all? the Supreme Court wondered on Monday, noting that such packaging was "dangerous" and deceiving, as it heard a trademark dispute between two liquor giants of

After a counsel produced the tetra packs of both companies, pointing out the similarities in branding of their products, a bench of Justices Surya Kant and Joymalya Bagchi expressed surprise that the Government had allowed liquor to be sold in such packets and said it was a "serious issue".

The bench was hearing a trademark dispute between John Distilleries Pvt Ltd, which sells the product 'Original Choice' whisky and Allied Blenders and Distilleries Pvt Ltd, which produces product 'Officers Choice' whisky.

The Supreme Court appointed former Supreme Court judge L Nageswara Rao as mediator to settle the dispute amicably between both the liquor firms, which command a major share in the country's whisky market.

When senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for John Distilleries Pvt Ltd, pro-



duced the tetra packs of both the companies to the bench, Justice Kant said, "What is this packet? Juice." Rohatgi said that these are tetra packs of whisky, which are one of the highest-selling products

in Karnataka. The bench said, "Should this at all be permitted. We think this is very dangerous. It can be taken to schools or colleges by the students in their bags. Parents can be easily deceived.'

Justice Kant said this was the first time in his life he was seeing liquor in tetra packs and remarked, "How did the

Governments permit these kinds of packets. If someone public interest litigation, we would like to

Rohatgi and senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi, appearing for Allied Blenders and Distilleries Pvt Ltd. said that there are other brands also in the market and Governments are only interested in earning revenue from the sale of these products.

Justice Bagchi said the Governments are trading on

the health of the people.

much tons are wasted on health because of earning revenue... Trading on the health of the people," Justice Bagchi said.

Rohatgi said, "This is how it is. Your lordships may look at this issue later, I have no difficulty.

The bench, while requesting Justice (retd) Rao to act as mediator, said that having regard to the nature of urgency involved, the mediator may take up the matter on a priority basis and make an endeavour to conclude a settlement

SC seeks replies from Centre, others on plea to check airfares

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE New Delhi

The Supreme Court (SC) on Monday sought responses from the Centre and others on a plea seeking binding regulatory guidelines to control the "unpredictable fluctuations" in airfare and ancillary charges imposed by private airlines in India. The Supreme Court agreed to hear the petition filed by social activist S Laxminarayanan, who has sought to establish a robust, independent regulator that ensures transparency and passenger protection across the civil aviation sector.

A bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta issued notices to the Centre, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation the Airports Economic Regulatory Authority of India seeking their responses on the plea and posted the matter for hearing after four weeks. Senior advocate Ravindra Srivastava and advocates Charu Mathur and Abhinav Verma appeared for the petitioner in the matter.

The plea claimed that all private airlines have, without any credible justification, reduced the free check-in baggage allowance for economy class passengers from 25 kg to 15 kg, thereby converting what was earlier part of the ticketed service into a new revenue stream". It said the "new policy of permitting only a single piece for checkin and the absence of any rebate, compensation or benefit to passengers who do not avail themselves of check-in baggage demonstrates the arbitrary and discriminatory nature of the measure". The petition said that currently, no authority has the power to review or cap airfares or ancillary fees, allowing airlines to exploit consumers through hidden charges and unpredictable pricing.

The plea said the "unregulated, opaque and exploitative conduct of airlines manifesting in arbitrary fare hikes, unilateral reduction of services, absence of on-ground grievance redressal and unjustified dynamic pricing algorithms directly infringes upon citizens' fundamental rights to equality, freedom of movement and life with dignity".

It said the absence of regulatory safeguards results in arbitrary fare hikes, especially during festivals or weather disruptions, which disproportionately harm poor and last-minute travellers. The plea said the wealthier few can plan and book in advance, while economically weaker citizens are forced to buy tickets at the peak of surge pricing. 'This inequality in access and opportunity strikes at the heart of Article 14 and Article 21," it said.

While Article 14 of the Constitution deals with equality before law, Article 21 pertains to the protection of life and personal liberty.

It said the State must ensure fare regulation and implement price-capping mechanisms to protect this constitutional guarantee, while claiming that ticket prices for air travel can double or even triple within hours due to opaque, algorithm-driven dynamic pricing mechanisms adopted by the airlines.

The plea cited reports about fare surge during the Maha Kumbh pilgrimage or in the aftermath of a crisis such as the Pahalgam terror incident and sought a direction to the concerned authorities to with enforce the provisions of the Bharatiya Vayuyan Adhiniyam, 2024, the Aircraft Rules, 1937 and the civil aviation requirements to ensure fair, transparent and nonexploitative domestic air passenger services.



Former Govt secretary seeks SC-monitored probe into Anil Ambani-RCOM bank frauds

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

A public interest litigation (PIL) has been filed before the court-monitored investigation alleging a massive banking fraud involving Reliance Communications (RCOM), its group entities and its founder Anil Ambani. The petition is filed by EAS Sarma, former Secretary to the Government of India. The petitioner said that that the CBI FIR and ED's case cover only a fraction of the wrongdoing. The agencies are not investigating the roles of bank officials and regulators despite detailed forensic audits and independent reports pointing to wide-

Bhushan says that the transactions recorded from upon the forensic audit adequate basis.

and diversion of funds has been judicially affirmed by a decision of the Bombay High Court. According to the petition, RCOM and its subsidiaries — Reliance Infratel and Reliance Telecom received loans amounting to ₹31,580 crore between 2013 and 2017 from a consortium of banks led by State Bank of India (SBI).

The plea states that a forensic audit commissioned by SBI allegedly revealed substantial diversion of funds, including thousands of crores used to repay unrelated loans, transfers to related parties, investments in mutual funds and fixed deposits that were immediately liquidated and complex bank accounts that had been confirmed as closed, raising concerns of fabrication of financial statements, said the PIL. It is claimed that several shell entities and dubious corporate structures — such as Netizen Engineering and Kunj Bihari Developers were allegedly used to siphon and launder loan funds. It highlights instances where subsidiaries were used to write off large liabilities through sham preferenceshare arrangements, alleged-ly causing losses of over

₹1,800 crore. The petitioner asserts that these findings demonstrate a deliberate, systematic effort to disguise losses, conceal diversion of public funds and manipulate financial reportspread fraud, it states.

The petition filed though noted lawyer Prashant loans. The audit also noted lawyer loans loans

2020. The bank filed its complaint only in August 2025, which the petitioner claims gives rise to a prima facie inference of "institutional complicity." As officers of nationalised banks are treated as public servants under the Prevention of Corruption Act, the petitioner argues that their conduct must be examined as part of the investigation.

The petition also places reliance on subsequent forensic audits and investigations involving other Anil Ambani-led entities. It refers to findings relating to Reliance Capital, which allegedly advanced nearly ₹16,000 crore in inter-corporate deposits to subsidiaries

Lexster Lead Dialogue on Global Arbitration Ecosystem in Dubai

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE/AGENCIES ■ New Delhi/Dubai

A substantive panel discussion examining the complexities of multi-party and cross-border disputes in mega project arbitration took place on November 14, during the concluded Dubai Arbitration Week 2025 organised by the Dubai International Arbitration Centre. The event, co-hosted by Lexster Law LLP and Agrawal Law Associates, drew together leading legal practitioners and adjudicators from across the globe. Lexster Law LLP also served as a Gold Sponsor of Dubai Arbitration Week 2025.

The distinguished panelists included Justice Sanjiv Khanna (Former Judge of the Supreme Court of India), HE Essam Al Tamimi (Chairman, Al Tamimi and Company), Mukul Rohatgi (Former Attorney General of India), Anne K Hoffmann (International Arbitrator, Hoffmann Arbitration), Soraya Corm-Bakhos (International Arbitrator, Corm-Bakhos Arbitration) and Mahesh Agarwal (Managing Partner, Agarwal Law Associates).

The discussion was moderated by Shantanu Agarwal (Managing Partner, Lexster Law LLP) and Saurabh Seth (Counsel, Delhi High Court).

Conceptual Clarity in Contractual Structures

Justice Sanjiv Khanna opened the discussion by addressing a fundamental challenge in contemporary mega project disputes: the need for precise conceptual frameworks when analysing interconnected contractual arrangements. He underscored the necessity of distinguishing among a group of contracts, a composite contract and a group of companies — distinctions that remain critical to resolving jurisdictional and substantive disputes.

Justice Khanna further identified multi-party issues such as consolidation, joinder, parallel proceedings and nonsignatory participation as requiring



Soraya Corm-Barkhos, Former Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna, Mahesh Agarwal, Saurabh Seth

principled and coherent judicial mechanisms. He noted that the UAE's approaches. He attributed a significant proportion of contemporary disputes to inadequate contractual drafting, emphasising that careful anticipation of intercontractual dependencies at the drafting stage remains the most effective

India-UAE Relations and Legal Institutional Development HE Essam Al Tamimi addressed the his-

preventive mechanism.

torical and ongoing partnership between India and the United Arab Emirates, acknowledging the substantial contributions of Indian legal professionals to the UAE's institutional and economic development. He characterised this relationship as

foundational to the nation's progress over several decades. Highlighting recent legal reforms, Al Tamimi identified the establishment of common law courts within DIFC and ADGM as exemplary institutional innovations that have enhanced investor confidence by incorporating international adjudicatory standards and robust enforcement

evolution from a non-signatory to the New York Convention in 2006 to a host jurisdiction for approximately 82 international law firms demonstrates how institutional modernisation attracts global legal talent without diminishing the competitive position of domestic practitioners.

India's Evolving Arbitration Jurisprudence

Mukul Rohatgi reflected on the transformation of India's arbitration landscape over recent decades. Under the 1940 Arbitration Act, he observed, disputes were comparatively straightforward, lacking the multi-party contractual structures and multi-seated proceedings characteristic of contemporary

The economic liberalisation of 1993 catalysed a marked shift, introducing complex contractual ecosystems where disputes frequently fragment across multiple arbitral seats and parallel proceedings. Rohatgi highlighted the practical impediments arising from this fragmentation: non-signatory parties bunal composition — are instrumental typically resist consolidation, preferring parallel arbitrations under distinct contractual arrangements.

(L-R) Saurabh Seth, His Excellency Essam Al Tamimi, Shantanu Agarwal

This fragmentation often results in protracted litigation through successive court levels before substantive arbitration can commence - a process consuming several years. Rohatgi advocated for unified adjudication mechanisms, proposing that a single composite tribunal could provide the holistic oversight necessary for coherent resolution in complex infrastructure projects involving several parties.

Procedural Coordination and Award Consistency

International Arbitrator Anne K Hoffmann examined the escalating frequency of multi-party arbitrations and the procedural challenges they present. She identified numerous complications that emerge prior to tribunal formation, emphasising that uniform arbitration clauses — particularly regarding seat

selection, appointing institution and tri-

in facilitating consolidation. Hoffmann cautioned that divergent arbitration provisions across related contracts create substantial coordination difficulties and heighten the risk of inconsistent awards.

She advised counsel to coordinate evidence and submissions comprehensively across related proceedings to mitigate award discrepancies, noting that evidentiary support for claims remains critical regardless of whether full consolidation has been achieved.

Dispute Resolution Architecture in Mega Projects

Soraya Corm-Bakhos provided a systematic analysis of the multi-tiered dispute resolution frameworks typical of large infrastructure projects. She identified the structural complexity introduced by numerous underlying contracts including construction agreements, joint venture arrangements and layered dispute resolution protocols — which frequently require exhaustion of prearbitral procedures before arbitration commences. Corm-Bakhos noted that the enforceability of such preliminary steps as mandatory conditions precedent often remains contested, generating jurisdictional disputes. She observed that mediation, though frequently positioned as an initial step, proves substantially more effective once parties have exchanged pleadings and expert evidence, at which point they gain realistic perspectives on case viability and set-

Contract Design as the Foundation of Dispute

tlement prospects.

Prevention Mahesh Agarwal emphasised how contractual interdependencies generate cascading disputes across jurisdictions. He identified a fundamental tension between party autonomy - a cornerstone of arbitration — and the procedural coordination necessary for coherent dispute resolution.

While major arbitral institutions have increasingly developed consolidation mechanisms, Agarwal noted that Indian arbitration law currently lacks equivalent statutory provisions, although Indian courts have demonstrated progressive jurisprudential development in related areas

He concluded by emphasising that strategic contract formulation - particularly standardisation of arbitration clauses, seat, governing law, arbitral language and procedural choices remains the most effective preventive approach, with the drafting stage determining success or failure in achieving coordinated resolution frameworks.

Drawing a diverse audience of over 120 in-person attendees and more than 500 virtual participants, the session reflected India's growing engagement with international arbitration networks. The event is an important step towards deepening collaboration between Indian firms like Lexster Law and Agarwal Law Associates and global law firms and advancing India's ambition to become a global arbitration hub.







Gen Z rage ignites Mexico's streets

Mexico's future stability hinges on rebuilding trust and enforcing accountability; without this, Gen Z will refuse to accept the status quo

Gen Z's rage knows no bounds. It is spreading across the world like wildfire, and the latest country to witness their fury is Mexico. Protests are not new to Mexico, but this time they are being led by Gen Z. The country is seeing serious demonstrations directed against those in power. Pirate-skull flags, meme-driven mobilisation, and the hallmarks of Gen Zled protests are now ubiquitous.

The outrage is directed at President Claudia Sheinbaum. Issues of misgovernance and high-handedness have made young people restless, driving them onto the streets. The situation is volatile, and the country is in turmoil, with tensions growing by the day. What sparked these protests was the assassination of Carlos Manzo, the reformist mayor of Uruapan in Michoacán, who was fighting organised crime and was gunned down at a public Day of the Dead event on November 1. Manzo had dared to challenge entrenched cartels, sending security forces deep into their mountain strongholds. His killing proved that even the most determined public servants can be silenced with impunity. The outrage surrounding Manzo's murder quickly crystallised into a larger revolt against a state seen as weakening under the weight of corruption, violence, and institutional fatigue.

While the protests began under the banner of "Generation Z Mexico" – a group claiming to be non-partisan and independent - the demonstrations soon drew people from all walks of life. What unified them was a shared exasperation with a country where the Government bows to powerful cartels. Scenes from Mexico City mirrored those observed in neighbouring countries - Nepal and Bangladesh - with protesters storming palaces and official buildings. Riot police responded with tear gas. Stones flew across Zócalo's historic square. The state's display of force only deepened public anger, as reports emerged of police chasing and beating young demonstrators. For her part, President Sheinbaum has accused right-wing parties of infiltrating and amplifying the unrest, using social media bots to inflate turnout.

Some Gen Z influencers, wary of political co-option, withdrew their support. Meanwhile, voices like former President Vicente Fox and billionaire Ricardo Salinas Pliego openly endorsed the protests, further complicating the question: is this truly a youth-led uprising, or an oppositionengineered storm riding on public frustration? These protests bring Mexico's dilemma to the fore. While the outrage is real and the corruption systemic, the political narratives surrounding the demonstrations risk overshadowing the core issue: Mexico's persistent failure to protect its citizens from criminal violence. If the unrest fizzles out, the underlying issues will continue to simmer – until the next tragedy triggers yet another eruption. But if it evolves into a sustained nationwide movement, as seen in Nepal or Bangladesh, Sheinbaum's Government could face significant pressure to resign, followed by a period of anarchy and chaos that Mexico can ill afford - much like what unfolded in Bangladesh.

Constitutionalised coup d'état in Pakistan

Under the cloak of constitutional legitimacy, Munir has consolidated absolute, lifelong control over the armed forces, nuclear command, and the country's institutional architecture, while civilian leaders remain nominal figureheads



BHOPINDER SINGH

While taking over Pakistan through Martial Law in 1958, Field Marshal Ayub Khan proclaimed, "I have no intention of perpetuating martial law. As soon as conditions permit, a democratic system suited to the genius of our people will be introduced." However, he did not restore the pre-1958 parliamentary democracy. Instead, he prolonged his stay for as long as he could physically sustain (11 years), and then handed over to yet another military general, Yahya Khan. Later, General Zia-ul-Haq also claimed after his military takeover in 1977, "I have no intention of staying in power a day longer than is necessary. Elections will be held in October 1977." He too suffered convenient amnesia and continued for over 11 years before dying mysteriously in an air crash. Later, General Pervez Musharraf was to make a similar promise in his inaugural address following a coup: "I have no political ambitions. I will restore true democracy in this country." He too ruled for nine years until he was forcibly removed.

Today, Pakistan is yet again caught in a vortex of militaristic manipulation that amounts to the usurpation of complete power, albeit under the cover of constitutional ratification. Following the footsteps of militaristic overreach as initiated by the first self-appointed Field Marshal, Ayub Khan, the current, similarly self-appointed Field Marshal, Asim Munir, has tightened his vicelike grip over the Pakistani narrative via the infamous 27th Amendment to the Pakistani Constitution. Herein, besides doing away with the post of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCSC), and instead anointing himself also as the Chief of Defence Forces (CDF-thereby controlling even the Navy and the Air Force), the Field Marshal will be granted permanent immunity from prosecution for life and will retain the rank and privileges for life. He also gets to choose the army-based Commander of the National Strategic Command, thereby retaining the vital levers over the critical nuclear wherewithal. Effectively, the Field Marshal has privileged his absolute control over all major elements of governance for life, with no accountability.

