



CM resorting to 'dirty politics': Ambati

Minister launches Media Relations Portal



Supreme Court to hear pleas challenging SIR



Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium to be dismantled, rebuild as 102-acre Sports City

Arjun vs Leko, Praggnanandhaa vs Dubov in round 4 of FIDE WC



PIONEER IN SHORT

SECURITY TIGHTENED ACROSS AP AFTER DELHI BLAST

The police stepped up security measures across the state following the blast in Delhi on Monday evening. A high-intensity explosion ripped through a slow-moving car at a traffic signal near the Red Fort metro station, killing at least eight people and gutting several vehicles. Twenty-four people were injured in the blast that took place on a busy evening when the area was milling with people.

FULL REPORT ON P2

TWO TTD OUTSOURCING EMPLOYEES FOUND EATING 'NON-VEGETARIAN FOOD'

Once again, an act of sacrilege has occurred in Tirumala. Near the holy feet of Lord Venkateswara, who is revered as the living deity of the Kali Yuga, a group of TTD (Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams) staff members were found eating non-vegetarian food along the footpath leading to the temple. These employees, who work as sanitation staff on a contract basis, were seen sitting together and eating the non-vegetarian meals they...

FULL REPORT ON P3

BJP CONFIDENT OF DECISIVE AND HISTORIC VICTORY IN BIHAR POLLS

The BJP on Monday exuded confidence about the NDA's "decisive and historic" victory in the Bihar assembly polls, as it took a swipe at Rahul Gandhi over his jungle safari in Madhya Pradesh's Satpura Tiger Reserve, asking him to enjoy his "political tourism". Addressing a press conference at the BJP headquarters, senior BJP leader Ravi Shankar...

FULL REPORT ON P5

MANU, ESHA MISS 10M AIR PISTOL MEDAL IN WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

Double Olympic-medallist shooter Manu Bhaker and multiple Asian Games medal winner Esha Singh suffered a meltdown in the women's 10m air pistol final as the country's top-two shooters could not win a medal in the ISSF World Championships on Monday. Manu, winner of the 10m air pistol individual and mixed team bronze at the Paris Olympics...

FULL REPORT ON P12

QUOTE OF THE DAY



"FOR THE FIRST TIME IN INDIA, A STATE GOVERNMENT HAS DECIDED TO PURCHASE 80 LAKH TONNES OF PADDY IN A SINGLE KHARIF SEASON. THIS ACHIEVEMENT REFLECTS THE STRENGTH OF TELANGANA'S AGRICULTURAL ECOSYSTEM

— N. UTTAM KUMAR REDDY
TG IRRIGATION AND CIVIL SUPPLIES MINISTER

8 killed in deadly blast at Red Fort

■ Cars gutted and several people injured



PNS ■ New Delhi

A high-intensity explosion ripped through a car parked near the Red Fort metro station on Monday evening, gutting several vehicles and killing at least eight people, officials said.

Twenty-four people were injured in the blast that took place on a busy evening when the area was milling with people. The injured were taken to the LNJP hospital a few kilometres away.

Videos shared by the Chandni Chowk Traders' Association showed the magnitude of the blast. A body could be seen lying on a vehicle. Another video showed a body lying on the

THE BLAST WAS SO POWERFUL THAT IT SHATTERED THE WINDOWS OF VEHICLES PARKED SEVERAL METRES AWAY. THE SOUND WAS HEARD AT ITS A FEW KILOMETRES AWAY

THE BLAST OCCURRED IN A CAR PARKED NEAR RED FORT METRO STATION GATE NUMBER 1. THE INTENSITY WAS QUITE HIGH

Probing Red Fort blast with full intensity: Shah

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday said that top investigating agencies are probing the blast near Red Fort with full intensity, and will go in-depth into the explosion which took place in a Hyundai i20 car.

Citing hospital authorities,



the home minister said eight people lost their lives while

several others received injuries in the blast, and the investigators are keeping all options open while probing the incident. Top agencies are investigating the incident with full intensity, and they will go in-depth into the incident, Shah said.

Fire Services said. The fire, officials said, was brought under control by 7.29 pm.

CONTINUED ON >> P2

PM SPEAKS TO SHAH

PNS ■ New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday took stock of the situation after a blast near the Red Fort here on Monday evening claimed at least eight lives, and spoke with Home Minister Amit Shah, government sources said. According to government sources, PM Modi has taken stock of the situation. He also spoke with Home Minister Shah and took an update, they said.

STAMPEDE IN TEMPLES

Cabinet sub-committee constituted to take corrective measures

PNS ■ Amaravati

The State government has focused on accidents and stampede incidents that happened in temples across the State. In the past year, accidents took place in three major temples. During the distribution of tokens on Vaikunta Ekadashi in Tirupati, a stampede occurred, followed by a wall collapse at the Simhachalam temple that led to the death of devotees. Recently, a stampede occurred at the Kashibugga Venkateswara Swamy temple in Srikakulam district.

In this context, the government has turned its attention to preventing stampede incidents. Measures have been taken to ensure that such incidents do not recur in the future. As part of this, the



State government has set up a Cabinet Sub-Committee. This sub-committee will take preventive measures to ensure that stampedes do not occur in temples. The sub-committee comprised three Ministers as members. Endowments Minister Anam Ramanarayana Reddy, Andhra Pradesh Home Minister Vangalapudi Anita, and Andhra Pradesh Revenue Minister A Satya Prasad.

The government, which constituted the cabinet sub-committee, has directed the Endowments Department to take further action. Meanwhile, the sub-committee will also oversee attacks on temples during the previous government's tenure and the actions taken by the government in response to those attacks. The Chief Secretary of Andhra Pradesh, Vijayanand, has issued orders to this effect.

Vande Mataram remains a source of inspiration: CM

PNS ■ Vijayawada

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu emphasised the importance of the song "Vande Mataram," urging every Indian to remember it daily.

Speaking at the celebration of its 150th anniversary, he lauded the song as a powerful emblem of strength, resilience, and unwavering patriotism that played a pivotal role in the freedom movement. He highlighted its ability to unite people beyond caste and religion.

The Chief Minister recalled Prime Minister Modi's initiative to celebrate "Vande Mataram" throughout the year, outlining a plan for these festivities to occur in four phases. He encouraged all Indians to embrace the song, noting its role in igniting a sense of patriotism and national pride.