But, unlike the ham-handed coup d'états of the past, the five-star Field Marshal Asim Munir has been far more guarded, wily, and surreptitious in his takeover approach. By empowering himself beyond questioning, he has effectively ensured that he and subsequent military chiefs have the protective cover of the Pakistani Constitution to rule de facto, without any official responsibility, as the ceremonially seniormost and highest posts of the executive will ostensibly be held by the civilian President and the Prime Minister, respectively. For all practi-



TODAY, PAKISTAN IS YET AGAIN CAUGHT IN A VORTEX OF **MILITARISTIC MANIPULATION** THAT TANTAMOUNT TO **USURPATION OF** COMPLETE POWER, ALBEIT, UNDER THE COVER OF CONSTITUTIONAL

RATIFICATION

The writer, a military veteran, is a former Lieutenant Governor of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Puducherry

dailypioneer @LtRajputs

bhopinder-singh

cal purposes, the well-established principle in a participative democracy — that the military is subservient to the civilian governmentremains a farcical pipedream.

The remit of the 27th Amendment also simultaneously destroys the powers of other institutions of authority, ie, the Supreme Court, the last remaining vestige of checks and balances, as that too would be brought under the will of the executive powers (which in any case will always remain beholden to the military "establishment"). Therefore, the courts could be expected to be populated by "friendly judges" who will do the bidding of the government, thereby curbing independent and unbiased decisions. With all such suppres-

sion of the institutions of checks and balances, and the concurrent valorisation of the Pakistani 'establishment", the Field Marshal will have the final say on all **SINCE 1865** remain pliant, beholden, and matters of governance.

Already, the Field Marshal is making surreal dashes from Washington DC to Riyadh to Ankara, making some extraconstitutional pitches — for example, the images of the Field Marshal brandishing and pitching rare metals in a suitcase to a clearly excited Donald Trump. This led Asim Munir to earn the dubious honour of Donald Trump calling him 'my favourite Field Marshal." This further signals the approval of the Pakistani constitutional coup d'état by the United States of America, and the obliging sheikhdoms will merrily toe the same line. The only other key player in the Pakistani calculus, ie, the Chinese, would also be more than happy to let the Field

Marshal run the show, as he would remain their most effective bet to protect the Chinese investments in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor

The unnatural and unhappy alliance between the two erstwhile political rivals, ie, Pakistan Muslim League - Nawaz faction (PML-N) and Pakistan People's Party (PPP), would meekly continue with the current coalition arrangement, as their own disrepute in the eyes of the masses, and the parallel popularity of the incarcerated leadership of Imran Khan's Tehreek-e-Insaaf (PTI), will be an exis-

It is a fact that, should the Pakistani military pull the rug from the current coalition government and allow free and fair elections, Imran The Pioneer Khan would romp home-thus the current coalition would

> subservient to the will of Field Marshal Asim Munir. Thus, with little or no opposition to their operational mandate, given the constitutional cover, the absence of any political opposition, and the acquiescence of all international stakeholders, Field Marshal Asim Munir will

> rule with utter immunity and impunity. With plausible deniability for any wrongdoing (for which the civilian government will bear the blame), the democratic government in Pakistan will run Pakistan in theory, not in practice, as all roadblocks for a coup d'état-like situation favouring the Pakistani military are in place. Democracy in Pakistan will

PIC TALK



People take part in a rowing competition on the Hooghly River, in West Bengal.

DIGITAL EXPERIENCE

www.dailypioneer.com

facebook.com/dailypioneer 🛛 🔊 @TheDailyPioneer

The silent paycheque cage we choose daily



SAKSHI SETHI

ND OPINION THE PIONEER

Modern society has perfected the art of imprisonment – so gracefully, so tastefully — that most people never realise they are trapped. Today's cage does not clang with metal bars. It arrives instead as a gentle digital message: "Your salary has been credited." A monthly lullaby that pacifies ambition far more effectively than any medieval fortress

Walk into any workplace and you will witness a quiet, universal contradiction. Teachers shaping future citizens, doctors delivering hope, engineers building the digital tomorrow, bankers balancing economies, designers sketching dreams, and service workers handling tempersall moving in unison towards the same destination: the pay-

cheque. It is a golden leash, polished with benefits, bonuses, and just enough comfort to keep its wearers obediently tethered.

The trap begins innocently. A young graduate steps into the workforce brimming with energy, ready to change the world. Fast-forward a few years, and that same individual now bargains for leave like a petitioner seeking royal mercy and plans life around the date their salary appears in the bank. Passion slowly dissolves between monthly bills, EMIs, and rising expenses. Consider the teacher — once a torchbearer of imagination — now drowning in paperwork, circulars, and administrative drudgery. They may dream of pursuing research or writing books, but the monthly credit alert leans in and whispers, "Not practical." In corporate corridors, the employee stares at the clock as though it were a countdown to freedom.

Their ergonomic chair becomes a throne of captivity; their KPIs rise as their enthusiasm falls. The doctor, among society's noblest professionals, is caught in the same web. Between legal pressures, night shifts, and hospital targets, the paycheque slowly transforms from a reward into a sedative. Nurses, standing through double shifts, carry identical smiles for comfort and survival. Service industry workers-hotel staff, retail clerks, flight attendants — move through demanding shifts, their uniforms serving as armour against unreasonable customers and shrinking

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

patience. Even the creative class is not spared. Writers churn out content for algorithms rather than artistry. Designers compress their vision to fit client whims. Musicians teach on weekends to subsidise the passion that cannot reliably pay rent. Sooner or later, every dreamer bows before the billing cycle.

exist only in name.

This is capitalism's most refined psychological trick-not coercion, but dependence. A system that persuades individuals that stepping outside is reckless, irresponsible, or foolish. The paycheque does not merely compensate; it conditions. It trains people to accept mediocrity, stomach unfair workloads, and exchange spontaneity for predictability.

Meanwhile, society glorifies this captivity, praising the "stable job" as the pinnacle of adult life. We applaud those who sacrifice weekends and answer emails at midnight, calling it dedication. But exhaustion is not honour, and captivity is not commitment. Almost everyone carries a private dream — a café on a quiet street, an art studio, a research degree, a sabbatical, a life where Monday does not feel like punishment. Yet each time it surfaces, the dutiful paycheque asks, "Who will pay the bills?" And the dream retreats. The modern cage may be invisible, but its bars-routine, fear, and comfort-are not unbreakable. A cage loses its power the moment someone realises the door was open all along.

The writer is an educator and a councillor

RTI SAFEGUARDS DIMINISH UNDER NEW DPDP RULES

instagram.com/dailypioneer in linkedin.com/in/The Pioneer

Although the original provisions of the RTI Act struck a careful balance between privacy and transparency while incorporating essential safeguards, the recent **Digital Personal Data Protection** (DPDP) amendment has unfortunately stripped away these protections without addressing the serious shortcomings that remain in the

The notification of the DPDP rules on November 14, 2025 has deepened these concerns. Over time, the RTI framework has been weakened by unwarranted amendments, excessive executive control, and increasingly restrictive judicial interpretations. Since its enactment, repeated efforts seem aimed at diluting its spirit and obstructing meaningful public access to information. In any democracy, the right to seek

and access information is essential to maintaining transparency, openness and accountability. A system of governance cannot endure if citizens are deprived of the power to question those in authority. As Justice V R. Krishna Iver observed with characteristic clarity: "A government which functions in secrecy not only violates democratic decency, but also buries itself with its own burial." The DPDP amendment's erosion of RTI safeguards is a troubling setback for participatory governance.

By narrowing transparency instead of strengthening it, citizens are left with fewer tools to hold power accountable. Protecting democratic values now requires an urgent restoration of a robust RTI framework

R SIVAKUMAR | CHENNAI

Bihar's people claim their victory

In the 1990s, thousands of children in Bihar were sent to distant boarding schools simply to escape the constant fear of kidnapping.

Families were compelled to part with ancestral land merely to secure routine clerical posts through bribes, while millions studied under lanterns and petromax lamps, desperately trying to break free from the suffocation of the so-called jungle raj. Corruption, favouritism, contractor mafias, and the collapse of institutional authority dragged the state backwards by decades. Ordinary citizens lived with fear, helplessness, and uncertainty, forcing an entire generation to migrate in search of dignity and opportunity.

Today, many of those who once fled Bihar have built stable, successful lives across India and abroad. As they look at their screens and witness these election results, a quiet, meaningful smile emerges.

This moment represents far more than the defeat of a political family or an entrenched legacy. It signifies the triumph of the ordinary Bihari who suffered injustice, endured humiliation, and persevered with unbroken hope. This is genuine victory — the victory of people who refused to allow despair to dictate their future.

AYUSHMAN PANDEY | LUCKNOW

India's defeat demands serious reflection

Apropos the report "India's spin gamble backfires as South Africa wins first Test" (November 17). India's sobering defeat in the opening Test at Eden Gardens demands rigorous introspection. Being bowled out for 93 while chasing a modest 124 is not a routine collapse; it exposes deeper problems regarding selection, application, and temperament. After failing to chase 147 at Wankhede last year, India have again faltered on a surface that required patience rather than misplaced aggression. The absence of accountability is particularly troubling. With Shubman Gill injured, the team effectively fielded only four specialist batters, relying excessively on all-rounders still adapting to Test cricket's

Questionable bowling management let South Africa extend their lead, with puzzling choices such as underbowling Kuldeep Yadav and ignoring Washington Sundar altogether. Bavuma and Bosch showed the value of discipline — something India's middle order sorely lacked. The collapse, marked by loose strokes from Pant, Jurel, and Axar, stood in stark contrast to South Africa's composed approach. Unless India confront these recurring flaws with clarity and resolve, such defeats will continue to overshadow their home dominance. SANJAY CHOPRA | MOHALI

Geopolitics drives tariff reversal

Apropos the editorial "Trump's agri tariff rollback signals reset" (November 17). The reversal of United States tariffs on a broad range of Indian agricultural products represents a moment when geopolitical strategy and domestic pressures have intersected. For Indian farmers and exporters, especially those dealing in spices, tea, coffee, and processed foods, the move restores a long-awaited sense of stability and fairness. It also acknowledges India's reputation for reliable, high-quality exports and the extensive networks that sustain them.

However, the timing indicates that Washington's decision is driven not merely by diplomatic goodwill but also by rising food prices, voter discontent, and electoral urgency. In that sense, this softening of tariffs is less a benevolent gesture and more a recognition that punitive measures often damage supply chains and political relationships. The key question now is whether this shift will lead to a more predictable and durable trade environment

India must seize this opportunity to strengthen quality standards, diversify its agricultural export base, and push for consistent long-term clarity. A thoughtful approach on both sides could convert a short-term tactical move into a genuinely stable partnership.

A MYILSAMI | COIMBATORE

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





Pakistan: The making of a new military state

The meteoric rise of Field Marshal Asim Munir — Pakistan's second-ever field marshal — marks more than another chapter in the country's long cycle of military dominance. His ascent signals a deeper institutional shift, merging state authority with an overt Islamic ideological framework and reshaping the core architecture of Pakistan's power structure





NILANTHA ILANGAMUWA

While Pakistan and Bangladesh wrestle with their fragile relationship under the interim government led by Yunus, the International Tribunal is set to deliver its verdict on Monday, November 17, formally exposing the alleged "sins" of Sheikh Hasina's rule. Hasina may face the harshest consequences imaginable, and her potential extradition from India threatens to inflame political passions for years, while social tensions are likely to spiral, carrying dangerous regional implications. Yet, amid this chaos, the most alarming development is the meteoric rise of Field Marshal Asim Munir, Pakistan's second-ever field marshal who now operates above the law, consolidating power with an audacity that recalls the darkest chapters of Pakistan's military past. The country appears to be repeating the cycles of power seen under the late Field Marshal Ayub Khan, with the civilian leadership increasingly marginalised as the military consolidates authority. Munir's ascent is more than symbolic; it is an institutional shift, codified through the 27th Constitutional Amendment, which enshrines military supremacy in Pakistan's legal architecture while weakening judicial oversight

and eroding democratic norms Pakistan's trajectory under Munir bears echoes of historical precedent. As Ayub Khan recounted in his autobiography, military intervention was repeatedly justified as a stabilising force in times of perceived political chaos. Yet, as history demonstrates, Pakistan's oscillation between military dictatorship and fragile civilian governance has rarely delivered sustainable reform or economic development. The CIA's declassified analysis of Pakistan in the 1970s warned that "the military, while professionally competent, is inherently prone to internalising ideological and political objectives beyond its remit," prescient words that resonate alarmingly today under Munir. Whereas past army chiefs, even Musharraf, attempted to balance professional military traditions with political ambition, Munir is pursuing an explicitly ideological agenda, transforming the Pakistani armed forces into a force fighting for Islam as much as for the nation.



ISLAMABAD'S PORTRAYAL OF AN INDIAN-**BACKED INSURGENCY IN** ITS WESTERN PROVINCES, ALONG WITH EFFORTS TO FOSTER A BANGLADESH-PAKISTAN AXIS, **RISKS TRIGGERING** UNPRECEDENTED **CRISES IN**

The writer is a columnist

SOUTH ASIA

@ilangamuwa1 nilanthailangamuwa

Munir has institutionalised terms like Fitna al-Khawarij and Fitna al-Hindustan, branding insurgents in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan as heretical or Indian proxies. In Munir's own words, the military must confront these "internal threats" through a religious lens, positioning Pakistan as the protector of the Muslim Ummah while simultaneously framing domestic conflicts as extensions of historic Islamic struggles. By co-opting centuries-old concepts from early Islamic history, Munir projects an image of Pakistan as a state under siege from both heretical internal actors and a hostile external India. While the rhetorical appeal resonates with sections of the Pakistani populace, it dangerously blurs the line between counter-insurgency and ideological warfare

Pakistani defence establishment under

The implications of Munir's rise extend far beyond domespolicy, historically fixated on India is increase.

India, is increasingly intertwined with efforts to construct regional alliances that challenge New Delhi's influence. Reports suggest that Islamabad is exploring deeper cooperation with Dhaka under the interim government, ostensibly to counterbalance Indian ambitions. The Financial Times noted that Munir, along with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, has been actively courting powers such as China, Saudi Arabia and even the United States, while simultaneously framing Pakistan's mineral wealth and strategic ports like Pasni as sites for foreign investment. Yet, beneath this geopolitical manoeuvring lies a darker reality: the potential proliferation of Islamist extremist organisations nurtured under the guise of strategic alignment. Pakistan's track record demonstrates the inherent danger of weaponising ideology for political leverage, a pattern that has repeatedly generated instability both internally and across the region.

The Pakistani military's Islamisation under Munir recalls the ambitions of General Zia-ul-Haq, whose coup in 1977 dismantled democratic institutions and laid the foundations for a deeply Islamist state. Analysts such as Makhdoom Ali Khan have remarked: "What General Zia-ul-Haq may have dreamt of, and what General

Pervez Musharraf could not achieve, will soon be an accomplished fact." Munir, a Hafiz-e-Quran, has emphasised the religious legitimacy of mil-

itary campaigns, framing them as moral and ideological imperatives. The creation of a constitutional backdoor through the 27th Amendment formalises his authority, grants him lifetime protection and the Field Marshal rank, and establishes the Chief of Defence Forces as the paramount military authority, effectively sidelining civilian oversight.

The judiciary, meanwhile, is being systematically curtailed. The Federal

Constitutional Court (FCC) assumes constitutional primacy over the Supreme Court, while the Supreme Court is relegated to civil and criminal appellate functions. Senior counsel have observed that the SC is now left "with a limited jurisdiction of deciding ordinary civil, criminal, and statutory appeals", effectively reducing it to a "Supreme District Court". Tariq Mehmood Khokhar warned that the FCC is "empowered by disempowering the Supreme Court", consolidating both military and executive control over constitutional interpretation. Dawn reported that these reforms have been lauded by supporters as a forward-looking model, yet for sceptics, they represent an erosion of checks and balances that has long been the only bulwark against authoritarian overreach

Meanwhile, Pakistan's economy remains precarious. According to the Financial Times, despite claims of investment inflows and resource wealth, the country continues to struggle with a poverty rate above 25 per cent, low capital formation, and a foreign investor climate undermined by historical instability.

The military's deepening involvement in business, combined with ideological militarisation, may further deter meaningful economic reform. Muhammad Aurangzeb, Pakistan's finance minister, has acknowledged the "existential issue" of growth that barely matches population increase, raising questions about the sustainability of Munir's ambitious geopolit ical and domestic projects. The potential consequences for the region are profound. Islamabad's portrayal of an Indian-backed insurgency in its western provinces, along with efforts to foster a Bangladesh-Pakistan axis, risks triggering unprecedented crises in South Asia. Munir's rhetorical framing of conflicts as a defence of Islam may embolden extremist organisations, both domestic and transnational, increasing the likelihood of cross-border terrorism. The May 2025 four-day conflict between India and Pakistan, during which Munir publicly credited the ceasefire to Donald Trump and even nominated him for a Nobel Peace Prize, highlights the unpredictable consequences of a militaryled foreign policy driven by ideology rather than strategic calculation.