CONTINUED ON >> P2

Cyclone Montha damage revised to Rs 6,384 cr

■ State seeks urgent aid of Rs 900 crore

PNS ■ Amaravati

The Andhra Pradesh government on Monday revised the estimate of damage caused by Cyclone Montha to Rs 6,384 crore and sought an immediate relief of Rs 900 crore after a central team visited the state to assess the loss. An eight-member Inter-Ministerial Central Team (IMCT) led by Pasumi Basu, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, and K Ponnuswamy, Director, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, visited the state on Monday.

The state earlier pegged the preliminary loss at Rs 5,265 crore.

"The total estimated loss stands at Rs 6,384 crore, and the state has sought immediate interim assistance of Rs 901.4 crore from the Centre," said an official release.



Inter-Ministerial Central Team members inspecting damaged crops in Krishna district on Monday

The southern state has appealed to the central team to extend generous support, stating that Cyclone Montha caused extensive damage far beyond initial expectations. In a detailed presentation to the central team, officials informed that agriculture, horticulture, fisheries, irrigation, housing,

and infrastructure suffered heavy damage across 24 districts. Crops like paddy, cotton, maize, and green gram spread over 1.61 lakh acres were affected, while horticulture crops across 6,250 hectares were damaged, the officials briefed the team.

CONTINUED ON >> P2

BBC faces leadership crisis

■ News bosses quit over Trump speech edit, bias claims



PNS ■ London

The BBC was facing a leadership crisis and mounting political pressure on Monday after its top executive and its head of news both quit over the editing of a speech by US President Donald Trump. The resigna-

tion of BBC Director-General Tim Davie and news chief Deborah Turness over accusations of bias was welcomed by Trump, who said the way his speech had been edited was an attempt to "step on the scales of a Presidential Election."

CONTINUED ON >> P2

Water conservation is vital to securing the nation's future: Union Minister

PNS ■ Guntur

"Watershed development is not just about building check dams, it is about rebuilding the ecological foundation of rural India and transforming the nation from water-stressed to water-secure," declared Union Minister of State for Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Pemmasani Chandrasekhar, while addressing the National Watershed Conference in Guntur on Monday. He emphasised that water conservation is the cornerstone



Pemmasani Chandrasekhar

of India's future, noting that the country has only 4 per cent of the world's renewable water resources to serve 18 per cent of the global population. "Every single drop of water must be conserved

carefully. Our nation's prosperity is deeply linked to the monsoon. When rains are good, we flourish; when they fail, we suffer," he remarked.

Citing alarming statistics, the Minister said India's per capita water availability, which stood at 1,486 cubic metres in 2021, is projected to decline to 1,367 cubic metres by 2031, placing the country in the "water-stressed" category. He called for zero tolerance towards water wastage, comparing it to the nation's zero tolerance toward terrorism. Highlighting the remark-

able success of WDC-PMKSY 1.0 (Watershed Development Component - Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana), the Minister said the first phase delivered a 70 per cent rise in farmers' income, boosted milk production by 40 per cent, and increased the groundwater table by an average of three metres. Agricultural income rose by Rs 19,454 crore — a 6.2-fold return on investment, he said. "Thanks to these efforts, soil moisture retention has improved, enabling farmers to grow second and third

crops while ensuring better access to irrigation and drinking water," he added.

Under WDC-PMKSY 2.0, the Minister said 1,220 projects are being implemented across 50 lakh hectares with an investment of 712,972 crore, aiming to rejuvenate drought-prone and rainfed regions by 2026. He noted that the 'Watershed Yatra', launched by Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, has already reached 8.5 lakh farmers, proving that "when communities lead, transformation follows."

CONTINUED ON >> P2

CM reviews preparations for visit of President, PM to Puttaparthi

PNS ■ Amaravati

The State Government has intensified arrangements for the centenary celebrations of Sri Sathya Sai Baba at Puttaparthi. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to visit on November 19 and President Droupadi Murmu on November 22, Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu has directed officials to ensure foolproof arrangements and leave no scope for lapses in hospitality, safety, and logistics.

Chairing a high-level review meeting at the Secretariat on Monday, the Chief Minister, along with Ministers, Chief Secretary, DGP, and senior officials, reviewed ongoing preparations for the event.

The Chief Minister emphasised that the government is officially organising the cen-



tenary celebrations and that meticulous coordination among departments is crucial given the presence of the nation's top dignitaries. He instructed the ministers' committee to personally visit Puttaparthi and oversee arrangements at the ground level. "The town should be beautifully decorated, clean, and welcoming for devotees and dignitaries alike," Naidu said, adding that no compro-

mise should be made on sanitation and public amenities. Highlighting that lakhs of devotees from across India and abroad are expected to visit Puttaparthi for darshan at the Maha Samadhi, Naidu directed officials to make comprehensive arrangements for crowd management, accommodation, drinking water, food, and medical facilities. He insisted that no devotee should face

inconvenience during the celebrations.

Officials informed the Chief Minister that 10 medical camps are being set up across Puttaparthi as a precautionary measure and that special parking zones are being arranged to manage the heavy influx of vehicles. Adequate APSRTC bus services will also be deployed to facilitate smooth movement of devotees.

In terms of transportation, officials reported that the Railways has scheduled 682 trains, including 65 special services, between November 13 and December 1 to handle the expected rush of pilgrims. Additionally, 20 shuttle buses per day will operate between the Puttaparthi railway station and bus complex to help devotees commute conveniently.

US: 'Closely monitoring situation'

PNS ■ New York/Washington

The United States on Monday said it is closely monitoring the situation and stands ready to provide consular assistance in the wake of the deadly bomb blast near Red Fort in New Delhi that has killed at least eight people and injured many more. A State Department spokesperson told PTI that "we are aware of the explosion near Red Fort in Delhi. We are closely monitoring the situation and stand ready to provide consular assistance." A high-intensity explosion ripped through a slow-moving car at a traffic signal near the Red Fort metro station in Delhi, killing at least eight people and gutting several vehicles. Twenty-four people were injured in the blast that took place on a busy evening when the area was milling with people.

Security tightened across AP after Delhi blast

PNS ■ Amaravati

The police stepped up security measures across the state following the blast in Delhi on Monday evening.