As reports suggest, Munir's elevation to Field Marshal and Chief of Defence Forces cements his unassailable position, giving him autonomy over the military and, by extension, significant influence over Pakistan's foreign relations. Critically, Pakistan is not an exception in the history of militarisation.

From Ayub Khan to Musharraf, every military takeover has promised stability, reform or modernisation, yet invariably delivered repression, economic mismanagement and heightened regional tension. Historical lessons prove that the militarisation of state institutions often generates the opposite of the intended outcomes: weakened governance, erosion of civil society and the proliferation of extremism. The current trajectory under Munir suggests a repeat of these patterns, now intensified by the infusion of ideological rigour and constitutional legitimacy.

However, one cannot disregard that India's hegemonic ambitions, regional arrogance, and strategic failures further complicate the equation. New Delhi's insistence on projecting influence over Bangladesh and Nepal, combined with its self-assured posturing vis-à-vis Pakistan, contributes to an environment in which Islamabad is incentivised to consolidate internal authority and project power externally. Yet history demonstrates that attempting to create strategic depth through ideological militarisation or cross-border alliances often backfires. As TS Eliot's words might suggest, this transformation is not occurring "with a bang but with a whimper", yet the consequences are likely to reverberate loudly across the subcontinent for decades.

Red Fort blast in Delhi: A wake-up call to reshape strategies on a real-time basis



ANIL ANAND

Transparency is certainly not the hallmark of the Narendra Modi government. This is true in its normal functioning, when there is ample elbow room to take the countrypersons into confidence. And when it comes to crunch situations such as the Delhi blasts at the threshold of Lal Qila-the symbol associated with India's freedom and the podium for Independence Day celebrations-the word transparency goes for a toss.

The heinous act of blasts that claimed 13 innocent lives has shaken Delhi. Why so? Because it has ruptured the decade-long peace which the national capital had been enjoying.

It has also raised serious questions about the claims made by the authorities concerned, including the Prime Minister and the Home Minister, that terror acts — particularly with focus on Kashmir — had been stubbed out and that terrorism in all its formats was gasping for its last breath. A terror strike in the heart of Delhi, that too near a strong national symbol such as Lal Qila, accompanied by disturbing reports of about 2,000 kilograms of high-grade explosives having been recovered in the National Capital Region (NCR). barely 20 kilometres from the seat of power, certainly worries these authorities and forces them into a real-time-based appraisal of the entire situation, rather than indulging in high-octane claims. The terror attack, which, as per the claims of the competent authorities, has a Kashmir link and has taken place after the restoration — after six years — of the 'Durbar Move' (shifting of the capital on a six-month basis from Jammu, the winter capital, to Kashmir, the summer capital, and vice versa) on intense public pressure, particularly from Jammu, the stronghold of the BJP — a development related to the dilution of Article 370 on August 5, 2019 — has put the ruling dispensation's credibility at stake.

Touted as a panacea for all the ills plaguing Jammu and Kashmir, including the onslaught of terrorism, the government's claims justifying the constitutional developments in Jammu and Kashmir, including its division and demotion to two Union Territories, have been exposed by the terror attack. It should compel the Modi government to think afresh on the entire gamut of policy governing not only Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh but also national security as a whole.

Notwithstanding the near fool-proof security network, Delhi, being the national capital and power centre, has always been a target for Punjab, Kashmir, or North-East-centric terrorist groups seeking to challenge the powers that be. The latest



act of terrorism — as the Union Cabinet has declared it — is meant to throw a gauntlet and challenge the might of India at its very power centre. There is no doubt that this must have set the political leadership and the security apparatus thinking about its fallout, emerging challenges, and countervailing strategies.

The biggest lesson and in fact the eye-openerfor the ruling BIP should be not to mingle its political agenda with issues related to national security. The political agenda or ideological issues are, most of the time, not in consonance with either the ground realities or the situational challenges.

Lesson one that the government should draw from the Lal Qila blast is that the ruling dispensation must function on a real-time basis to tackle

serious issues. Transparency is the key word in adopting such an approach, accompanied by taking the nation into confidence to prevent speculation and kite-flying. The problem SINCE 1865 becomes even more complicated, as is the case presently, when the higher quarters

in the government seek refuge in leaking "sourcebased" stories.

Why not come upfront? That is in the interest of the nation. Otherwise, speculations can lead to complications and provide ample space for anti-India forces to fish in troubled waters. Not only the government but the media should also refrain from running or writing such stories despite professional compulsions and tight timelines to meet. Lesson two is that, as far as possible, the political and ideological agenda should be separated from the national agenda. Issues such as national security and its offshoots-such as Kashmir and the North-East-should not be viewed entirely from a political perspective. A case in point is the fledgling situation prevailing in Manipur and the ruling BJP at the Centre again indulging in political permutations and combinations to reinstall its government in the state despite public opinion to the contrary.

The same spirit prevailed when the Narendra Modi government hurriedly brought the State Reorganisation Bill to Parliament in 2019 to change the constitutional status of Jammu and

Kashmir. In a first-of-its-kind development in independent India, a state was demoted to a Union Territory, and all democratic rights, including the people's right to elect their own local government, were curtailed. Be it Manipur, Jammu and Kashmir, or Ladakh, public sentiment should remain at the centre of any policy formulation. Ignoring or suppressing this sentiment is always fraught with dangerous consequences. This has been witnessed in the past, and the Delhi blast of 2025 is a warning in that direction.

Lesson three — and nothing new about it-is that in situations like Jammu and Kashmir, the external and internal dimensions of the issue, though intertwined, have to be viewed through different prisms on a real-time basis. Otherwise,

there is a danger of falling into the trap of external forces inimical to India's interests.

Lastly, lesson four is that no act of terrorism should be viewed through the prism of religion. Doing so will

not only undermine the country's multi-cultural and multi-religious harmony, which is already under severe strain, but will also provide a platform for anti-India forces. A democratically elected government has no option but to avoid sitting on self-professed laurels if these are not in consonance with the ground realities. A realtime-based assessment-accepting both success and failure-and avoiding a "might is right" approach should be the positive way forward. The answer does not always lie in the jugglery of statistics, which the current ruling dispensation excels at, but in accepting the ground reality and reshaping strategies accordingly. The disturbance of urban calm in multi-cultural Delhi should act as an immediate eye-opener. Transparency-to substantiate the claims of busting terror networks and recovering a huge quantity of explosivesshould be the buzzword to avoid speculation and the resultant confusion.

The writer is a political and national affairs analyst



A new age of global warfare



BALRAJ MEHTA

Discussing the Russia-Ukraine war — or even the tragic events in Gaza — has become so routine that the very act of analysing them feels almost mundane. Yet this normalisation of brutality hides a far more discomforting truth. Beneath the surface of daily headlines and geopolitical commentary lies the unsettling reality that the world, despite the existence of the United Nations and numerous international institutions, remains a jungle where might still prevails

The global order, weakened by the arrogance of a few powerful nations and the passivity of many others, is decaying from within. It now stands in desperate need of a structural reset. The Ukraine conflict, in particular, has rewritten many assumptions about modern warfare. The kinetic dimensions of this war have already reshaped global understandings of how battles will be fought in the years ahead. These tactics and technologies are being studied intensely and will eventually be applied with even greater precision and coordination. In many ways, we are witnessing a new phase of the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) — one in which artificial intelligence has just made its formidable entry.

An RMA marks a fundamental transformation in the way wars are conceived and executed. It is driven by

advances in science and technology, by organisational restructuring, and by doctrinal changes that reflect new forms of strategy. An RMA does not simply make militaries more efficient; it propels them into an entirely new sphere of warfare defined by speed, surprise, and unprecedented impact. With cutting-edge tools for command, control, communication, intelligence, and real-time precision targeting, militaries become capable of inflicting decisive blows before an adversary even understands what is unfolding. History offers ample examples of

The induction of railways, telegraphs, steamships, and rifles transformed conflicts from the Napoleonic era to the American Revolution, World War I saw the rise of aircraft submarines, and machine guns. World War II brought mechanised warfare guided by radio and radar, culminating in the nuclear strikes on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Until recently, the refinement of nuclear weapons, satellites, missiles, encrypted systems, and stealth platforms continued to redefine military posturing. Then, almost abruptly, came India's own Operation

Sindoor — a turning point that pushed the country to think beyond conventional paradigms. The operation underscored a timeless military truth: nations must prepare for future wars rather than fight the last one. Its swift suspension after four days — having achieved the intended strategic end state against a declared nuclear power - reflected years of preparation for precisely such an offensive.

It was a signal that India has been quietly building new competencies, and that further refinement of these capabilities is not merely desirable but essential. Going ahead, several trends are likely to dominate the future of warfare. Artificial intelligence will play a central role in data synthesis, surveillance, reconnaissance, and autonomous decision-making. UAVs, drones, directed-energy weapons, loitering munitions, and near-undetectable missiles or underwater vehicles will deliver precise and devastating strikes deep inside enemy territory. Cyber warfare will become a preferred tool for espionage, sabotage, and coercion. Trade wars – through tariffs, asset freezes, and exclusion from global financial networks - will be wielded with scant regard for treaties. Information warfare will intensify, fuelled by deepfakes and sophisticated propaganda machines.

Even targeted assassinations, social disruptions, and the exploitation of Gen Z vulnerabilities may become instruments of statecraft. For India, achieving mastery across these domains is not optional — it is imperative. Safeguarding national and civilisational interests at this critical stage of our developmental journey demands massive investments in technology, manufactur-

> ing, research, and human capital. We will need thousands of bright professionals across R&D, testing, production, and deployment. Encouragingly, many national initia-

tives are already underway. In this context, the new Trump tariffs — seen by some purely as a challenge — could actually be a blessing in disguise. They offer India an opportunity to strengthen domestic ecosystems, retain skilled talent, attract the diaspora, and channel national energy into long-term capability-building. Such moments of recalibration seldom come twice.

Equally important is doctrinal adaptation within the armed forces, coupled with greater alignment among political leadership, bureaucratic machinery, scientific communities, defence establishments, and strategic thinkers. This will require continuous dialogue, deep understanding, and sustained national commitment. An updated and officially declared National Security Strategy — as a single, coherent policy document — would be an important and timely step in that direction.

and has been decorated with

The writer is a Major General @@majgenbalrajmehta

Appzillon™

Al Powered Digital Banking Solutions

WWW.i-exceed.com

BLASÉ CAPITAL E-GOLD WORLD



You may think that it is the best way to hold gold. Unlike the bullion assets in the bank lockers, there are no bulky and physical bars, coins, and jewellery. In contrast to the gold-based Exchange Traded Funds (ETFs), and derivatives, there is no paper trail. However, there is an assurance and guarantee that you possess a certain amount of gold, which appears in the form of a digital statement. More importantly, whenever you express the wish, the equivalent physical quantity will appear at your doorstep.

Welcome to the world of e-gold, or digital gold, which is being sold by several online platforms as a substitute for physical and paper metal. However, as the stock market regulator, SEBI, and experts warn, this gold can vanish as instantly as it digitally adds to an individual's portfolio. According to a recent SEBI circular, these offerings are "entirely different from SEBI-regulated gold products, as they are neither notified as securities, nor supervised as commodity derivatives." They remain in the nowhere-land of nonregulation.

This implies that most unregulated products, digital gold products "function completely outside SEBI's regulatory purview and may carry substantial risks, including counterparty and operational vulnerabilities." There are no legal protections against frauds, or illegalities, and the sellers cannot be convicted. In this shadowy world, the onus is on the buyers. As the SEBI circular warns, "none of the investor protection safeguards available in the securities market will apply to investments made in digital gold, or e-gold." These are products that can leave the

investors out in the cold. Instead, the regulator recommends that investors who feel the desire to invest in gold need to explore legal avenues that include ETFs, derivatives, electronic gold receipts and, of course, physical gold. The first three can be purchased and sold on the exchanges, are "accessible through SEBI-registered intermediaries, and operate strictly within SEBI's regulatory framework." The fourth is available through government, and private channels, which are allowed to sell them. There is no need for people to go to

unregulated platforms.

SEBI's angst stems from the fact that the digital gold products have gained explosive popularity fuelled by instant UPI-based buying, and low entry barriers. There are other advantages too. For example, they are convenient, and accessible. You can invest anytime via a phone, UPI, or broker apps, with no jeweller visits. Gold is anyway the favourite of the Indian household since it acts as an inflation hedge, and reduces market risks. Digital gold, like other legal products, offers instant liquidity, and one can sell immediately at live market prices without searching for the buyers.

The entry amounts are low, or lower than the ETFs, derivatives, and physical gold, since e-gold can be purchased with tiny sums, and in low quantities. The purity of the digital gold, if delivered physically as per demand, is backed by 24-karat 99.9 per cent purity. As mentioned above, the virtual gold is easily convertible into physical coins, bars, or biscuits, with home delivery. There are no worries related to storage. Insured vaults at the platforms' ends eliminate the security and safety risks of storing physical gold.

Except for one overriding and expansive risk. Digital gold can vanish in a poof, as easily as it arrives in a jiffy through a digital statement. Ajay Menon, MD & CEO (wealth management), Motilal Oswal Financial Services, strongly endorses the regulator's concerns. "It may appear attractive when a digital statement claims that 'you own X grams of gold.' However, SEBI has rightly highlighted the risks associated with digital gold. If something goes wrong, there are no regulatory protections. Should the company shut down tomorrow, your gold could simply vanish," he explains.

Moreover, the so-called convenience, ease, accessibility, and liquidity have another component: It is marketed with embedded and significant hidden costs. "You pay three per cent GST at the time of purchase, a 2-3 per cent spread on buy/sell prices, and capital gains tax when you sell. If you request physical delivery, additional delivery and making charges apply," states Menon. The profit margins, thereby, are reduced for the investors. So, do the calculations carefully before plunging into this virtual world.

"Digital gold-related UPI transactions jumped from 50.9 million in January 2025 to 99.8 million in August 2025, a massive behavioural shift," Menon notes. Obviously, the trend is linked to the overall enthusiasm for gold, and gold products. Sandip Raichura, director, PL Capital, offers a perspective on gold price trajectory. "Gold has recovered from a pullback towards what we believe could be a \$4,800 target in the next few months. Our stop loss remains near \$3,550, giving a 2:1 risk-reward at current levels," he says.

Experts like Raichura add that the weakening US economic data may accelerate the trend. "Job losses in October, and multi-year lows in consumer sentiment suggest deeper weakness than what Mr Powell (head of the US Federal Reserve) expected. If the upcoming data confirms this, it may provide another upward impulse to gold prices," he feels. This may further propel the purchase of digital gold, and e-gold, which may exemplify the risks for the investors. SEBI, which has red-flagged several challenges in other areas, is concerned about the possible implications in the future.



Jobs cause a possible stock effect

It is a cause-and-effect that seems quite correlated. Obviously, when you bring two things together, a pattern or trend emerges sometimes because the human mind is wired to find the latter. Thus, often the cause becomes the effect, and vice versa, or correlation is confused with a deeper connect. As the famed Rumi said ages ago, "What you thought was the effect, is but the cause." In a sense, what we consider the end point becomes the beginning for something else. A fruit is the effect of the plant (cause), which is the effect of the roots (cause). More importantly, the gardener tends to the plant (effect) because of the fruit (cause). This can go on and on.

In this context, let us examine the roots of a graph that is viral on social media. A curious and enterprising analyst plotted the rise of the American S&P stock index against new jobs in the US since 2000. He or she found a revealing link. Until 2022-23, the two graphs moved in tandem, like they were conjoined by an umbilical cord. They behave like twins joined at the hips, with each one unable to move out of sync, or get away from each other. When the S&P goes up, so does the creation of new jobs. The opposite happens when the index comes down. Maybe it is the opposite, the rise in jobs is followed by a similar movement in the index, and vice versa.

There can be logical explanations to the trend. For example, one can argue that companies hire more people when the business opportunities are excellent, which leads to higher production, and more profits. In fact, since firms are highly sensitive to costs, they hire only when demand goes up, and benefit from both the shortages, and higher future sales. In both cases, the stock prices positive effects. One can conversely argue that stock valuations go up due to external reasons such as policy changes, lower interest rates, and low inflation, which arms the business owners with money sources (public issues, and loans) that enables them to increase capacities, and hire more people.

However, the individual who traced the original graphs on a single chart, gave it a technological twist. According to him or her, the breaking point, or the catalyst point, when the two graphs begin to diverge from each other, is 2022-23, or the introduction of Artificial Intelligence (Al) in

workplaces. This logic puts the onus on the launch of ChatGPT, which became a routine tool for managers, and executives. Al SINCE 1865 increased productivity through

tech shifts, made many workers redundant, and enabled firms to sack them. This is why stocks flew, as productivity gains earned more profits, but there was a contraction in the creation of new jobs. Technology trumped manual work, firms opted for the former in several jobs, and employees were the ones who buckled under the disruption.

A recent flash survey by CNBC finds that nine out of 10 human resource leaders expect AI to reshape jobs next year, and more than twothirds feel it is "currently having an impact at their firms." More than a sixth contend that half or more than half of the jobs were affected, and half of them think that the impact was less than 50 per cent. In fact, the use and abuse of AI is so rampant that HR leaders plan to reduce workforce just because they "need to cut costs," and the new tech tool is a perfect excuse to do so. Neither inflation, tariffs, reduced demand, or Al's efficiency gains matter. This explains just under 30 per

The Pioneer

No one can deny that AI, and ChatGPT, or its competing tools, as is evident from recent workplace experiences, will reduce the need for workers. It will replace several forms of jobs that are routine and repetitive, especially among the entry-level workers. Various estimates contend that globally 300 million jobs will vanish because of the new technology. Yet, there are some who feel that Al will create new jobs, which will require new skills or re-skilling, whose number will be higher than the job losses. Hence, the S&P index, and new job data will

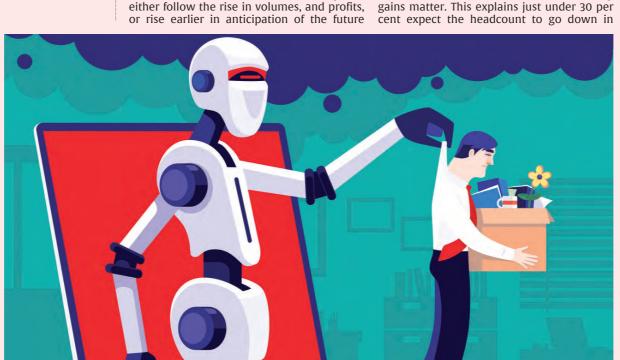
converge in the future. The current trend is a short-term one, and an interim phenomenon. There will be no AI apocalypse at the workplaces, but sections of the

society will get hurt.

This column wants to maintain that there are no causes and effects between AI, job losses, and the stock market index. It is a coincidental correlation. Technology is one of the drivers that drove down jobs. In the post-Covid era, hundreds of millions lost jobs, and a similar number, and more, worked from home. When normalcy returned, firms realised that they could do more with less, more work with less employees. Most of the ones that they had sacked were never recalled. Of the ones who worked from home, many were pressured to work in a hybrid mode, at a lesser salary, and as consultants. Pronto, the workforce was reduced, and the need to hire workers slowed down. Less workers were hired in the next few years.

At the same time, coincidentally, while revenues dipped, profits zoomed during the two Covid years. One of the reasons was the huge reduction in costs, especially manpower, and administrative and other expenses related to the workforce. This jacked up the stock markets, which boomed within weeks and months after the great fall in March 2025 (in India). Expectations in future financials improved, and stock valuations hit the roof, as did the indices. S&P was no exception. The combined effect was that the index skyrocketed, and demand for new jobs tanked. The divergence in the graphs was inevitable, which merely coincided with the launch of ChatGPT. As mentioned earlier, tech did aid the job-cutting process.

One can think of other factors that de-linked the graphs. Firms opted for China+1 strategy to replace China in case of similar disruptions. This implied that unless they were lucky to find locations like India, or the Philippines, which were cheap, they shifted to the expensive Latin America, East Europe, or North Americas. Manpower was more expensive in these regions, and firms chose to spend more on technology, and rely less on labour. Spending on machines was a one-time cost, which gave tax and other breaks. Highcost workers were a regular drain. This contributed to lower hires, even as the stock markets boomed. In fact, such cost controls helped the latter trend.



A Contrarian Investor

Suddenly, the tide has turned against IPOs (Initial Public Offerings). From excited and exulted news about the issues, and how their oversubscriptions reached dizzying heights, which were followed by massive listing gains, the headlines are sober, even depressing. We find events about low subscriptions, as one of the recent IPO was subscribed less than two times. Listing gains have vanished, with premiums in single digits. Many past IPOs that managed great listing gains are being quoted at huge discounts, including prices that are way lower than the offer prices. Now comes another suggestion of a panicinduced future. A new headline screamed that the past five booms in IPOs were followed by stock market busts. Ergo, be prepared for the great global correction in

Remember 1987, just to give an example from a not-so-distant period. While the US was awash with mergers, and acquisitions, most of which were leveraged buyouts by managements and hostile predators, India saw a spate of public issues, and rights issues. There was mania among investors to get new shares, whatever may be the company, and whatever may be the valuation. Indian firms changed names, and launched new issues, and investors gobbled them up. Companies raised money through rights issues for no rhyme or reason. Stock manipulations were the key during the rights issues, as promoters surrendered their rights in favour of new and other investors at huge premiums. Grey market ruled as new issues were desired for the potential listing gains, as is the case now.

Within no time, the market crashed in 1987. Leveraged buyouts were washed out, and the rights issues went horribly wrong. During the early 1990s, India witnessed a demonic situation of vanishing promoters. Most of them raised money during the late 1980s, and siphoned it off. After a few years, their offices were empty, watched by a lone guard, there were no plants or factories, and the promoters were nowhere to be found. Investigations ensued, some of the founders were traced, and there were indictments, or convictions. A similar thing happened with the tech and IT firms in India in 2000 during the Ketan Parekh scam, as also in the US, when valuations, IPOs, and public issues ruled. This too was

followed by the dotcom con. One can possibly establish the links between the IPOs and market crashes. Public issues invariably lag stock price rises.

Is this the Initial Panic Omen?



As the indices go up, as do specific stocks, only the brave and risk-takers enter the fray. As they make money, and stocks continue to go up, others join in. This is around the time when promoters decide that this is the best time to raise money, given the high valuations. The IPO frenzy starts, backed by ever-higher indices, which leads to a herd mentality among investors, who cannot afford the already-listed stocks because of the high prices, and join the IPO

gangs and queues. The IPO madness is in full flow, as the indices jump further. Obviously, a bubble forms, expands, and reaches its stretched shape.

It is time for the crash. Although the indices may move up on an average over the next few years, the herd mentality, and madness of the crowd forces an immediate shock. Too much money chasing too few stocks. Prices out of sync with profits. Valuations stretched, and waiting for a pinprick. It is now a matter of a whiff of bad news. Until now, for months, even years,

a faint smell of good news was highlighted and celebrated with higher price movements. The opposite happens at the height of the bubble. The moment something seemingly-bad happens, the bottom gives way, floor crashes, and the ceiling dashes into the investors' heads. Only a few escape. The majority is pinned to the ground, buried under the debris of dead hopes, dreams, and desires.

bad news was discarded, and dumped, and

Do not think for a moment that this is unexpected. A few critical voices warn of the impending doom. No one wants to hear them. Although publicly,

SINCE 1865 the experts goad investors, and scream that everything is fine, they are scared. So are the investors, but do not back away because of the FOMO factor. No one wants to miss out on the fun unless and until they are scarred. The promoters want their IPOs before the crash. Investors want to get in, and get out to benefit from the listing gains. Merchant bankers, investment bankers, and institutional bankers want to have stakes in the next Google, or Microsoft. Policy-makers do not want to rock the status quo. Economists are oblivious to the crazed environment.

This writer saw this bizarre phenomenon from close quarters in the late 1999, and early 2000 during the dotcom boom in the US. The valuations were as weird as they are now. IPOs were dime-a-day, as startups, and their founders dreamt of racking up valuations of billions of dollars, and becoming billionaires. The discussions at the social gathering, including the New Year's party, was about the hundreds of millions that one made, or will make, and the real estate purchased at ridiculous prices. Yet, every angel investor, venture capitalist, private equity player, founder, and pundit I met spoke about the crash. For the dozens of people interviewed, it was not a matter of if, but when. It will happen, they said, but they did not know when, so they went ahead with what they did.

An introduction to one of the post-2008 editions of 'The Great Crash,' a seminal book of John Kenneth Galbraith, explains, "But there is here a basic and recurrent process. It comes with rising prices, whether of stocks, real estate, works of art or anything else. This increase attracts attention and buyers, which produces the further effect of even higher prices. Expectations are thus justified by the very action that sends prices up. The process continues; optimism with its market effect is the order of the day. Prices go up even more. Then, for reasons that will be endlessly debated, comes the end. The descent is always more sudden than the increase; a balloon that has been punctured does not deflate in an orderly

The initial air of the balloon is filled with facts, data, and realistic assumptions. Later, hot air creeps in, as desires, hopes, and optimism engulfs the investors. This turns into smoke, smog, and fog as the herd gathers pace, and runs blindly towards the edge of the mountain, ready to fall off the cliff. At the stages of the hot air, and the great run one witnesses the hundreds of IPOs, with the founders aiming to be the next dollar-billionaires. Everything is crazy, and hazy, and those who can intervene seem to be in a daze.



Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman sat down with The Pioneer's Printer and Publisher Kushan Mitra, Chief Executive Officer Prakash V and J Gopikrishnan and to understand the current business activities and growth plans of The Pioneer media group. She was also invited to be the Chief Guest of The Pioneer India Finance and Innovation Forum (India FIF) that will be hosted in Mumbai from February 25-27, 2026. The event will focus on the core sectors of the economy and will be a space where finance, policy and innovation converge.



GST 2.0, Indo-Japan partnership redraw India's auto industry map

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

India's automotive industry, which contributes 7.1% to the country's GDP and nearly half of its manufacturing output, is entering a new growth phase backed by regulatory reform and strong foreign collaboration. The sector produced 28 million vehicles in 2024, up 8 per cent year-on-year, while exports surpassed 4.5 million units, according to a whitepaper by Grant Thornton Bharat and the Indo-Japan Chamber of Commerce and

Titled "Navigating Change: GST 2.0, Customs, and FTA Impacts on the India-Japan Auto Sector," the report outlines how taxation reform, customs changes, and trade partnerships are reshaping the industry's competitiveness. With USD 43.3 billion in cumulative investments, Japan remains India's fifthlargest foreign investor and a key force in the automotive ecosystem.

The rollout of GST 2.0 in September 2025 has streamlined tax structures and boosted affordability across vehicle categories. Under the revised regime, small cars and motorcycles under 350cc attract 18 per cent GST, down from 28 per cent plus cess, trimming prices by up to ₹1 lakh for select models. Premium vehicles now face a 40 per cent flat rate, while electric vehicles continue at 5 per cent, reaffirming policy support for clean mobility.

Automakers have already recorded a surge in bookings, with the small car

AUTOMAKERS HAVE ALREADY RECORDED A SURGE IN BOOKINGS, WITH THE SMALL CAR SEGMENT **REPORTING NEARLY 50 PER** CENT GROWTH. THE UNION **BUDGET 2025**

COMPLEMENTED GST CHANGES WITH SUPPLY-CHAIN MEASURES. INCLUDING CUSTOMS DUTY **EXEMPTIONS ON LITHIUM-**ION BATTERY SCRAP AND CRITICAL MINERALS LIKE LEAD AND COPPER.

segment reporting nearly 50 per cent growth. The Union Budget 2025 complemented GST changes with supply-chain measures, including customs duty exemptions on lithium-ion battery scrap and critical minerals like lead and copper. These steps aim to strengthen domestic manufacturing, secure raw materials, and expand employment in the EV value chain.

"The convergence of GST 2.0 and targeted customs incentives marks a defining moment for India's automotive sector," said Sohrab Bararia, Partner, India Investment Advisory, Grant Thornton Bharat. He noted that the reforms enhance cost competitiveness and reinforce India's position as a manufacturing and export hub for Japanese

The India-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) and the India–Japan Digital Partnership (IJDP) are also driving collaboration in electric and connected vehicles, as well as AI-led manufacturing. Skill programmes such as the Japan-India Institute for Manufacturing (JIM) and Japanese Endowed Courses (JEC) have trained over 30,000 Indian engineers to Japanese manufacturing standards, creating a talent base for advanced produc-

Trade schemes like MOOWR, EPCG, Advance Authorisation, and RoDTEP continue to underpin export competitiveness by supporting duty-free or concessional imports of capital goods and components.

"There is strong synergy between India and Japan in hybrid and electric vehicles and precision components," said Suguna Ramamoorthy, Secretary General, IJCCI. "Reforms under GST 2.0 and CEPA strengthen R&D and joint production while advancing the Atmanirbhar Bharat vision.'

During the first nine months of FY2025, India's car exports to Japan reached USD 616.45 million, while auto component exports stood at USD 171.72 million. Industry observers believe sustained policy alignment and India-Japan collaboration will define the next phase of growth, driving competitiveness, technology transfer, and a more sustainable mobility future.

Fitch: Sanctions on Russian oil unlikely to hit Indian oil marketing companies

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

US sanctions on Rosneft and Lukoil, along with the EU's ban on refined products derived from Russian crude, are unlikely to materially dent the margins or credit profiles of India's state-run oil marketing companies, Fitch Ratings said.

The ratings agency warned, however, that the eventual impact will hinge on how long the sanctions last and how strictly they are enforced. Russian crude made up about a third of India's oil imports between January and August 2025, and its discounted rates have been a key boost to OMC profitability. Fitch expects the companies to adhere to sanctions, though some refiners may continue sourcing

Traditionally reliant on Middle Eastern oil, India significantly increased its imports from Russia following the February 2022 Ukraine invasion. Western sanctions and reduced European demand made Russian oil available at steep discounts. As a result, India's Russian crude imports surged from under 1 per cent to nearly 40 per cent of its total crude oil

imports in a short span. The US, however, last month imposed sanctions on Russian oil producers Rosneft and Lukoil, who



accounted for 75 per cent of barrels. Refiners still processoil sold to India. Indian refining Russian crude could ers have stopped buying oil benefit from deeper disfrom them but others can still counts. Abundant spare continue to sell.

"Fitch Ratings believes US sanctions on two of Russia's largest crude oil producers, Rosneft and Lukoil, and the EU's ban on refined imports derived from Russian crude, are unlikely to have a significant effect on the refining margins or credit profiles of our rated Indian oil marketing companies (OMCs)," the

rating agency said in a note. Fitch said sanctions-related disruptions should suppress global demand for products linked to affected crude, widening refined product spreads and helping offset H1 FY26, supported by softer

global crude capacity should also keep a lid on oil prices; Fitch forecasts Brent at USD 65 per cent in 2026, down

from USD 70 in 2025. Private refiners with significant EU exposure may face greater compliance risks, as tracing crude origins becomes more complex once grades are blended. Such firms may shift exports to alternative markets, adjust crude slates or invest in

tighter traceability systems. Indian OMCs posted EBITDA broadly in line with or slightly above expectations in the loss of discounted Russian crude and strong gasoil

spreads. Gross refining margins averaged USD 6-7 per barrel, compared with USD 4.5-7 per barrel in FY25.

Fitch expects GRMs to hold near mid-cycle levels of around USD 6 per barrel in FY27, aided by firm domestic fuel demand and high utilisation rates.

A government-approved Rs 30,000 crore support package for Indian Oil, Bharat Petroleum and Hindustan Petroleum in 2Q FY26 will help offset losses from selling subsidised LPG below cost and strengthen liquidity.

Fitch said the Issuer Default Ratings of all three OMCs remain anchored by strong state linkages and a high likelihood of sovereign support if required.

India signs 1-year deal to import 2.2m tonnes of LPG from US

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA New Delhi

Indian state-run oil companies have signed a one-year deal to import cooking gas LPG from the United States in 2026, marking a push by New Delhi to expand energy purchases from Washington.

The move is seen as an attempt to narrow India's trade surplus with the US - a sticking point for President Donald Trump, who has slapped a 50 per cent tariff on Indian goods entering

"Indian PSU oil companies have successfully concluded a one-vear structured contract to import around 2.2 million tonnes of LPG from the US Gulf Coast for the contract year 2026," an official statement said on

The quantity contracted is close to 10 per cent of India's annual LPG imports and marks the first such structured US LPG contract for the Indian market.

While India is either selfsufficient or has surplus production in most fuels like petrol, diesel and jet fuel, it imports about 65 per cent of its LPG consumption of 31 million tonnes. In 2024, about 90 per cent of the 20.4 million tonnes of LPG imports came from UAE, Qatar, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

It sporadically imported cargos from the US but this is the first time it has entered



into a structured contract. State-owned Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) and Hindustan

Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) will import about 48 very-large gas carriers of LPG in 2026. The supplies will be made by super majors Chevron, Phillips and TotalEnergies Trading SA. India has offered to raise

energy imports from the US as part of the bilateral trade deal that has been under discussions for the past couple of months. New Delhi buys about 8 per cent of its crude oil - the raw material for making petrol and diesel -

In the first half of 2025, India imported about 271,000 barrels per day (bpd) of US crude, up 51 per cent from 180,000 bpd in H1 2024. Scope for raising crude

imports from the US is

reach Indian shores — a period during which ships can make six sorties from the Middle East. Oil Minister Hardeep Singh

take 45 days sea voyage to

Puri took to X to announce the LPG deal. 'A historic first! One of the

largest and the world's fastest growing LPG markets opens up to the United States," he said.