A high-intensity explosion ripped through a slow-moving car at a traffic signal near the Red Fort metro station, killing at least eight people and gutting several vehicles. Twenty-four people were injured in the blast that took place on a busy evening when the area was milling with people. The injured were taken to the LNJP hospital, a few kilometres away. "We have intensified security across the state following the Delhi blast. Special Branch and Intelligence Wings have been activated to collect information and maintain close surveillance," said an official release from the DGP



office. Director General of Police (DGP) Harish Kumar Gupta instructed all Superintendents of Police, Range Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIGs), and Inspector General of Police (IGPs) to enhance security in public places, vital installations, and sensitive locations. Special Branch and Intelligence Wings have been activated.

The people of the state

have been urged to remain alert and report any suspicious objects, persons, or activities to the nearest police station or by dialing 100 or 112. Special focus is being placed on areas of mass gatherings, with increased patrolling, thorough checks, and CCTV monitoring and field officers have been instructed to conduct special operations to ensure citizen safety statewide, it said.

Tension as Chaitanya school student dies by suicide

PNS ■ Kadapa

Tension prevailed near Chaitanya School in Kadapa after a Class 9 student committed suicide in the hostel room. The parents staged a protest, alleging that the school management was responsible for their child's death. They tried to take the girl's body from the mortuary to the school.

The police, upon receiving the information, stopped the girl's parents and relatives. Consequently, the girl's parents and relatives staged a sit-in protest on the road itself.

Meanwhile, the District Educational Officer went to the school to investigate the student's death. Even after the DEO arrived, the management did not open the school gate. The DEO waited at the school gate for nearly half an hour. The DEO expressed anger over the school management's failure to respond.

CM resorting to 'dirty politics': Ambati

PNS ■ Tadepalli

Former minister Ambati Rambabu has expressed anger, saying that Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu and Minister Lokesh are engaging in vile politics. He said that Naidu, who is committing serious wrongdoings by using temples and God for his political gain, will not be forgiven even by the Almighty. Rambabu made these remarks while speaking to the media at the YSRCP central office in Tadepalli.

He said the only agenda of Naidu's government is to harass YSRCP leaders, and there have been several instances of this over the past one and a half years. According to him, the Chief Minister was using a section of the media to spread false allegations against YSRCP. First, they publish certain stories to create a perception among people that something big is going to



Former minister Ambati Rambabu addressing a media conference in Tadepalli on Monday

happen. Then, to make it look like YSRCP leaders have committed a major crime, they set up a SIT (Special Investigation Team).

He accused Naidu of stooping so low as to use even God and temples for his selfish political motives. He said false narratives were spread that animal fat was mixed in the sacred laddus. Former TTD Chairman YV Subba Reddy approached

the Supreme Court demanding a CBI inquiry into the matter. The court ordered a probe under a SIT supervised by the CBI.

Rambabu added that since went to court, Naidu began targeting him by having media outlets publish a series of stories against him. A person named Chinna Appanna was questioned by the SIT on June 6, and he was pressured to name YSRCP leaders.

Uttam reviews record paddy procurement Directs officials to stay alert

PNS ■ Hyderabad

Telangana has achieved a new milestone in paddy procurement, with 8.54 lakh metric tonnes (LMT) purchased so far during the Kharif 2025-26 season - more than twice the 3.94 LMT recorded at the same time last year. Irrigation and Civil Supplies Minister Capt. N. Uttam Kumar Reddy, along with Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao, on Monday reviewed the progress with district collectors and civil supplies officials through a video conference held by Chief Secretary S. Ramakrishna Rao from the Dr B.R. Ambedkar Secretariat. The ministers directed the officials to stay vigilant in view of any adverse weather conditions

and to counter misinformation about procurement.

Uttam Kumar Reddy said Telangana had set an unprecedented record in both paddy production and procurement.

"For the first time in India, a state government has decided to purchase 80 lakh tonnes of paddy in a single Kharif season. This achievement reflects the strength of Telangana's agricultural ecosystem and the commitment of our government to farmers," he said.

He informed that 3.95 LMT of fine variety (sannalu) and 4.59 LMT of common variety (doddupaddy) had been procured so far. The number of farmers selling to government centres has nearly doubled - from 55,493 last year to 1,21,960 this year.

The total MSP value of paddy procured stands at Rs 2,041.44 crore, compared with Rs 915.05 crore a year ago. Of this, Rs 832.90 crore has already been paid to farmers, while the remaining Rs 1,208.54 crore will be cleared through the Online Procurement Management System (OPMS) within 48 hours of registration.

The bonus value for fine paddy varieties rose sharply from Rs 43.02 crore last year to Rs 197.73 crore this year, of which Rs 35.72 crore has been disbursed.

Uttam Kumar Reddy instructed officials to ensure prompt payments, adequate storage and transportation, and continuous field supervision by collectors.

"Procurement is a sensitive process that must run

smoothly from purchase to payment. Every grain must be safeguarded, and every farmer must be paid on time," he said.

The Minister directed all collectors to remain in high alert mode to handle any adverse weather conditions and take preventive steps to protect all crops - paddy, maize, and cotton - from damage. He said farmers had only recently recovered from the Monda cyclone, and the new system demanded preparedness. "Officials must act with speed and caution. No farmer should face losses due to rain or procedural delay," he emphasised.

He instructed all districts to accelerate procurement and move stocks quickly to rice mills.

Narrow escape for RTC bus passengers

PNS ■ Kakinada

A large number of passengers of an RTC bus had a narrow escape from what

would have been a major disaster, when a speeding van lost control and collided head-on along Pulimeru- Divili road in

Peddapuram Mandal on Monday. The Pallo Velugu bus was overcrowded and was on its way from Prathipadu to Kakinada

when this accident took place. Luckily no one was injured in the accident, according to the Bus driver and conductor.

13 killed...

"Six cars, two erickshaws and one autorickshaw were gutted in the fire," said a fire department official.

The blast was so powerful that it shattered the windows of vehicles parked several metres away. The sound was heard at ITO a few kilometres away. "The blast occurred in a car parked near Red Fort metro station gate number 1. The intensity was quite high. Injuries are feared," said a senior official of Delhi Fire Service. Visuals of the incident showed plumes of fire billowing from the burning cars. Panic gripped the area as several vehicles were seen damaged at the spot following the loud explosion. An injured eyewitness, who suffered a wound on his forehead, said the explosion appeared to have originated from a car, probably a Swift.