"In our endeavour to provide secure affordable supplies of LPG to the people of India, we have been diversifying our LPG sourcing. In a significant development, Indian PSU oil companies have successfully concluded a 1 year deal for imports of around 2.2 MTPA LPG, close to 10 per cent of our annual imports - for the contract year 2026, to be sourced from the US Gulf Coast — the first structured contract of US for a third of all LPG users in the country - receiving cost was over ₹1,100.

LPG for the Indian market,"

This purchase is based on using Mount Belvieu as the

benchmark for LPG purchas-

es, he said adding a team from the three PSUs had

visited the US and engaged

in discussions with major US

producers over the last few

months, which have been

He touted poor Ujjwala

consumers — who make up

concluded now.

cooking gas cylinders at just ₹500-550 while the actual "Government of India incurred the cost of over ₹40,000 crore last year in order to ensure our mothers and sisters did not feel the burden of rising internation-

al LPG prices" The price of LPG for non-Ujjwala users currently is ₹853 per 14.2-kg cylinder.

For the US contract, the pricing shift - using Mount Belvieu as a benchmark brings greater transparency and global linkage into India's procurement model. For consumers, this diversification strengthens the ability to shield households

from global price spikes. "The Minister emphasised that this new sourcing arrangement for 2026 is another step in strengthening India's energy security while ensuring affordable access to clean cooking fuel for millions of households,"

Unemployment rate remains steady at 5.2 pc in October: Govt survey

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA New Delhi

The rate of unemployment for those aged 15 and above remained steady at 5.2 per cent in October, according to a government survey released on Monday.

Statistics and Programme with a moderate rise in urban Implementation (MoSPI).

The UR was 5.1 per cent in April as per the first PLFS bulletin released in May 2025.

"The UR among persons of age 15 years and above remained unchanged at 5.2 per cent between September,



The unemployment rate (UR) was 5.2 per cent in September, 5.1 per cent in August, 5.2 per cent in July and 5.6 per cent in May and June, as per the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) released by the Ministry of

2025 and October, 2025," an official statement said.

According to the statement, a marginal decline in the rural unemployment rate, from 4.6 per cent in September 2025 to 4.4 per cent in October 2025, coupled

UR from 6.8 per cent to 7.0 per cent, resulted in overall stability in the pace of joblessness among persons aged 15 years and above.

It stated that UR among females aged 15 years and above declined to 5.4 per cent in October 2025 from 5.5 per cent observed during September 2025.

. The drop in UR among rural female, from 4.3 per cent in September 2025 to 4.0 per cent in October 2025, mainly contributed towards the decline in overall female joblessness rate.

Among males, the rate of unemployment remained stable at 5.1 per cent in October 2025 as compared to previous month.

A minor decrease in rural male UR, from 4.7 per cent in September 2025 to 4.6 per cent in October 2025, was offset by a slight uptick in urban male UR from 6.0 per cent to 6.1 per cent during the same period, which contributed to overall stability.



India's exports drop 11.8 pc to USD 34.38 bn in Oct

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA New Delhi

India's exports contracted 11.8 per cent to USD 34.38 billion in October, showed government data released on Monday. Imports jumped 16.63 per cent to USD 76.06 billion.

The country's trade deficit stood at USD 41.68 billion during the reporting month. Imports surged due to increased shipments of gold and silver. Gold imports jumped to USD 14.72 bn in the last month

against USD 4.92 bn recorded in the same month last year. The country's exports to the United States declined to USD 6.3 bn in October as against USD 6.9 bn registered in the year-ago month, Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal told reporters here.

During April-October this fiscal, exports increased marginally by 0.63 per cent to USD 254.25 billion. At the same time, imports rose 6.37 per cent to USD 451.08 billion, the commerce ministry data showed.

One-in-four Indian firm surveyed report cyber losses: PwC report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Nearly a quarter of Indian enterprises surveyed reported losses exceeding USD 1 million (about ₹8.8 crore) from cyber breaches over the past three years, with the risk particularly high among companies earning USD 5 billion or more in annual revenue.

Cyber budgets are rising, albeit at a cautious pace, with 87 per cent of organisations in India planning to increase their cybersecurity spending over the next 12 months, according to a PwC report.

The PwC 2026 Global Digital Trust Insights survey, based on responses from 138 Indian business and technology executives, found that investment in AI tops budget priorities at 46 per cent, followed by cloud security at 33 per

cent. "...25 per cent of busi-

nesses say their most dam- than 10 per cent—a slight aging data breach in the past three years cost their organisation at least USD 1 million, with exposure highest among enterprises generating USD 5 billion or

more in revenue (45 per

dip from last year's 93 per cent, yet a strong signal of sustained investment. Notably, just over one-third (38 per cent) of these said their budgets would likely increase 6-10 per cent," the



'This year, 87 per cent of leaders of Indian organisations expect their cyber budgets to grow in the coming year, and nearly one-third of them plan to boost spending by more report noted.

More than half (60 per cent) of security leaders are prioritising AI threathunting capabilities, while nearly 47 per cent are focusing on other Al-driven functions such as agentic AI.

FROM THE

Jaffar Express targeted again

The frequently-targeted Jaffar Express passenger train narrowly escaped an explosion in Pakistan's Balochistan province, a day after it resumed operations following nearly a week of suspension due to security concerns. Insurgents targeted the train in the Nasirabad area of the province on Sunday, months after it came under a deadly insurgent attack that left

26 people dead. Suspected insurgents detonated explosives planted on the railway track on the route taken by the Jaffar Express from Quetta to Peshawar, officials said. The explosion caused damage to a portion of the track, but the train escaped without any damage Nasirabad Senior SP Ghulam Sarwar said in a telephonic conversation that security forces reached the area and launched a search for the insurgents

USA Trump to meet Mayor Mamdani

President Donald Trump indicated on Sunday that he plans to meet with New York City's mayor-elect Zohran Mamdani and said they'll "work something out," in what could be a detente for the Republican president and Democratic political star who have cast each other as political foils. Trump has for months slammed Mamdani, falsely labeling him as a communist. He also threatened to deport Mamdani, who was born in Uganda and became a naturalised American citizen and to pull federal money from the city. Mamdani rose from an obscure State lawmaker to become a social media star and symbol of the resistance against Trump during his campaign. He campaigned on an array of progressive policies and a message that was stark in its opposition to the aggressive, anti-immigrant agenda Trump has rolled out in his second White House term

Ukraine to buy 100 Rafales from France

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Paris

Ukraine on Monday signed a letter of intent to buy up to 100 Rafale warplanes from France, the Ukrainian Embassy and the French president's office said.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and French President Emmanuel Macron signed the document stating that Ukraine is considering the possibility of buying French defense equipment, including Rafale jet fighters, Macron's office said. It did not provide further details.

Zelenskyy was on his ninth visit to Paris since Russia's full-scale invasion in February 2022. His talks are meant to strengthen Ukraine's defenses as the country enters another winter under Russian bombardment of its energy infrastructure and other targets.

On Monday morning, Macron and Zelenskyy visited an air base in the Paris outskirts, before heading to the headquarters of a multinational force. dubbed the "coalition of the willing," that France and Britain have been preparing with more than 30 other nations to police an eventual ceasefire in Ukraine.

French officials say the force could be deployed immediately after a ceasefire and would be stationed Sunday that he looked Ukraine and Sweden signed defense assistance to plus missiles.



French President Emmanuel and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy hug after signing an agreement

away from the front lines in forward to a "historic deal renewed Russian attacks. Russian President Vladimir Putin has so far rejected calls for a ceasefire as his troops make creeping gains on the battlefield.

an effort to help dissuade with France in Paris to strengthen our combat aviation and air defense." He way to France to sign an agreement to supply Ukraine with US liquefied Zelenskyy wrote on X on natural gas. Last month,

an agreement exploring the possibility of Ukraine buying up to 150 Swedish-made Gripen fighter jets over the made a stop in Greece on his next decade or more. Ukraine has already received American-made F-16s and French Mirages. France is among major suppliers of

Ukraine, including air defense systems and fighter jets. According to Mandon, Ukraine needs immediate additional air defenses to fend off attacks by Russia, which on average targets the country with about 1,700 drones per week

German Goverment lifts Israel arms ban



German Chancellor Friedrich Merz arriving for the cabinet meeting at the Chancellery in Berlin, Germany

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

The German Government said Monday that it's lifting its restrictions on exports of military equipment to Israel, weeks after the ceasefire between Israel and the Hamas militant group. Chancellor Friedrich Merz said in early August that Berlin wouldn't authorize any exports of military equipment to Israel that could be used in Gaza "until further notice." That was a response to a decision by the Israeli Cabinet to take over Gaza City.

A spokesperson for Merz, Sebastian Hille, said that the restrictions will be lifted from Nov. 24. "Since Oct. 10, we have had a ceasefire in Gaza and it has fundamentally stabilized," social network X.

Hille told reporters at a regular government news conference. "That is the basis for this decision."

"We expect everyone to keep to the agreements that were reached - that includes the ceasefire holding, that includes humanitarian aid being provided on a large scale and the process continuing to run in an orderly way, as agreed," he added.

Once the restrictions are Germany will examine military exports on a case-by-base basis, as is its standard practice with such exports, he said.

Merz's decision in August was a remarkable move by a country that is a particularly staunch ally of Israel. The Israeli foreign minister welcomed its lifting Monday in a post on

Gunmen abduct 25 girls from school in Nigeria

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Abuja

Gunmen attacked a high school in northwestern Nigeria before dawn on Monday and abducted 25 schoolgirls, police said.

One staffer at the school was killed and another was wounded in what was the latest incident of school abductions in Nigeria's northern region. No group immediately claimed responsibility for the abductions from the boarding school in Kebbi State. According to police, the incident took place at 4.00 am and the girls were abducted from their dorms. The boarding school is in Maga, in the State's Danko-Wasagu area, police spokesperson Nafi'u Abubakar Kotarkoshi said.

The assailants were armed "sophisticated weapons" and exchanged ing the abducted students Haram group abducted 276 fire with guards before and arresting the perpetra-students from Chibok in



team is currently combing suspected escape routes and surrounding forests in a coordinated search and rescue operation aimed at recover-

Kotarkoshi said. "A combined added. This is the latest school abduction in Nigeria's northern region, where armed groups have targeted school children since 2014, when the militant Boko the girls, tors," the spokesperson Borno state. Kidnappings poorly policed region.

have become common in parts of northern Nigeria, where dozens of armed groups take advantage of a limited security presence to carry out attacks on villages and along major roads. Most victims are released only after the payment of ransoms that sometimes run into the thousands of dollars. In March 2024, more than 130 schoolchildren were rescued after spending more than two weeks in captivity in the Nigerian state of Kaduna.

The mass abduction of 276 schoolgirls from Chibok marked the beginning of a new era of fear — with nearly 100 of the girls still in captivity in 2024. Since the Chibok abductions, at least 1,500 students have been kidnapped, as armed groups increasingly find in abductions a lucrative way to fund other crimes and control villages in the nation's mineral-rich but

Landslide kills 6, injures 19 in Vietnam

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Hanoi

A landslide buried a passenger bus on a treacherous mountain pass in Vietnam, killing six people and injuring 19 others, as more heavy rain was forecast into the week. The earth and rocks collapsed onto the bus late Sunday as it was travelling through the Khanh Le pass in the central highlands, State media reported.

The winding, 33-kilometre stretch carved into steep mountainsides is scenic and popular with tourists but prone to landslides in the rainy season.

The landslide crushed the front of the bus, trapping many passengers. Rescuers struggled for hours to reach the scene as heavy rain had also caused landslides on both sides of the pass, cutting off access. Rescue teams were only able to reach the bus after mid-



bus was carrying 32 people from Vietnam's financial capital, Ho Chi Minh City and was travelling from Da Lat in Vietnam's central highlands to the coastal city of Nha Trang.

The injured passengers were taken to a nearby hospital. State media said two of the dead bodies were still night, state media said. The trapped under the debris as 85 centimeters.

the treacherous terrain hindered the work. Heavy rain is pounding

central Vietnam, which earlier was hit hard by Typhoon Kalmaegi. Rainfall through Wednesday is expected to reach 30-60 centimeters in parts of central Vietnam, with some areas likely to exceed

US absence threatens South Africa's G20 legacy: Experts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Johannesburg

Although South Africa has said the G20 Leaders' Summit in Johannesburg this weekend will continue despite the absence of the US, there may be longer-term consequences for the host nation, experts have cautioned. US President Donald Trump announced earlier that there would be no US participation at the Summit, citing allegations of white farmer genocide and illegal expropriation of land from them by the Government. Both the South African Government and white leaders have rejected these allegations as being false.

President Cyril Ramaphosa confirmed on Friday that the G20 Leaders' Summit will proceed as planned on November 22-23, despite the US absence. "President Trump has decided not to come, and he's pulled out all PRESIDENT CYRIL **CONFIRMED** THAT THE G20 LEADERS' SUMMIT WILL PROCEED AS PLANNED ON NOVEMBER 22-23, DESPITE THE US **ABSENCE**

the US representatives. But we have said that boycott politics never work," Ramaphosa said on the sidelines of an event here.

"The summit will go on. We are not going to stop because they are not here. We will continue and we will take fundamental decisions on matters that affect the people of the world," Ramaphosa said, adding that nearly 40 other Heads of State and Government will be at the Summit.

However, analysts and researchers believe that the US absence may have a

"The US sponsors most of the international initiatives, like climate change. They use a huge amount of money for the operation of the United Nations and other financial institutions like the World Trade Organisation," Dr Nampula Mphahlele, a researcher on South African foreign policy, told the local daily The Star. "If the US is boycotting (the G20), then it sends a strong message of the future of multilateralism and how the G20 is going to operate moving forward," . Iphahlele said.

She said that it was unlike-South Africa would lose its G20 seat, given that a country's inclusion is voted on by members and not just by one person or country. However, the US might continue excluding South Africa from certain activities, as invitations are often required to

broader impact on South Africa, especially relating to finance and development. attend G20 meetings, such as the finance ministers' meeting and the working meeting and the working groups. Dr Noluthando Phungula, an international relations expert from the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal, told the newspaper that Trump's decision was sending a message through an effective exercise of soft power. "This is evident in the absence of the Argentinian president, who has also declined the invitation and has cited that he will send a representative," she said.

According to her, the boycott speaks to deeper tensions between Pretoria and Washington and is sure to impact trade and diplomatic relations. "It also has implications for those countries that are associated with the US. As you saw, Argentina is currently receiving financial support from the US, so obviously it has to be seen to be standing in solidarity with the US," she said.



Air Force officials during the bilateral air exercise Garuda 25 between Indian Air Force and French Air and Space Force



Singapore Minister warns of rising AI-enabled extremism

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Singapore

Extremist groups use AI to amplify the reach and sophistication of radical content, making it difficult for young minds to distinguish truth from manipulation, a Singapore minister said on Monday. Speaking at a seminar, acting minister-in-charge of Muslim Affairs Faishal Ibrahim said that Artificial Intelligence (AI) has also featured in several youth self-radicalisation cases in the multi-racial city-state. Extremist groups now use Al to create persuasive propaganda and even impersonate trusted voices, Faishal was quoted as saying by The Straits Times newspaper. He said that the reach and sophistication of racial content can be enhanced with AI, making it more difficult for younger people to distinguish truth from manipulation



ICC prosecutors seek life sentence for Janjaweed leader

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ The Hague

Prosecutors at the International Criminal Court(ICC) on Monday asked for a life sentence for a leader of the feared Janjaweed militia convicted of playing a major role in a campaign of atrocities committed in the Sudanese region of Darfur more than 20 years ago – including ordering mass executions and bludgeoning two prisoners to death with an ax. "You literally have an axe murderer before you," prosecutor Julian Nicholls told judges in The Hague as Ali Muhammad Ali Abd-Al-Rahman, also known as Ali Kushayb, looked on. Last month, Abd–Al-Rahman was convicted of 27 counts, including mass murders and rapes, for leading Janjaweed militia forces that went on a campaign of killing and destruction in 2003-2004. It was the first time the court had convicted a suspect of crimes in Darfur.



Sheikh Hasina: The rise, reign and ruin of Bangladesh's Iron Lady

■ New Delhi/Dhaka

For nearly two decades, Sheikh Hasina's name moved with the pulse of Bangladesh, sometimes steady, some times storm-tossed.

To her supporters, she is the architect of a modern, developing Bangladesh; to her critics, she was an autocrat whose appetite for power blinded her to the cries of the streets.

Few, however, could have imagined that the very tribunal the 77-year-old deposed Prime Minister once created to try hardened war collaborators would one day place her in the dock.

On Monday, when the International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) pronounced the death sentence against Hasina in absentia, it marked the most dramatic turn vet in the story of the world's longest-serving female head of Government.

Hasina was born on September 28, 1947, in Tungipara in the then East Pakistan, into a family that would come to define Bangladesh's identity. Her father, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, led Bangladesh to independence with India's help in 1971 and became its founding father.

She studied at the University of Dhaka, earning a master's degree in Bengali literature and became deeply engaged in student politics. In 1968, Hasina married nuclear scientist MA Wazed Miah, whose low-profile, scholarly life stood in contrast to the turbulence of Bangladeshi politics. Wazed



Police use stun grenades to disperse protesters gathering outside the demolished residence of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Bangladesh's former leader and the father of the country's ousted I Minister Sheikh Hasina following the verdict against her in Dhaka, Bangladesh

remained a steady presence Minister Indira Gandhi, in Hasina's life until he died in 2009 at the age of 67. They have a son, Sajeeb Wazed Joy and a daughter, Saima W

Hasina's political destiny hardened after the August 1975 military coup, in which her father, mother, three brothers, and several other family members were assassinated. She and her younger sister Rehana survived only because they were abroad.

granted her asylum. After six years, in May 1981, Hasina returned to Bangladesh, where she was elected in absentia as the general secretary of the Awami League.

When Hasina returned in 1981 to lead the Awami League, she found her rival already waiting: Khaleda Zia, widow of slain President Ziaur Rahman.

The 'Battling Begums', as they came to be known, India, under then Prime fought electoral and ideological wars that defined Bangladesh's politics for more than three decades.

Hasina first became Prime Minister in 1996, defeating Zia in a fiercely contested election. She lost power in 2001 but returned with a landslide in 2008, beginning, what her critics say, a long stretch

Under her leadership, the Awami League swept the 2008 general election; the 2014 election, which was boycotted by Zia's Bangladesh

the 2018 election, giving Hasina one of the world's longest tenures for a female leader. During her premiership. Bangladesh saw rapid economic growth, major infrastructure achievements like the Padma Bridge,

and advances in poverty

reduction. The country

also became a global

garment powerhouse under her watch. But the accolades came

Nationalist Party (BNP); and clampdowns on dissent, curbs on the media, arrests of opposition leaders and the expansion of state security powers. In 2024, student-led demonstrations, which initially erupted in protest over quotas in Government jobs for children of independence war veterans, later exploded into a nationwide uprising

against Hasina's regime. The crackdown that followed unleashed spirals of violence, ultimately ousting alongside accusations of Hasina from power and

PROTESTERS NEAR MUJIBUR RAHMAN'S HOUSE

Dhaka: Security agencies used batons and fired tear gas on Monday to disperse protesters who tried to demolish the house of deposed premier Sheikh Hasina's father and Bangladesh's founder Sheikh Muiibur Rahman in the capital. "Several stun grenades were used to disperse the protesters,' Masud Alam, deputy commissioner of Ramna Division Police, was quoted as saying by the Daily Star newspaper. The paper reported that several protesters and security personnel were injured during the baton-charge and brick-hurling clashes.

Mujibur Rahman, fondly called Bangabandhu, was killed in a military coup on August 15, 1975, along with most of his family members. including his 10-year-old youngest son, Sheikh Russell. A large part of Rahman's private residence, which was

forcing her to flee to India.

Following Hasina's ouster,

the interim Government led

by Muhammad Yunus recon-

stituted the ICT, once her

war criminals, to bring

charges of crimes against

humanity related to the 2024 crackdown against her.

A UN rights office report

estimated that up to 1,400

people were killed during

last year's student protest

between July 15 and August 15

during what came to be

known as the July Uprising, as

her Government ordered a

turned into a museum, was levelled following the ouster of the Awami League regime of Hasina last year.

On Monday, Hasina was sentenced to death in absentia by a special tribunal for "crimes against humanity over her Government's brutal crackdown on student-led protests last year.

Even before the verdict was announced, a large group of protesters tried to move two excavators towards Dhanmondi 32, where Rahman's house is located. They were stopped by security personnel, who used batons to disperse protesters, the paper said. Some protesters regrouped near Square Hospital on Panthapath, where law enforcers fired several rounds

Traffic on Mirpur Road in Dhaka and the surrounding areas was suspended, and most shops in the neighbourhood were closed

of tear gas.

sweeping security crack down. On Monday, after months of proceedings she never attended, the tribunal handed down the unthinkinstrument for prosecuting able: Hasina, four-time Prime Minister and political heir of

Bangladesh's founding leader,

was sentenced to death.

Now, in exile in India, Hasina, often dubbed the 'Iron Lady' of Bangladesh, watches from across the border as the nation she helped build, and often ruled with a firm hand, grapples with the legacy her rise and fall has left behind.

YUNUS HAILS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

AGAINST SHEIKH

Bangladesh's Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus Monday

hailed a special tribunal's

VERDICT

HASINA

Outrage in Israel: Netanyahu to oversee October 7 probe

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

After repeated delays, Israel's Government has agreed to launch an investigation into the Government failures that led to the Hamas-led attack on October 7, 2023, that triggered the war in Gaza. But questions about the

investigation's independence drew accusations Monday that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is trying to evade personal responsibility in the worst attack in Israel's history.

Israel has traditionally appointed an independent the Movement for Quality state commission of inquiry, led by a retired judge, following major Governmental failures. Netanyahu has resisted calls for such an investigation into the October 7 failures, saying only that he would answer all questions when the war is over. In Sunday's decision, he said the ceasefire that went into effect on October 10 allows the Government to start the investigation.

His Cabinet approved the formation of a watereddown "Government committee." Netanyahu will oversee the makeup of the team governing the inquiry, in effect putting him in charge of the probe. More details about the inquiry are to be announced in 45 days.

Public criticism

Israel's opposition leader, Yair Lapid, called the decision insulting to the victims of October 7 and to the hundreds of soldiers who have died in the war. "The Government is doing everything it can to run from the



truth and evade responsibility," Lapid said.

The Government is "estabwill investigate itself," noted Government in Israel, which is critical of Netanyahu. "This is not an investigative commission, this is a cover-up commission." In the October 7 attack, Hamas-led militants killed some 1,200 people and took over 250 others hostage. Nearly 500 soldiers have been killed in fighting since then, while Palestinian health officials say over 69,000 Palestinians have been killed in Israel's retaliatory offensive against Hamas. According to a poll by the Jerusalem-based think tank Israel Democracy Institute last month, nearly three-quarters of the public support a fully independent

Even among Netanyahu's right-wing base, 68 per cent favoured an independent commission. The survey questioned 1,000 people and had a margin of error of 3.1 percentage points.

commission of inquiry.

Thousands of people demonstrated on Saturday night in Tel Aviv, many calling for an independent probe. Netanyahu, who is on trial for corruption charges

unrelated to the war, says Israel's judiciary has too much power and has assertlishing a commission that ed that an independent inquiry would not have "the broadest possible public support." "The only way to ensure public trust in the work of the commission is broad agreement regarding the composition of the commission," he said.

The Israeli military and other security bodies have conducted a number of investigations into their failures on October 7. But the new investigation also will look at Governmental decision-making and assumptions that created the conditions for the attack to occur.

Many security figures have said that Netanyahu's attempt to overhaul the country's judicial system, which triggered mass demonstrations and public divisions before the war, sent a message of weakness that encouraged Israel's enemies to attack.

Netanyahu rejects the accusations. Many Israelis believe the mistakes of October 7 extend beyond the military, and they blame Netanyahu for what they view as a failed strategy of deterrence and containment in the years before the attack.

Bangladesh's tribunal sentences ex-home minister Kamal to death for crimes against humanity

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Dhaka/New Delhi

Deposed Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's aide, former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal. was on Monday sentenced to death in absentia by a tribunal for crimes against humanity during last year's student uprising.

The International Crimes Tribunal-Bangladesh also sentenced former inspector general of police Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun, who turned state witness, to five years of imprisonment in the same case. Delivering the Former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal



Kamal, the tribunal ordered the confiscation of all his movable and immovable properties in favour of the State. Kamal, who is believed to be living in exile in India, was tried in absentia. The prosecution said the former home minister "played a central role" in coordinating the 2024 crackdown. Mamun. who is in custody, pleaded guilty during the proceedings and became a State witness. His cooperation, the tribunal noted, "substantially aided" the prosecution in establishing the chain of

death sentence against

verdict against deposed prime minister Sheikh . Hasina and her aide, saying the ruling affirmed a fundamental principle — "no one, regardless of power, is above the law.' The International Crimes Tribunal-Bangladesh (ICT-BD) sentenced 78-year-old Hasina and her former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal to death in absentia for "crimes against

> student uprising. Hasina has been living in India since she fled Bangladesh on August 5 last year in the face of the massive protests. She was earlier declared a fugitive by the court. Kamal is also believed

> humanity" during last year's

to be in India. 'Today, the courts of Bangladesh have spoken with a clarity that resonates across the nation and beyond. The conviction and sentencing affirm a fundamental principle: no one, regardless of

power, is above the law," Yunus said in a statement. Yunus had assumed charge as the chief advisor of the interim Government last year

in August, three days after Hasina fled to India after the massive protests toppled her 16 year regime. Commenting on the verdict,

Hasina denied the charges as "biased and politically motivated" and said the judgment has been made by a "rigged tribunal" established and presided over by an "unelected Government with no democratic mandate".

Jaishankar arrives in **Russia on** three-day visit

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Moscow

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Monday arrived in Russia on a three-day visit to attend the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Heads of State Council meeting.

At the airport, Jaishankar was received by Indian Ambassador Vinay Kumar and Alexei Pavlovsky, Director of the Second Asian Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia.

Later in the day, he will hold talks with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov. They are expected to discuss bilateral, regional and international issues, including cooperation within the SCO, BRICS, the UN, and the G-20, State-run TASS news agency reported.

Ethiopia confirms 3 Marburg virus deaths ASSOCIATED PRESS

Addis Ababa Ethiopia on Monday confirmed three deaths from

the Marburg hemorrhagic virus that has been detected in an area neighbouring South Sudan. Health Minister Mekdes

Daba said Ethiopia's Government, which declared a Marburg outbreak on Friday, had conducted tests in 17 suspected cases in the country's south. The outbreak was reported in the Omo region.

The minister said there were no active cases but the Government was taking preventive measures.

A team from the World Health Organisation and the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention has been dispatched to support with testing and outbreak control. South Sudan's health ministry on Sunday



concern because South

Sudan has a "fragile

health system."

Like Ebola, the Marburg virus originates in fruit bats and spreads between people through close contact with the bodily fluids of infected individuals or with contaminated sheets. Without treatment, Marburg can be fatal in up to 88 per cent of people who fall ill.

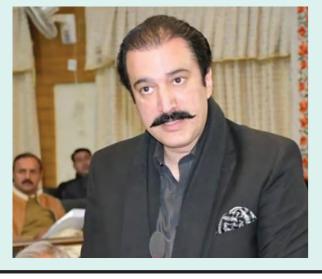
Symptoms include fever, muscle pains, diarrhoea, vomiting and, in some cases, death from severe blood loss. There is no authorised vaccine or treatment for Marburg.

Marburg outbreaks and individual cases have in the past been recorded in Rwanda, Tanzania, Equatorial Guinea, Angola, Congo, Kenya, South Africa, Uganda and Ghana, accord-



Republicans should vote to

vote to release the files in the Jeffrey Epstein case, a startling reversal after previously fighting the proposal as a growing number of those in his own party supported it. "We have nothing to hide, and it's time to move on from this Democrat Hoax perpetrated by Radical Left Lunatics Republican Party," Trump wrote on social media late Sunday after landing at Joint Base Andrews following a weekend in Florida. Trump's statement followed a fierce fight within the GOP over the files, including an increasingly nasty split with Georgia Rep Marjorie Taylor Greene, who had long been one of his fiercest supporters.



PPP lawmaker elected new PoK premier

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Islamabad

A Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) lawmaker was on Monday elected as the "prime minister" of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir after the regional assembly adopted a noconfidence motion against incumbent Chaudhry Anwarul Haq of Tehreek-i-Insaf. Raja Faisal Mumtaz Rathore is the fourth premier in the sitting assembly since its installation in 2021. He received the support of 36 lawmakers, including 27 from PPP and 9 from Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz. The assembly has 52 members, and a simple majority of 27 lawmakers is needed to elect a new leader. The no-trust motion was tabled on Monday by PPP lawmaker Qasim Majeed. On Sunday, two PTI lawmakers joined PPP, raising its strength to 29. In October, PPP's ranks swelled to 27 after 10 PTI lawmakers joined it.

'Exempt life insurance

from GST to enable

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

LIC Managing Director Ratnakar Patnaik on

Monday pitched for exempt-

ing life insurance sector from Goods and Services

Tax as it would help insur-

ers claim input tax credit.

Patnaik also welcomed

the Government's decision

to eliminate the Goods and

Services Tax (GST) on all

individual life and health

insurance premiums, effec-

tive September 22, 2025.

"My small request will be...It

is zero taxation. Can it be

GST exempt? That will help

us to have some input tax

credit (ITC) in place," Patnaik said,while speaking at CII Financing Summit here. In

August, the GST Council

resolved to cut GST to zero

without putting it under

the GST exempt category.

Under the latter, compa-

nies like LIC can benefit by

way of saving on opera-

on the ITC front.

tional costs through benefits

Mumbai

PROSPECT



Meghalaya CM Conrad K Sangma inaugurates the new Jengi Police Station building in West Garo Hills

Sri Chaitanya Academy marks 51st test prep centre

Sri Chaitanya Academy - an Infinity Learn initiative, focussed on delivering outcome-based learning at scale, has proudly announced the launch of its 51st Test Prep Centre, marking its 1st Centre in the city of Noida.

With this expansion, the Institution brings its proven academic model, experienced faculty and integrated test-preparation approach to students in the NCR region. Ujjwal Singh, Founding CEO of Infinity Learn by Chaitanya, added," We are excited to bring Chaitanya's proven pedagogy to learners in Noida.

Personalised guidance, cutting-edge technology and a focus on conceptual clarity are at the core of our educational model, driven by our motto, 'Baccha Seekha

Establishing our first Academy in Noida represents an important step in our mission of shaping future-ready learners across the country.

NHAI publishes updates on bidding for 55 projects

State-owned NHAI published details of 55 National Highways projects, spanning around 2,269 km with a combined capital cost of ₹1,19,359 crore for which bids have been invited on its website, an official statement said on Monday. The statement further said by proactively disclosing this information on the public platform to bidders and other stakeholders, NHAI aims to promote transparency in its project award process that will include public disclosure of approval and clearance related details. This initiative will ensure a level-playing field for all bidders and will help to enhance public private partnerships, more clarity in processes as well as lesser disputes and litigation, it added.

According to the statement, the project information will be updated every two weeks on the NHAI website, sharing approval and clearance details publicly. The information will help establish clear status of the project, leading to a realistic bidding and timely awarding of the projects, the statement said. It will also provide real-time access to upcoming opportunities and information on projects where bids have been invited, encouraging broader participation from the contractors and developers

IRFC to set up India's first SCOT lab with precision healthcare

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE New Delhi

Institute Technology,Madras and Indian Railways Finance Corporation (IRFC) have set up country's first Single Cell Omics Translational (SCOT) research laboratory, officials said on Monday.

Equipped with state-of-theart instrumentation, the SCOT lab will facilitate early diagnosis, disease prognosis, biomarker discovery and drug screening across a spectrum of diseases — including cancer, cardiovascular, infectious, inflammatory, metabolic and other non-communicable diseases, they said.

IRFC is providing a CSR grant of ₹10.83 crore to establish this lab, which will be located in the Department of Medical Sciences and Technology (DMST) at IIT Madras. The facility is designed to accelerate research in single-cell biology, drug discovery, biomarker identification and



translational healthcare innovation. "Our collaboration with IRFC marks an important milestone in accelerating India's journey in drug discov-

ery and precision medicine. The state-of-the-art SCOT Research Laboratory will greatly enhance our ability to develop solutions for India's capabilities in early diagnostics, targeted therapeutics and next-generation healthcare innovation," IIT Madras Director V Kamakoti said.

Looking forward to highimpact outcomes from the lab, Usha Venugopal, Member (Finance), Ministry of Railways, said the inauguration of the SCOT Research Lab is a welcome step towards building stronger capabilities in medical research.

"The support extended through IRFC's CSR funding

will aid studies that have the better therapies.

potential to improve early diagnosis and develop

This collaboration shows how institutions can work together for larger national goals. I am hopeful that the facility will contribute to knowledge, innovation and better health outcomes in the years ahead, Venugopal said.

> Patnaik also appealed policymakers to consider excess holdings of Government securities and state development loans as infrastructure and housing investments, pointing out that Governments deploy the funds for the same purpose. At present, insurance companies have been able to take their investments in housing and infrastructure to just over 9 per cent as against the 15 per cent mandate, he said.

He also appealed to the Government for a review into the three-year-old policy of taxing maturity proceeds for policies with

insurers claim ITC' premium of over ₹5 lakh.

"Is it time to upgrade or revise upwards to up to Rs 10 lakh,the maturity proceeds should be tax free, so that we can get some good policies and mop up good funds," he said.

He affirmed LIC's support for investing in developmental purposes for the country through investments in corporate bonds

and government securities. Meanwhile, speaking at the same event, NSE's managing director and chief executive Ashishkumar Chauhan said the rules Governing foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) have become too tough over the years and India is making such investors uncomfortable with the amount of

information being sought. "The amount of information we ask for is very very intrusive. Many of them do not want to give that information. And so, they are staying away," Chauhan said. He also said that "we need to standardise the way to look at market volumes and shirk the tendency to present data in such a way that India is seen as the largest

or biggest." "We think we are the largest market in derivatives, (but) we are by far not," he said, adding that on premium terms, trading on stock options in the US alone is five-times more than India every month and sometimes the single scrip of Tesla does more.