"There was a Swift car in front of my auto. There was something in that car that suddenly blasted," he said.

Another witness said, "I was at the gurdwara when I heard a strong sound. We couldn't make out what it was, it was that loud."

"Several vehicles nearby were completely damaged," he added. Sanjay Bhargava, president of the Chandni Chowk Traders Association, whose shop is about 800 metres away from the incident site, said the entire building shook due to the blast. There was chaos in the market as people started running, he shared. The blast came hours after the recovery of around 360 kg of suspect-

ed ammonium nitrate and a cache of arms and ammunition from a Kashmiri doctor's rented accommodation in nearby Faridabad Haryana Police, in coordination with their Jammu and Kashmir counterparts, arrested Dr Muzammil Ganaie from Faridabad's Dhauj area and recovered explosive materials, weapons, and timers from his rented house. Eight people, including three doctors, were arrested and 2,900 kg of explosives seized with the uncovering of a "white collar" terror module involving the Jaish-e-Mohammed and Ansar Ghazwat-ul-Hind and spanning Kashmir, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh, officials said.

Among those arrested following a 15-day operation were Kashmir's Dr Ganaie in Faridabad and Dr Shaheen, a woman doctor from Lucknow, who was taken by air to Srinagar for custodial interrogation, officials said. An AK-47 rifle was found in her car.

AP Cabinet...

He instructed them to prepare a list of people without house sites and ensure that everyone eligible receives one. He urged Ministers to actively take the government's welfare initiatives to the public. The CM also stated that delays in resolving revenue-related issues are unacceptable, and called for the formulation of an effective mechanism for speedy resolution of such matters.

The Andhra Pradesh government took another key decision. It decided to set up

20 to 30 workstations in every mandal across the state. These workstations are being set up to facilitate IT and IT-enabled service employees who work under the work-from-home model. Through these workstations, employees will get the convenience of working from home, while those who set up the workstations will receive government support and employment opportunities. On the other hand, the State government has been taking steps to provide employment opportunities to the youth of the state through the work from home policy. A skill survey has been conducted to provide employment opportunities under this policy for individuals aged between 18 and 50 who possess educational qualifications and have an understanding of technology. The survey has now been completed, and the next phase of the process will soon begin for those who have registered their details. Along with them, those who are already working from home in various companies are also included in this initiative.

In the cabinet meeting, the issue of housing for the poor in the state was also discussed. On this occasion, Chief Minister Naidu suggested that MLAs of constituencies and Ministers should take responsibility for providing houses to the poor. He also emphasised the need to identify those in the state who do not have their own residential land. He advised preparing a list of such

people and ensuring that everyone gets a house plot. The Chief Minister made it clear that measures should be taken so that those without residential land benefit within a year. He also suggested that ministers and MLAs should take the welfare schemes implemented by the government to the people. He urged that revenue-related issues should be resolved quickly.

Vande Mataram...

Acknowledging the leadership of Prime Minister Modi amid evolving global circumstances, he pointed out that unlike many nations lacking effective leaders, India is on a path to become a global leader by 2047, with Andhra Pradesh set to exemplify this vision. Over the last 78 years, India has showcased its resilience, and the Chief Minister expressed confidence that the nation will excel in all areas. He reiterated that "Vande Mataram," which once inspired the fight for independence, remained a vital source of inspiration as India strives to establish itself as the leading nation on the world stage.

Cyclone Montha...

Fish ponds over 3,000 hectares were destroyed, and nearly 4,500 houses and around 1,800 schools were damaged, the release said, adding that roads stretching 5,000 km and 311 bridges and culverts under the roads and buildings department also suffered damage.

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In the irrigation sector, 3,437 minor and 2,417 major and medium structures were impacted, while 58 urban local bodies reported extensive losses due to heavy rainfall and flooding.

Officials emphasised that the state requires urgent financial support to undertake repair works and assist families affected by the disaster.

Between October 27 and 29, the state recorded 82.3 mm of rainfall, nine times higher than the seasonal average, while the cyclone affected 443 mandals, resulting in three deaths, submergence of 9,960 houses, and displacement of over 1.11 lakh people.

BBC faces...

BBC chairman Samir Shah was expected to issue an apology for the actions of the publicly funded national broadcaster on Monday.

The BBC has faced a storm of criticism for misleading editing of a speech Trump made on January 6, 2021, before a crowd of his supporters stormed the Capitol in Washington. Its "Panorama" documentary programme spliced together two sections of the speech, delivered almost an hour apart, into what appeared to be one quote in which Trump urged supporters to march with him and "fight like hell."

Among the parts cut out was a section where Trump said he wanted supporters to demonstrate peacefully. In a letter to staff, Davie said "there have been some mistakes made and as director-general I have to take ultimate responsibility." Turness said the controversy about the Trump documentary was "causing damage to the BBC."

"In public life leaders need to be fully accountable, and that is why I am stepping down," she said in a note to staff. "While mistakes have been made, I want to be absolutely clear recent allegations that BBC News is institutionally biased are wrong." Trump posted a link to a Daily Telegraph story about the speech-editing on his Truth Social network, thanking the newspaper "for exposing these Corrupt Journalists." These are very dishonest people who tried to step on the scales of a Presidential Election.

He called that "a terrible thing for Democracy!" White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt reacted on X, posting a screen grab of an article headlined "Trump goes to war with fake news BBC" beside another about Davie's resignation, with the words "shot" and "chaser."

Trump speech edited Pressure on the broadcaster's top executives has been growing since the right-leaning Daily Telegraph published parts of a dossier compiled by Michael Prescott, who had been hired to advise the BBC on standards and guidelines. As well as the Trump edit, it criticised the BBC's coverage of transgender issues and raised concerns of anti-Israel bias in the BBC's Arabic service.

The "Panorama" episode showed an edited clip from

the January 2021 speech in which Trump claimed the 2020 presidential election had been rigged. Trump is shown saying: "We're going to walk down to the Capitol and I'll be there with you. And we fight. We fight like hell."

According to video and a transcript from Trump's comments that day, he said: "We're going to walk down to the Capitol, and we're going to cheer on our brave senators and congressmen and women, and we're probably not going to be cheering so much for some of them."