"Once we have the right statistics, we will have the right policy coming out,"



LIC managing director Ratnakar Patnaik

The British

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma at London's British Museum on Monday to sign an Letter of Intent to enable bringing Mahapursh Srimanta Sankardev's iconic Vrindavani Vastra to Assam

REC Shines at 7th edition of **Future of Legal and Compliance Summit** and Awards 2025

PIONEER NEWS SERVICER

REC Limited, a Maharatna Public Sector Enterprise under the Ministry of Power and a leading NBFC, proudly emerged as a front-runner in legal and compliance excellence at the prestigious 7th Edition of the Future of Legal and Compliance Summit and Awards 2025, held on November 14,2025.

Demonstrating its unwavering commitment to innovation and excellence in a progressive, tech-driven environment, REC secured top honours in three distinguished categories:



 Best Legal Technology Implementation of the Year. Compliance Innovation of the Year

 Compliance Team of the Year.

The accolades were received by REC's representatives. Dinesh Kaushik (GM). Rajeshwar Valaboju (DGM) and Chander Mohan Sharma (DGM), who accepted the awards on behalf of the organisation.

These recognitions further strengthen REC's position as a thought leader in the legal and compliance domain, as the organisation continues to set new industry benchmarks through technology integration, strategic innovation and robust Governance frameworks.

Assam's promise: Government tribute and healing efforts for Zubeen Da



HIMADREE CHUTIA

My musical journey across genres continues every day, but today the melody carries a quieter note. Life after Zubeen Da, a man far more than a pop star to Assam, feels different and many of us are still learning to navigate that silence. His songs lived in weddings, protests, Bihu nights, heartbreaks and moments of healing. even in the familiar crackle of an old family radio.

His passing has touched people of all ages: children sensing the change, teenagers sharing memories online, adults revisiting the comfort his music once brought, and elders mourning a cultural anchor.

A Cultural Wave That Continues

Zubeen Da's passing abroad triggered a landslide of emotion at home: thousands on the streets, candlelit vigils, playlists on loop and heartfelt tributes. For many, his music wasn't just something to listen to; it was something to live with. Losing him feels like losing a part of ourselves. The release of Roi Roi Binale, his final movie, on October 31 added another layer of emotion. The film broke box — office records, with pre-dawn screenings from 4:25 am in Guwahati. Theatres became spaces of reflection and mourning, where audiences, family, friends and colleagues watched him alive, expressive and effortless on screen.

Grief and celebration intertwined as people wept, laughed and at times shouted "Joi Zubeen Da!", a tribute to the joy and talent he shared with generations. I have yet to watch it myself; it seems it will take courage, knowing how my loved ones and colleagues have flocked to theatres every day since its release.

Tributes and Blood-Donation Drive

Preparations for what would have been his 53rd birthday on November 18 have further united Assam. The Chief Minister, Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma announced a large-scale blooddonation drive, with camps at 53 locations across the state to symbol-

ise Zubeen Garg's age. Members of the BJP, AGP, BPF and UPPL will participate, alongside ministers joining in their districts. These initiatives, along with tribute programmes and memorial events, aspire to celebrate his life while bringing communities together.

From Sorrow to Alarm: Mental-**Health Concerns**

Since Zubeen Da's passing, worrying patterns have emerged: extreme reactions among devoted fans, at least one attempted suicide, rumours and a fake post-mortem report circulating widely, which was immediately fact-checked by Assam Police and nonstop news cycles reopening emotional wounds. Experts warn that sudden loss can trigger anxiety, depressive symptoms, panic attacks, insomnia and unhealthy grief.

Children, teens and adults are vulnerable: children sense tension without fully understanding it; teens and young adults, tied emotionally to icons, are overwhelmed by heavy online mourning; adults and older listeners relive personal losses Zubeen Da's music once soothed. Those already struggling with mental-health vulnerabilities are at particular risk. Schools, colleges, local authorities and community groups are encouraged to provide safe spaces, structured gatherings and music-sharing circles.

Families are urged to watch for signs of distress and seek professional help if needed.

A Promise from the State

In the aftermath, the Chief Minister announced measures balancing tribute and accountability. Assam observed three days of mourning and Zubeen Da's mortal remains were placed at Arjun Bhogeswar Baruah Sports Complex for public homage. A second autopsy was ordered, a Special Investigation Team formed and a judicial commission set up. The Government declared a holiday in Kamrup (Metro) and blacklisted the festival organiser linked to events preceding his final days. A permanent memorial, Zubeen Kshetra, is being developed on a 10-bigha plot in Sonapur with guidance from his family and cultural representatives.

The state has pledged its GST share from Roi RoiBinale to the Kalaguru Artiste Foundation to help flood victims, support medical treatment of artistes and assist needy students. Through tribute, transparency, and community care, Assam honours Zubeen Da while supporting healing, ensuring his legacy inspires generations to come. The music may have paused, but Assam's collective responsibility to care, remember and celebrate the life of a cultural icon has only just begun.

Writer is J.I.O., Directorate of Information and Public Relations, Government of Assam Currently attached as PRO to the Chief Secretary



e Tendering portal i.e. eproc.punjab.gov.in.

2. Corrigendum, if any, will be uploaded on website only.

 For complete details regarding above tender (NIT), please visit our website i.e. www.verka.coop & 1018/12/2025-26/5055 General Manager (Purchase)

▼ BRIEFLY

INDIA NEEDS GOOD COACHES OF FOOTBALL: LOTHAR



Only best coaches can produce good football players and India will need to bring in legends and former players of the game to train their coaches, says German football legend Lothar Matthaus.

Matthaus said India, the world's most populated country, cannot be in a situation where it does not play in the football World Cup while smaller countries like Cape Verde make it to the global event. "You get good footballers only when they learn from the best coaches. India needs good coaches to produce better footballers," Matthaus, a member of Germany's 1990 World Cup-winning team, told the media here on Sunday. "A good teacher makes a good student. And when you have a bad teacher, or a bad professor, you don't get good students. To start, you bring the legends, ex-players and reputed coaches to India to teach your coaches. Then these coaches can help the new generation of players. You have to start this at the school level." Matthaus cited the example of Cape Verde, which will play in next year's World Cup despite having only a

PAIGE GRECO, PARALYMPIC **GOLD MEDALIST, DIES AT 28**

million people as their population.



Australian cyclist Paige Greco, a Paralympic gold medalist, has died. She was 28.

A joint statement by the Australian Paralympic Committee and Australian cycling federation said that Greco "passed away in her Adelaide home after experiencing a sudden medical episode" on Sunday. "Paige meant everything to us," her mother Natalie Greco said." Her kindness, her determination and her warmth touched our family every single day. She brought so much joy and pride into our lives, and the pain of her passing is something we will carry forever. "While we are devastated by her loss, we are

incredibly proud of the person she was and the way

Lad, Thakur shines as Mumbai dominate in Ranji

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Siddhesh Lad's career-best 170 and skipper Shardul Thakur's three-wicket burst underlined Mumbai's domination as the hosts reduced Pondicherry to 43 for 4 after piling up 630/5 declared on Day Two of their Ranji Trophy Elite Group D clash on Monday. Thakur struck twice in first

three balls and returned 3/17, following up on a minute-amile fifty earlier in the day as his side left Pondicherry staring at a mountain to climb. The visitors are trailing by 587 runs in the first

Thakur cleaned up Neyan Kangayan (0) in the first ball of the innings and trapped Paras Ratnaparkhe (0) in the third, while having Anand Singh Bais (5) caught behind in a fiery spell with the new ball on a flat wicket here at the Wankhede Stadium.

Earlier, Lad struck his 13th first-class hundred, his third of the season and second on the trot to make 170 off 285 balls with 19 fours and four sixes as Mumbai made merry on a batting-friendly pitch against insipid Pondicherry attack.

Akash Anand (107 not out) notched up his third FC ton in nine matches, but India batter Sarfaraz Khan missed out, falling for a 113-ball 67 (6x4s, 1x6s). Thakur smacked a characteristic 32-ball 56 with four sixes and three fours before retiring hurt. While putting on 160 runs for



Sarfaraz, Lad was in his elements, scoring runs on both sides of the wickets. Hitting two sixes each over long-on and long-off, he also pierced gaps at will to carve out a flawless innings. Lad consolidated Mumbai's

hold on the game as he added another 110 runs for the fifth wicket with Anand against an exhausted Pondicherry attack, who had each of their five bowlers including skipper Sagar Udeshi giving away more than 100 runs.

Sarfaraz took off his helmet and celebrated crossing the the fourth wicket with fifty-run mark like batters do

after making tons, but poked on one outside off to be caught behind, having batted well for his maiden halfcentury of the season.

Mumbai did not take the foot off the pedal as Anand and Thakur then tore apart a tiring Pondicherry attack, adding 100 runs off only 68 balls in their bid to bat out the rivals.

Thakur was severe on anything short and wide while smacking powerful sixes on the leg side. Anand cracked eight fours to make 107 not out off 122 balls.

Anand said there is enough in the Wankhede track for the

bowlers provided they were able to make the effort, while praising Pondicherry spinners for their efforts.

"There is enough help for everyone, for pacers and even for spinners. If you bat well, you have value for strokes also. It's a wicket where if you bend your back as a bowler, you have help throughout the day. That is what we aim to do," he told media.

In Jammu, hosts Jammu and Kashmir took complete control of the clash against Hyderabad by extending their overall lead to 324 runs.

J&K were 275 for four when stumps were drawn with 570/7 declared against Delhi. Delhi were 8 for no loss when stumps were drawn, trailing by a massive 562 runs.

At the Amtar Cricket Ground in Nadaun, Himachal Pradesh were 37/1 after Chhattisgarh declared their first innings at a massive score of 585 for six, following centuries from Anuj Tiwary (162), Amandeep Khare (101 not out), Mayank Verma (112)

Brief Scores:

and Sanjeet Desai's 84.

At Mumbai: 630/5 in 147 overs (Musheer Khan 84, Akhil Herwadkar 86, Siddhesh Lad 170, Sarfaraz Khan 67, Akash Anand 107 not out, Shardul Thakur 56 retd hurt; Sabhay Chadha 2/146) lead Pondicherry 43/4 in 12 overs (Mohit Kale 13 not out; Shardul Thakur 3/17, Tushar Deshpande 1/7) by 587 runs.

At Jammu: Jammu and Kashmir 170 & 275/4 in 71 overs (Qamran Igbal 50, Abdul Samad Samad 77 not out, Kanhaiya Wadhawan 82 not out; Rakshan Readdi 2/56) lead Hyderabad 121 by

At Rajsamand: Rajasthan 570/7d in 161 overs (Sachin Yadav 130, Kunal Singh Rathore 102, Mahipal Lomror , Kartik Sharma 120; Simarjeet Singh 3/81) lead Delhi 8/0 in 4 overs by 562 runs.

At Nadaun: Chhattisgarh 585/6d in 158 overs (Ayush Pandey 59, Anuj Tiwary 162, Sanjeet Desai 84, Mayank Verma 112; Mayank Dagar 2/124) lead Himachal Pradesh 37/1 in 11 overs by 548 runs.

Reddy's maiden ton boosts Andhra against Jharkhand

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Opener Abhishek Reddy weathered a potent Jharkhand bowling attack by scoring a timely unbeaten century as Andhra made a strong bid to overhaul the hosts' first-innings total on day two of the Ranji Tropy Group A match on

Jharkhand, whose innings folded up at 328 in 112.3 overs early during the day, saw themselves sweating and grimacing at stumps after 31-year-old Reddy struck his maiden century (103 not out off 156 balls) to guide Andhra to 224 for 2.

Andhra need just 104 runs to take the first-innings lead with eight wickets still intact.

Reddy, who has struck back-to-back half-centuries against Odisha and Tamil with a valuable century took almost a decade to



knock just when his team needed stability at the top against a side that has emerged triumphant on the back of some brilliant bowling from Sahil Raj and Rishi Raj.

Reddy, who started his domestic career with Nadu this season, came up Karnataka way back in 2015,

score his maiden century. He shared a 94-run stand for the opening wicket with India Test keeper-batter Srikar Bharat (51) before batting stoutly with Shaik Rasheed (58) for a 122-run stand for the second wicket

to put Andhra in a strong Relying heavily on his their opponents.

11 boundaries and just one maximum as Andhra made a strong bid to dislodge Jharkhand from the No.2 spot on the points table.

ground strokes, Reddy struck

While Jharkhand are on 16 points after four games, Andhra are third with 14

At stumps, young spin all-rounder Tripurana Vijay (6 not out) was giving Reddy

The morning session didn't bring huge cheers for Jharkhand with their lastfour wickets falling for the addition of just 69 runs. Overnight batter Sahil Raj laboured to 50 (86 balls) as he added 43 runs on the second day before he was the last player to be dis-

missed.

Andhra's veteran pacer KV Sasikanth (4/67) and leftarm spinner Saurab Kumar (4/77) did well to restrict

India finishes third in shooting championships

(50), Abdul Samad (77 not

out) and Kanhaiya Wadhwan

(82 not out) hitting their half-

Having taken 49-run lead

on the first day where 16 wickets fell, J&K produced a

tidy effort with the bat to gain

complete control of the

game against Hyderabad

who have not lost a game so

Hosts Rajasthan were bol-

stered by centuries from

Mahipal Lomror (128 not out)

and Kartik Sharma (120) on

the second day after Sachin

Yadav (130) and Kunal Singh

Rathore (102) hit triple figure

far this season.

centuries.



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Olympian Gurpreet Singh came agonisingly close to becoming the world champion in men's 25m Centre Fire Pistol event but eventually got a silver after losing on inner 10s to Ukraine's Pavlo Korostylov at the Olympic

Shooting Range here. This was Gurpreet's second individual medal in the World Championships, the first also being a silver won back in 2018 at Changwon in the 25m Standard Pistol event. Yann Pierre Louis Fridrici of France

won the bronze here. India thus ended their World Championship campaign in third place with a total of 13 medals, including three gold, six silver and four bronze behind China. The Chinese team mustered 12 gold, seven silver and two

South Korea secured seven gold, three silver and four the overall standings.

Gurpreet shot a total of 584-18x over two days of competition in the precision and rapid stages, while Korostylov shot 29 inner 10s and a perfect score of 100 in the final rapid round to edge away with the gold medal.

The Indian shooter, who was placed ninth after the precision stage with a score of 288-8x (95,97,96), bounced back on the second day to shoot a brilliant score of 296-10x (98,99,99) in the rapid stage to clinch the silver medal.

The Ukrainian, who was leading after the precision stage with a score of 291-14x, shot 293-15x in the rapid stage to level Gurpreet's score

and win the gold on inner 10s. Harpreet Singh, who was in contention for a medal after manage 286-6x in the rapid stage which saw him eventu-

the precision stage with a score of 291-10x that placed him second, could only bronze medals to end third in ally finish in ninth place.

trainer on two occasions -

and got it wrapped after the

much, to be honest, because I could run well," Alcaraz

said. Alcaraz broke Sinner's

serve in the opening game of

the second set but Sinner

Sinner then got the crowd

going again in the next game

when he won a long rally and

held his finger to his ear -

signaling for more noise

Sinner broke Alcaraz again

to close it out when the

inside the Inalpi Arena.

then evened it at 3-3.

"Didn't affect me too

Former Chelsea plaver Oscar discharged from hospital after heart scare

she represented Australia."

ASSOCIATED PRESS Sao Paulo

Former Chelsea midfielder Oscar has been released from hospital, five days after being admitted with a heart issue

Oscar's current club, Sao Paulo said in a statement that the player had been discharged on Sunday.

It added that extensive tests had revealed Oscar had "experienced an episode of vasovagal syncope," a common cause in fainting after a sudden drop in blood pressure or heart rate.

"Stable and clinically well throughout his hospital stay, the athlete will now follow a medical program of rest for the next few days," the statement continued.

Oscar was taken by ambulance to Einstein Hospital Israelita on Tuesday after collapsing during pre-season testing. He was reportedly unconscious for about two minutes and his club said at the time that he "presented a complication with cardiac changes.'

The 34-year-old has a contract with Sao Paulo until 2027. He returned to his boyhood club on a free transfer last December after a long spell in China.

Smaran hits double ton to put Karnataka in driver's seat

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Hubli (Karnataka)

Promising Ravichandran Smaran hit an unbeaten 227 and was being supported well by the lower-order to put Karnataka in the driver's seat on the second day of their Ranji Trophy Group B match against Chandigarh on Monday.

Resuming at the overnight personal score of 110 with Karnataka at 298 for 5, Smaran stitched crucial partnerships with Shreyas Gopal (62), Vidyadhar Patel (30) and Shikahr Shetty



(59) as Karnataka declared at a mammoth 547 for 8 in 160 overs.

Smaran first stitched 141 runs for the sixth wicket Gopal and then shared unconquered 120 with Patel to take Karnataka to the imposing total.