"Because you'll never take back our country with weakness. You have to show strength and you have to be strong. We have come to demand that Congress do the right thing and only count the electors who have been lawfully slated, lawfully slated."

"I know that everyone here will soon be marching over to the Capitol building to peacefully and patriotically make your voices heard."

Trump used the "fight like hell" phrase toward the end of his speech, but without referencing the Capitol.

"We fight like hell. And if you don't fight like hell, you're not going to have a country

anymore," Trump said.

A national institution The 103-year-old BBC faces greater scrutiny than other broadcasters — and criticism from its commercial rivals — because of its status as a national institution funded through an annual license fee of 174.50 pounds (USD 230) paid by all households with a television.

Water conservation...

Chandrasekhar urged State CEOs to review progress, accelerate works, and ensure sustainable outcomes. "Implementation alone is not enough; sustainability is critical. Watershed Mahotsav and Mission Watershed Punarutthan are game-changing initiatives that require full participation from local bodies, communities, and private partners," he said. Commending the leadership of Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu and Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan, the Minister lauded their vision in reviving stalled projects and prioritising water security. "In Amaravati, water bodies are being created even before construction begins — a true model for future cities," he observed.

GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH
PANCHAYAT RAJ ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT
E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE
NIT No.60 to 116/TO/2025-26 Dt: 07.11.2025
Online tenders are invited for 57 works of Village Health Clinics with an Estimated Cost of Rs.2052.00 Lakhs under 15th Finance Commission Grant in Krishna District. Bid download starting date: 17.11.2025 onwards. Further details can be seen at e-market place: www.tender.aeprocurement.gov.in Ph.No.8956062101. Sd/- Executive Engineer, DPCR.No. 17982/CLADVT/11/2023-23, Dt: 16.11.2025 PFI Division, Machilipatnam

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Hindustan Zinc granted licence for tungsten, associated mineral block



PNS ■ Amaravati

The Andhra Pradesh government on Monday said it granted a composite licence to Hindustan Zinc Ltd for a tungsten and associated mineral block spread over 308 hectares in Sri Sathyasai district.

The state Industries and Commerce Department issued the license for the block located at Balepalayam village in Kanaganapalle mandal of Sri Sathyasai district. "Government...hereby grant composite license for tungsten and associated mineral block, over an extent of 308.3 hectares...in favour of Hindustan Zinc Ltd," an order said.

The GO further stated that the licensee must obtain all necessary approvals and consent from relevant landowners and departments before commencing prospecting operations.

Minister launches Media Relations Portal

RAVI KUMAR BOPPANA
PNS ■ Amaravati

In a major step towards digital governance and transparency, Information, Public Relations, and Housing Minister Kolusu Parthasarathy on Monday launched the Media Relations Portal, a comprehensive online platform for issuing accreditations to journalists across the state for the 2026-2027 term.

Launching the portal at the Public Relations Wing of the AP Secretariat, the Minister described it as a progressive and citizen-friendly initiative designed to simplify the accreditation process and strengthen the government's engagement with the media community. "This digital portal will make the entire accreditation process faster, transparent, and more accessible to every eligible journalist in the state. It is a step toward ensuring that information flow between the government and the media



Information, Public Relations Minister Kolusu Parthasarathy launching Media Relations Portal in Amaravati on Monday

remains seamless, accountable, and technology-driven," he said.

The launch event was attended by Information Department Director KS Vishwanathan and senior officials from the Public Relations Department.

The Minister, along with the Director, formally inaugurated the website and demonstrated its key features.

Through the new portal, journalists working in print

and electronic media can submit their applications for State-level and District-level accreditations. Once registered, applicants can also track the real-time status of their applications and receive updates regarding approvals, renewals, or clarifications directly on the website.

Minister Parthasarathy noted that the existing accreditations, issued during the previous cycle, will expire on November 30, making it

necessary for all journalists to apply afresh for the upcoming two-year term. "We invite applications from all eligible and recognized media representatives to make use of this facility. Our aim is to bring efficiency, clarity, and inclusiveness into the accreditation process," he said.

The Minister further informed that detailed guidelines and application procedures will be shared through an official press release on Tuesday, outlining the steps to be followed while submitting online applications.

He expressed confidence that the Media Relations Portal would become a single-window digital platform for all media-related interactions and services offered by the Information Department, marking another milestone in Andhra Pradesh's efforts to digitize governance and empower media professionals.

Driving licences straightaway in these training centres

PNS ■ Amaravati

Government-recognised driving training centres will be established in Andhra Pradesh. These centres will provide training to those who wish to obtain a new driving license. Currently, many private driving schools lack proper facilities, training tracks, and quality instruction. Hence, the Central government has decided to set up centres that provide training as per official standards.

It is decided to establish one driving training Centre (DTC) for every 10 lakh people. The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) has sanctioned 53 DTCs for Andhra Pradesh. Additionally, five regional driving training centres (RDTCS) have also been approved.

Of these five RDTCS, three are proposed for the coastal region, one for North Andhra, and one for the Rayalaseema region. To set up each RDTC, at least three acres of land are required. The Central Government will provide financial assistance of Rs 5 crore per centre, and proper driving tracks will be established there. Those who complete training at these centers can apply for and receive their driving license directly at the same location. In the case of DTCs, each



must have at least two acres of land. The MoRTH will also provide financial assistance—up to 85 per cent of the total cost or a maximum of Rs 2.5 crore per centre. These centres will offer training for two-wheelers, cars, and heavy vehicles such as buses and lorries. Along with practical driving lessons, training will also be provided using simulators and dedicated tracks. The MoRTH will specify the duration of training and fees for each license type. One major benefit for those who complete training at these DTCs is that they do not need to take a separate driving test at the state transport office—the license will be issued directly.

A key announcement was made regarding the establishment of 53 DTCs and 5 RDTCS in Andhra Pradesh.

Applications have been invited from those interested in setting up these

centers. Applicants must submit proposals to the District Collectors, who will examine eligibility, availability of land, and other requirements before recommending them to the Transport Commissioner. With the Commissioner's approval, an average of two DTCs per district will be sanctioned.

Applications have already been received from some districts. two DTC applications each from NTR, Srikakulam, and Nellore districts, and one each from Anantapur, Krishna, Tirupati, West Godavari, Bapatla, and Kakinada districts were received. Of these, the DTC application from Anantapur district has already been approved by the MoRTH. There are, however, there are no takers for RDTCS so far.

Officials said applications for DTCs and RDTCS will be accepted until the end of January.

Horror: Man stabs mother, brother to death

PNS ■ Bhimavaram

The double murder that took place early Monday morning in Bhimavaram town has left the local people in shock. The incident occurred on Sunkara Paddaiah Street, where Gunupudi Srinivas (38) stabbed his mother Gunupudi Mahalaxmi (60), and his younger brother, Gunupudi Raviteja (33) to death.

Following the attack, Srinivas called the police and surrendered, confessing to the crime, the official said.



According to family members, Srinivas had been suffering from mental illness for some time. He reportedly believed that his mother and brother

were discriminating against him, and, in a fit of distress, he committed this brutal act.

Local people said that the family's financial situation

deteriorated after the death of their father during the COVID-19 pandemic, which severely affected their finance business.

Both Srinivas and Raviteja were unmarried, and neighbors described the family as very reserved and private, maintaining limited contact with outsiders. The family also has a daughter who is married and currently lives in Bengaluru.

Upon receiving information about the incident, District Superintendent of Police Adnan Nayeem Asmi visited the crime scene. With the help of the clues team

and a sniffer dog, crucial evidence was collected. He also inquired about the progress of the investigation from the One Town Police.

Speaking to the media, the SP stated, "Preliminary investigation suggests that family disputes and the suspect's mental health issues may have led to these murders. We have directed officials to conduct a thorough and transparent investigation from all angles."

The gruesome incident has shocked Bhimavaram town, leaving the community in deep distress.

Concern over lack of shelter homes for street dogs

PNS ■ Kakinada

In the backdrop of the latest incident of a three-year-old boy Bharat dying of rabies in government general hospital here, the Citizens Initiative, a social organisation renewed its demand for construction of shelter homes for stray dogs to save their lives and also the lives of people, especially the children from them.

The boy suffered the dog bite in his village Kodavali near Gollaprolu a month ago.

Despite anti-rabies injections being given, he could not survive from the dreaded rabies. The Citizens Initiative secretary and a senior BJP leader Duvvuri Subrahmanyam has referred to the Supreme court's verdict that all the street dogs, especially those found near schools, Anganwadi centers, hospitals, railway



stations and bus stations should be shifted to special dog shelters.

He told media persons here on Monday that the World Health Organization statistics showed that about 28,000 to 30,000 people die from dog bites in India every year. He said the Supreme court's directive, striking a balance between protection of street dogs and protection of humans from stray dogs, was most

pertinent. But the pity is that there seems no permanent shelters for dogs anywhere in the state, more so in Kakinada smart city corporation, he added.

Subrahmanyam demanded that the state government allocate special funds to the tune of Rs3 to 5 crores to all the municipalities for construction of shelters for street dogs including for land acquisition.

ADULTERATED GHEE IN TIRUMALA LADDU Shocking facts comes out in CBI inquiry: Dinakar

PNS ■ Amaravati

Chairman of 20-point Programme and BJP leader Lanka Dinakar said that shocking facts have come to light in the CBI investigation into the adulterated ghee case in Tirumla. He stated that between 2019 and 2024, an Organic Dairy supplied 68 lakh kilograms of ghee, but the CBI found that the company did not procure milk or butter from anywhere. He said that chemicals were used to manufacture fake ghee and the CBI had also obtained details of the companies that supplied those chemicals.

"During previous regime, the TTD Board was involved in several irregularities. Even though we repeatedly raised concerns about these issues, the then government ignored them. Between 2019 and 2024, the TTD's spiritual values were degraded. The previous government



treated the TTD as a source of income rather than a spiritual institution," he said.

He further said that using adulterated ghee in the preparation of Tirumala Laddus is an unpardonable crime. Speaking to the media on Monday, he remarked that those who harmed the sanctity of Lord Venkateswara would face consequences, as history has shown. He alleged that from 2019 to 2024, the spiritual values of the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam (TTD) were ignored.

Two TTD outsourcing employees found eating 'non-vegetarian food'

TTD files a police complaint against the workers

PNS ■ Tirupati

Once again, an act of sacrilege has occurred in Tirumala. Near the holy feet of Lord Venkateswara, who is revered as the living deity of the Kali Yuga, a group of TTD (Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams) staff members were found eating non-vegetarian food along the footpath leading to the temple.

These employees, who work as sanitation staff on a contract basis, were seen sitting together and eating the non-vegetarian meals they brought in their lunch boxes. Some devotees passing by noticed this and questioned why non-vegetarian food was being consumed so close to such a sacred place. The devotees warned that they would immediately file a complaint with the TTD and recorded the incident on video.

However, allegations have surfaced that the TTD staff also threatened the devotees who questioned them. In the video, when devotees asked about it, the staff replied that the food had been brought from their village. The devotees countered, saying that eating such food in Tirumala is still wrong regardless of where it came from. The YSRCP also tweeted the video, saying, "Once again, a serious sacrilege in Tirumala. Near the sacred feet of Lord Venkateswara, TTD staff is eating non-vegetarian food



A TTD outsourcing employees allegedly eating non-vegetarian food at Alipiri

on the footpath. When questioned by devotees, they were threatened. Is the TTD vigilance department asleep? Is this what you call temple purification?"

Following this, officials from the TTD Health Department filed a police complaint against the sanitation workers who consumed the non-vegetarian food. Similar incidents have occurred in the past, but

this latest one has sparked widespread outrage.

TTD responded, stating, "It has come to our notice that two outsourcing staff members, Ramaswamy and Sarasamma, were eating non-vegetarian food near Alipiri on Sunday. We have filed a complaint against them at the Tirumala Two Town Police Station and have also terminated their employment."

Visakhapatnam emerges as real estate hub in AP

PNS ■ Visakhapatnam

The Andhra Pradesh government has focused its attention on the coastal city of Visakhapatnam, taking steps to develop it as an Information Technology (IT) hub and an Artificial Intelligence (AI) city. Major IT giants like Google, TCS, and Cognizant have already established their presence in Visakhapatnam, and several other companies are also showing interest in setting up operations there. Last month, the MoU for Google's data centre marked a turning point for the city. Soon, several IT,

tourism, and service sector companies are expected to start their operations in Visakhapatnam.