Smaran decorated his 362-ball knock with 16 boundaries and two hits over the fence.

For Chandigarh, medium pacer Jagjit Singh (2/70), offspinner Vishu Kashyap (2/141) and left-arm spinner Nishunk Birla (2/159) shared six wickets between them.

At stumps on the second day, Chandigarh were struggling at 72 for 4 in reply to Karnataka's mammoth score. Opener Arjun Azad made

32. At the close of play,

skipper Manan Vohra was batting on 14. Leg-spinner Gopal was the pick of the bowlers for Karnataka with figures of 3 for 18. Maharashtra enjoy slight upperhand

In Chandigarh, Punjab finished the second day at 125 for 4 in reply to Maharashtra's 350 all out.

over Punjab

Sinner beats Alcaraz to retain ATP Finals title before his home fans

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Turin

The final installment of the "Sincaraz" rivalry for 2025 went to Jannik Sinner.

The second-ranked Sinner beat top-ranked Carlos Alcaraz 7-6 (4), 7-5 for the ATP Finals trophy on Sunday in the sixth meeting this year between the two players who are dominating men's tennis.

Sinner defended the title before his home Italian fans for only his second victory over Alcaraz this year after also beating the Spaniard in the Wimbledon final.

"It was an incredible season," Sinner said. "To finish it this way, before

my Italian fans, is very pecial for me."

I will be ready to hopefully
Alcaraz had already play more finals against you," special for me."

secured the year-ending No. 1 ranking and was contesting his first final at the event for

the year's top eight players. Alcaraz still leads his career meetings with Sinner, 10-6.

Sinner and Alcaraz have met in the last three Grand Slam finals. Alcaraz beat Sinner in a fifth-set tiebreaker to win the French Open; Sinner gained a measure of revenge at Wimbledon; then Alcaraz again came out on top at the U.S. Open.

They also clashed this year in the Italian Open final (won by Alcaraz) and the Cincinnati Open final (won by Alcaraz when Sinner retired due to illness). "I hope you are going to be

ready for next year because

Alcaraz said during the trophy ceremony. To which Sinner added

that he hopes they have "great, great battles ahead of us. Sinner also won the

Australian Open - beating Alexander Zverev in the final - so he and Alcaraz each won two majors this year.

In all, Alcaraz has won six majors and Sinner has St. SinnerAlready early in

the first set, the pro-Sinner crowd chanted its customary "Ole, Ole, Ole, Ole; Sin-ner, Sin-ner.' One fan even held up an image of Sinner depicted as

Sinner saved a set point at 5-6 in the tight first set with a big second serve that Alcaraz couldn't return. Then



the Italian took control of the "I'm extremely happy with how I handled the situatiebreaker by running down tion," Sinner said of saving a drop shot and responding with a lob that led to an overthe set point. Added Alcaraz, "He came head put away.

up with a second serve 185-190 kph (115-118 mph) that surprised me.'

Alcaraz's thighAlcaraz had his right thigh treated by a Spaniard missed a backhand wide - then fell down to the court on his back in relief.

first set.

"It was a huge emotion," said Sinner, who was banned

for three months earlier in the year after settling a doping case.

Eden turner highlights Gill-Gambhir disconnect

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

The pitch row triggered by India's embarrassing 30-run loss to South Africa while chasing a modest 124 has also opened up a larger skipper Shubman Gill and coach Gautam Gambhir on the same page on what construes ideal home conditions? The collapse, India's lowest failed chase at home, has left behind deeper fault lines than a dry Eden Gardens wicket can conceal.

Just a month ago, on the eve of the West Indies Test series in Ahmedabad, Gill had been emphatic that the team has moved away from the philosophy of preferring "rank turners"

...We would be looking to play on wickets that offer both to the batsmen and to the bowlers," Gill had said, outlining a vision of balanced surfaces.

Yet India walked into the series against the reigning World Test champions on a pitch that was the exact opposite of what their captain advocated.

The Eden strip was left unwatered for more than a week and was kept under cover in the evening. The result was a dry, flaky surface that disintegrated from session one in a match that lasted barely eight sessions, producing 38 wickets, with spinners taking 22 and pacers 16. If the team had moved away from rank turners, Eden suggested the opposite. Gambhir was unapologetic and had no qualms declaring that the



Shubman Gill and coach Gautam Gambhir

team management wanted. "If you don't play well this is what happens. There were no demons in the

wicket," he asserted. Ask Aiden Markram, who was undone by a ball from **Jasprit Bumrah that leapt** from the off-stump line in the first hour of the opening day, or KL Rahul, who was bamboozled by a Marco Jansen delivery that reared up sharply in the fourth innings — and they would disagree.

Gambhir insisted seamers were the ones doing the

won this Test match, you wouldn't even be talking about this pitch," he said in his usual combative style.

The messaging gap, however, is evident. Gill had asked for balance. The coach wanted exactly what transpired. The captain didn't even get to play owing to neck spasms that needed hospitalisation, putting him in doubt for the second Test in Guwahati from November

Gill took no part beyond day 1 owing to the neck spasm sustained while playing a slog-sweep bound-"Ultimately, if we had ary off Simon Harmer. In his

absence, Indian batting displayed neither discipline nor adaptability.

India have now lost four of their last six Tests at home — a trend that has shred the aura of invincibility that the team enjoyed in its backyard.

Under Gambhir, India have eight wins from 18 Tests — four of them have come against lowly Bangladesh and West Indies.

The script here resembled India's 0-3 humiliation against New Zealand at home last year, a series in which Ajaz Patel (11 in Mumbai), Mitchell Santner quent. Historically rich in the WTC campaign now.

(13 in Pune) exposed the side's frailties on turning tracks. That series derailed India's World Test Championship run, and the Eden defeat now sits in the same bracket. This loss also flipped India's WTC standngs. South Africa climbed to third with two wins in three;

in the new cycle. From the moment India landed in Kolkata on Tuesday, the focus was obsessively on the pitch. Meetings with curator Sujan Mukherjee became fre-

India dropped to fourth with

just two wins in eight Tests

ing the iconic 2001 Laxman-Dravid miracle — Eden hosted a surface that drew even Harbhajan Singh's ire.

"They have completely destroyed Test cricket. RIP Test cricket," Harbhajan

Cheteshwar Pujara dismissed talk of transition as excuse-making.

"Losing at home cannot be accepted, transition or not," he said.

India had the Test in their pocket at stumps on day two. South Africa were 93/7, effectively 63 ahead, with Temba Bavuma on 29 (78 balls) and debutant Corbin Bosch on 1.

Conditions on a Kolkata morning typically favour seam with cool breeze from the Ganges. Common sense demanded that Bumrah start at the Club House End, where he took a first-innings

Instead, he was introduced as late as the ninth over from the other end and by then Bosch looked settled, Bavuma had grown roots, and the lead stretched past the psychological 100run mark.

Indian batting implosion It mirrors tactical confusion, and over-curated pitches, without batting depth to sustain it.

After Guwahati — where they now cannot win the series regardless of result -India will not play at home till the Border-Gavaskar Trophy in January 2027.

Before that, they tour Sri Lanka (August) and New Zealand (October next year) and their task is cut out in

Split captaincy wise amid pressure on Gill: Mukund



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA New Delhi

Former India opener Abhinav Mukund believes the pressure on Shubman Gill has reached a critical point as he called for split captaincy in the wake of India's opening Test defeat to South Africa.

With Gill absent in the second innings due to neck spasm, India were bowled out for 93 in their chase of 124. South Africa sealed a 30run win inside three days for their first Test victory in India in 15 years.

"At home, everyone expects India to win — no questions asked," Mukund said on The Great Indian Cricket Show Doordarshan.

Gill suffered the spasm during a slog sweep in the first innings and retired hurt on four as his absence compounded India's batting woes. Gill's workload has also become a topic of

Immediately after leading India to a 2-0 Test series sweep over West Indies at home, Gill flew to Australia to captain the ODI side, also featuring in the T20Is before returning to lead India in the opening Test just four days

after the Brisbane T20I. He has been playing nonstop cricket across formats since the IPL and then he was made the Test skipper and led India to a remarkable 2-2 draw in England in a five-match gruelling series.

"I think Shubman has it in him to become an all-format captain, but I don't think India should have an allformat captain anymore," said Mukund, who has played seven Tests.

"Split captaincy is a smart move. Shubman Gill has been given the responsibility to take on the mantle in Tests and he will be under big pressure."

'This is a crucial series," he noted, "and the England series was a big confidence

ANUYA PRASAD, PRANJALI SEAL

AIR PISTOL GOLD

AND SILVER AT

DEAFLYMPICS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Young Anuya Prasad gave

herself a birthday present

while Pranjali Prashant

Dhumal added to India's joy

as the duo completed a 1-2

finish in the women's 10m

air pistol event at the

Deaflympics, in Tokyo on

Anuya clinched the gold

medal in style, breaking the

Deaf Final World Record

(DFWR) enroute to winning

the top-podium spot, while

Qualification World Record

(QWR) on way to securing a

place in the finals. In men's

10m air pistol, Abhinav

Deshwal, who equalled the

Qualification World Record,

won silver to take India's

medal tally in shooting to

seven after two days of com-

On Sunday, 23-year-old

broke the

■ New Delhi

Pranjali

petition.

Something is wrong if a strong squad is losing at home: Pujara

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Former India Test batter Cheteshwar Pujara has strongly rejected the notion that India's crushing defeat to South Africa in the first Test at Eden Gardens can be blamed to a transition

Pujara contended that while overseas losses during a rebuilding period can be understood, losing at home - especially with a squad that includes proven first-class performers — is unacceptable.

He pointed to players such as Yashasvi Jaiswal, KL Rahul, Washington Sundar and Shubman Gill as evidence of India's depth and potential in the longer

"I don't agree with the view that India's defeat at home can be attributed to a transitional phase. While it's understandable to face setbacks abroad during a transition period, the current Indian side pos-



sesses ample talent and strong first-class records -- players like Yashasvi Jaiswal, KL Rahul, Washington Sundar, and Shubman Gill have all proven themselves," Pujara told lio Hotstar.

"If the team is losing in home conditions despite this, it suggests that something else is wrong. Had this match been played on a good pitch, India's chances of winning would've been much higher.'

While India head coach

Gautam Gambhir did not find any fault with the pitch where wickets fell in heap. Pujara said such tracks are not good for India.

'The nature of such wickets reduces our winning percentage and brings the opposition on a level footing. Even an India A team, given the depth of talent, could challenge South Africa at home. So it's not lack of ability. Therefore, blaming transition for this defeat in India isn't justifiable," he said.

No matter who sits out, SA still wins: Rabada

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

South African pacer Kagiso Rabada, who missed the first Test against India here due to a rib injury, is in awe of his team's ability to rebound from setbacks and 'find a way to win" no matter who is left out.

The reigning World Test Championship winners completed a 30-run win inside three days over India in the opening Test here defending a modest 123 on Sunday. The win, which was their first on Indian soil in 15 years, gave them an unassailable 1-0 lead in the twomatch series.

"No matter who sits out, we can still find a way to win. (Skipper) Temba (Bavuma) has been crucial for us, but he hasn't played every game. I haven't played this game," Rabada said in a video shared by Cricket South Africa.

Bavuma returned to the playing XI after missing their preceding two Tests in Pakistan, where South Africa bounced back to draw the series 1-1.

"That doesn't matter. Whoever is gonna get out on the field, we believe that they can do the job," Rabada said.

The visitors outplayed the hosts on a dry wicket here with variable bounce and turn. Rabada hailed South Africa's individual performances, including skipper Bavuma's match-winning 55 in the second innings that gave the travelling bowlers something to fight for.

"We had a good start in the first innings with Aiden (Markram) and (Ryan) Rickelton. They set the tone. Marco (Jansen) stood up, Boschi (Corbin Bosch) stood up at crucial times. Everyone chipped in and really, that's the hallmark of what this team is made of," Rabada said.

It remains to be seen if Rabada, who had to undergo multiple scans in the lead-up to the first Test, would be available for the second Test to be played in Guwahati from November

Rabada said the victory in a low-scoring thriller at Kolkata would rank among



the top three wins for South Africa this season.

"(The victory is) definitely right up there. With the types of wins that we've had this season, it's hard to say, because we've had some pretty epic wins, but this one is definitely (in the) top three," he said.

'That was typical Test cricket (contest)... I mean. just the ebbs and flows of

"It was quite nerve-wracking on the side, and I'm just itching to want to get out. I don't know what to say. It's just. It's just, like, an emotional roller coaster, and I'm glad that we finished on the right side," Rabada

the game. We found our selves on the back foot, and then somehow managed to finish on the front foot.

Dhanush Srikanth, who trains at Olympian Gagan Narang's shooting academy in Hyderabad, had won the 10m air rifle gold.

Anuya shot 564 in the qualification round to enter the eight-shooter placed third, final while Pranjali broke the QWR with a brilliant score of 572 to top the preliminary round. The 19-yearold Anuya was on song in the final as she amassed 241.1 and in the process set a DFWR on way to gold.

This is her second major international medal after winning gold at the Deaf World Championships in Hanover last year.

FIDE World Cup: Arjun draws easy with black pieces



Pat to captain SRH for

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Hyderabad

Australia's premier fast bowler Pat Cummins was on Monday appointed as captain of Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) for third consecutive IPL season.

SRH confirmed Cummins role as leader on its 'X' handle with his pictures without divulging details.

Cummins has officially been ruled out of the first Ashes Test in Perth due to his back injury but he is expected to be ready for the

second match in Brisbane. Steven Smith will captain Australia in the opening Test against England which begins on November 21. The second Test in Brisbane

begins on December 4.

Cummins took over SRH's captaincy from South African Aiden Markram in 2024 after he was bought by the franchise for a whopping ₹20.50 crore in the 2024 IPL players auction following Australia's success in the World Test Championship and the 2023 50-over World Cup

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Panaji (Goa)

Seeking to qualify for the Candidates' event, India's top-rated Arjun Erigaisi walked off with an easy draw with his Chinese counterpart Wei Yi in the first game of the quarterfinals on Monday.

On what turned out to be an easy day for Arjun, Alexander Donchenko finally realised about things being

rosy everyday. The German had been on a

dream run which is likely to end now as Nodirbek Yakubboev won an exciting game one with white pieces. If Yakubboev is able to hold the German in the next game to a draw he will be through to the semifinal. For Arjun the opening was

important and it did not pose

any issues. The young Indian

generation is re-writing the

theoretical aspects of the

IN THE ONLY OTHER REMAINING MATCH SAMUEL SHANKLAND OF UNITED STATES ALSO PLAYED OUT A DRAW WITH RUSSIAN ANDREY ESIPENKO

game and Arjun is no exception. As it turned out of a routine Ruy Lopez theory, Arjun equalised with a thematic pawn sacrifice earlier in the middle game. When Wei Yi returned the favour the position was

already dead-equal and the players shook hands to split the point in a mere 31 moves. Javokhir Sindarov of Uzbekistan played out a draw with Jose Eduaordo Martinez Alcantara of Mexico in a well contested game. The Uzbek was never under real threat and could be seen as a potential semifinalist out of this

contest. In the only other

remaining match Samuel Shankland of United States also played out a draw with Russian Andrey Esipenko. Complete results quarter-

finals game 1: Javokhir Sindarov (Uzb) drew with Jose Eduardo Martinez Alcantara (Mex); Wei Yi (Chn) drew with Arjun Erigaisi (Ind); Sam Shankland (Usa) drew with Andrey Esipenko (Fid); Nodirbek Yakubboev (Uzb) beat Alexander Donchenko (Ger).

India pins hopes on Satwik, Chirag as Lakshya, Prannoy seek form

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Sydney

With India's singles stars still searching for rhythm, the spotlight will once again be on Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty as the topseeded men's doubles pair eyes its first title of the season at the Australian Open Super 500 starting here on Tuesday.



The Asian Games champions have been the bright spots in an otherwise troubled season for Indian badminton, weaving together a second World Championships bronze and back-to-back runner-up finishes at the Hong Kong Super 500 and China Masters Super 750. The two, who spent 18 weeks as world No. 1, had slipped to No.

27 in May but fought their way back to No. 3. They will be eager to put together another strong run ahead of the World Tour Finals. The Commonwealth Games champions will open against Chinese Taipei's Chang Ko-Chi and Po Li-Wei.

Bruised by injuries and lean patches but intermittently shining with flashes of brilliance, India's top singles

stars, including Lakshya Sen and HS Prannoy, will hope to find the consistent rhythm that has eluded them for much of the year.

Lakshya seemed to have rediscovered his form with a final appearance at the Hong Kong Open after enduring a run of poor results since his heartbreaking fourth-place finish at the Paris Olympics.

damage or loss to any person, a purchaser of this publication or not for the result of any action taken on the basis of this work. All disputes are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of competent court and forums in Lucknow only. Readers are advised and requested to verify and seek appropriate advice to satisfy themselves about the veracity of any kind of advertisement before responding to any contents published in this newspaper. The printer, publisher, editor and any employee of the Pioneer Group's will not be held responsible for any kind of loss, consequences and further product-related damages on such advertisements.