As a result, many people are looking to settle in the city, leading to a real estate boom. The real estate sector is rapidly expanding in all directions of the city. With infrastructure improving and the Bhogapuram International Airport nearing completion, people are showing great interest in investing in real estate. Many are coming forward to fulfil their dream of owning a house. Consequently, the construction sector in North Andhra has gained

momentum, and property registrations have increased. New constructions are underway across the city.

Currently, over 10,000 apartments are available in Visakhapatnam, with prices ranging from Rs 35 lakhs to Rs 1 crore. The number of villas and gated communities is also gradually increasing. For those who wish to build their own homes, more than 50,000 open plots are available across North Andhra. Several builders recognised by NAREDCO (National Real Estate Development Council) are developing affordable



housing projects.

A special real estate exhibition called "Vizag Property Fest - 2025" will be held in Visakhapatnam on November 14, 15, and 16. Organised by NAREDCO at Gadiraju Palace, the event aims to provide domestic and international visitors—attending the CII partnership summit—with a comprehensive understanding of the city's real estate potential. The exhibition will showcase various projects in a festive atmosphere.

Major banks like SBI, UBI, LIC, and Bank of Baroda will participate in the event, which will feature over 60 stalls. The exhibi-

tion will be open daily from 10 am to 9 pm.

Not just houses, many people are also showing interest in buying land in Visakhapatnam. While several have already purchased plots, others are in the process of doing so. Areas such as Gajuwaka, Pendurthi, Bheemili, Anandapuram, Madhurawada, and Akkayyapalem are witnessing high demand for land. Similarly, there is significant interest in purchasing flats across the city.

In short, owning land or a flat in Visakhapatnam has become as good as striking gold.



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Land-for-job scam: Court defers order on framing of charges against Lalu, others



A Delhi court on Monday deferred pronouncement of its order to December 4 on framing of charges in the alleged land-for-job case involving RJD chief and former Railway Minister Lalu Prasad Yadav, his family members, and several others. Special CBI Judge Vishal Gogne was hearing the case filed by the agency against Lalu Yadav and others over their alleged involvement in the case. The matter will now be taken up on December 4.

The CBI has filed chargesheets against Lalu Yadav, his wife and former Bihar Chief Minister Rabri Devi, their son Tejashwi Yadav and others in connection with the alleged scam. The prosecution has alleged appointments in Group-D category of West Central Zone of the Railways based in Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh, made during Lalu Yadav's tenure as railway minister from 2004 to 2009, in return for land parcels gifted or transferred by the recruits in the name of the RJD supremo's family or associates. The CBI has alleged that the appointments were made in violation of norms and that the transactions involved benami properties, amounting to criminal misconduct and conspiracy.

Delhi HC protects actor-MP Jaya Bachchan's personality rights



In a significant order, the Delhi High Court (HC) on Monday protected the personality rights of actor-turned-Rajya Sabha MP Jaya Bachchan to prevent websites and online platforms from using her name, image, dialogues and likeness for commercial gains without her consent. The Samajwadi Party MP joined her husband Amitabh Bachchan, son Abhishek Bachchan, daughter-in-law Aishwarya Rai Bachchan and grand daughter Aardhya in moving the Delhi High Court for safeguarding their personality rights.

Besides the Bachchan family members, the High Court has already protected the personality rights of other popular figures, including Hrithik Roshan, Kumar Sanu and Karan Johar. Personality rights protect celebrities against unauthorised use of their persona, including the creation of fake content which could cause financial and reputational harm. A bench of Justice Manmeet Pritam Singh Arora was hearing Jaya Bachchan's plea, saying several social media accounts, YouTube channels and websites were misusing her name and persona for commercial gains.

The defendants in the matter included Google, Amazon, eBay and Meta.

Her counsel said that attributes of her persona, including her images, were being misused without any authorisation from her and that merchandise featuring her pictures were being sold. The counsel said that technological tools such as Artificial Intelligence were used to create videos having a likeness to her client.

SC mulls appointing retired HC judges to oversee State bar council elections

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Supreme Court (SC) on Monday indicated that all state bar council elections will be held under the supervision of retired high court judges to ensure a free and fair poll process.

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and Joymalya Bagchi said there is a trust deficit with the Bar Council of India (BCI), as well as state bar councils and therefore an independent election panel headed by retired high court judges in each state will be appointed to oversee the process. Senior advocate Manan Kumar Mishra, who is also the Bar Council of India chairman, said that the body does not have any objections if retired judges are appointed for conducting the elections to the bar bodies.

"State Bar council or Bar



association elections are the most difficult elections on earth," Justice Kant said, and asked Mishra to notify the elections for different states as early as possible. Mishra

Supreme Court to hear pleas challenging SIR

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Supreme Court (SC) is scheduled to commence hearing pleas challenging the Election Commission's decision to conduct pan-India Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise, said any fresh matter needs to be mentioned for listing before Chief Justice of India BR Gavai.

"We are only seized of Bihar SIR matters and any fresh petition with regard to other states needs to be mentioned for listing before the Chief Justice of India.

"We don't know whether other matters will also be allocated to us. It all depends on the CJI," the bench told the counsel appearing for the West Bengal unit of Congress seeking urgent listing of a plea filed by the party. The West Bengal Congress and leaders of other political parties in the state have moved the Supreme Court challenging the Election Commission's decision on SIR of electoral rolls.

Sources said Trinamool Congress MP Dola Sen has also challenged the decision to conduct the SIR exercise in Bihar.

On Tuesday, the Supreme Court is also scheduled to hear a plea of the DMK challenging the decision of the Election Commission (EC) to conduct the exercise in Tamil Nadu.



The CPI-M has also moved the Supreme Court challenging the constitutional validity of the EC's directive to conduct the SIR exercise in Tamil Nadu, terming the process "arbitrary, illegal and unconstitutional".

Meanwhile, the AIADMK has filed an application supporting the poll panel's decision to conduct the exercise in Tamil Nadu, calling it a "legitimate and necessary" exercise to uphold the sanctity of elections and prevent voter fraud.

On November 7, the Supreme Court agreed to hear pleas challenging the EC's decision to conduct pan-India SIR of electoral rolls on

November 11. A bench headed by Justice Surya Kant said it will start hearing the pleas from November 11 onwards. Advocate Prashant Bhushan, appearing for the NGO Association of Democratic Reforms (ADR), had sought urgent hearing in the matter, saying the issue goes to the root of democracy.

The Supreme Court is already hearing pleas challenging the validity of the poll panel's decision to conduct the SIR exercise in Bihar.

On October 16, the EC termed the Bihar SIR "accurate" and told the Supreme Court that the petitioner political parties and NGOs are merely content with making "false

allegations" to discredit the exercise. The poll body also told the Supreme Court that not a single appeal has been filed by any voter against name deletion since the publication of the final electoral roll for Bihar. It denied the allegation of the petitioners that there was a "disproportionate exclusion of Muslims" from the final electoral roll of the state prepared after the months-long SIR exercise.

On September 30, the EC, while publishing the final electoral list for poll-bound Bihar, said the total number of electors has come down by nearly 47 lakh to 7.42 crore in the final roll from 7.89 crore before the

SIR exercise. The final figure increased by 17.87 lakh from 7.24 crore electors named in the draft list issued on August 1, which removed 65 lakh voters from the original list on various accounts, including deaths, migration and duplication of voters.

While 21.53 lakh new electors were added to the draft list, 3.66 lakh names were removed, resulting in a net increase of 17.87 lakh.

The first phase of elections in Bihar on 121 seats was held on November 6, while the remaining 122 constituencies will go to polls on Tuesday. The counting of votes will take place on November 14.

On October 27, the Election Commission announced the conduct of phase two of the SIR exercise in 12 states and Union territories between November and February next year.

The states and UTs are: Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Gujarat, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Puducherry, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

Among these, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Kerala and West Bengal will go to the polls in 2026.

The poll panel said that for Assam, where polls are due in 2026, the revision of electoral rolls will be announced separately.

Phase two of the SIR exercise began on November 4 and will continue till December 4. The EC will release the draft electoral rolls on December 9, and the final electoral rolls will be published on February 7.

CJI highlights perils of AI, agrees to hear plea to frame guidelines

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Highlighting the perils of artificial intelligence, Chief Justice of India BR Gavai on Monday said he was aware of a morphed video circulating on social media that falsely showed a shoe-throwing incident in his courtroom.

The remarks were made as a bench comprising the Chief Justice of India (CJI) and Justice K Vinod Chandran agreed to list for hearing after two weeks a plea that sought framing of guidelines to regulate the use of artificial

intelligence (AI) tools within the judiciary. During the proceedings, a counsel for the petitioner cautioned against the unchecked adoption of AI tools in court processes, saying, "Even this court is using AI, but the ills are such..." "We are aware of it; we have seen the morphed video of us (two)," the CJI said while referring to the fabricated clip circulating online.

The plea, filed through advocate Abhinav Shrivastava, seeks a policy to govern the use of AI in judicial functions, warning that generative AI systems can



CJI BR Gavai

embed "systemic biases" and operate as "black boxes" whose internal logic remains opaque even to their creators. According to the petitioner, the use of generative AI is problematic as it entails a complex process of datafication, which may generate words and images not meant by the user. The plea stated that AI integrated into the judiciary and judicial functions should have data that is free from bias, and data ownership should be transparent enough to ensure stakeholders' liability.

It argued that one of the

biggest red flags of such integration is data opaqueness and warned that the use of generative AI within judicial work may lead to higher risks of cyberattacks.

On October 6, 71-year-old Rakesh Kishore, a lawyer, attempted to hurl a shoe towards the CJI in his courtroom, which prompted the Bar Council of India to suspend his license with immediate effect. The incident sparked widespread condemnation.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, while condemning the incident, also spoke to the CJI.

NIA urges Delhi HC to hold in-camera hearing on plea seeking death penalty

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Monday asked the Delhi High Court (HC) for in-camera proceedings while hearing the agency's appeal seeking death penalty for Kashmiri separatist leader Yasin Malik in the 2017 terror funding case. A bench of Justices Vivek Chaudhary and Manoj Jain said the plea would be considered after NIA's counsel, Special Public Prosecutor Akshai Malik, requested to conduct the proceedings in-camera and provide a private virtual link.

Yasin Malik, who appeared through video conferencing from Tihar jail, said he was subjected to psychological torture because of the protracted delay of around three years in deciding the appeal. The bench has posted the matter to January 28 for hearing the arguments.

In September, Yasin Malik, in an 85-page affidavit submitted before the high court, claimed that he spent nearly three decades as a key figure in a state-sanctioned "backchannel" mechanism, working with a succession of prime min-



Yasin Malik in police custody

isters, intelligence chiefs and even business tycoons to foster peace in Jammu and Kashmir.

The Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) chief is lodged in Tihar jail where he is serving a life term in the case. On May 24, 2022, a trial court sentenced the separatist leader to life imprisonment after holding him guilty for offences under the stringent Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) and IPC.

He had pleaded guilty to the charges, including those under the UAPA and was

convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment.

Appealing against the sentence, the NIA emphasised that a terrorist cannot be sentenced life term only because he has pleaded guilty and chosen not to go through trial. While seeking enhancement of the sentence to death penalty, the agency said if such dreaded terrorists are not given capital punishment on account of pleading guilty, there would be complete erosion of the sentencing policy and terrorists would have a way out to avoid death sentence.

Pelting of stones not very ordinary action: Supreme Court to Shabir Shah

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Pelting of stones in Jammu and Kashmir is not a very ordinary action, the Supreme Court on Monday remarked while asking Kashmiri separatist leader Shabir Ahmed Shah to approach the NC Government for obtaining his detention order. A bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Nath granted the NIA three weeks to respond to Shah's fresh affidavit after Solicitor General Tushar Mehta pointed out newly mentioned facts and stressed his links with Pakistan-based terror networks. Senior advocate Collin Gonsalves, appearing for Shah, submitted that his family was not given the detention order and he seeks series of detention orders passed since 1970.

Mehta opposed the submission and said the issue was not raised before the Delhi High Court.

"You ask the Government to provide you the details. Why ask in bail proceedings? It's over a 50 years," the bench observed.

Gonsalves argued that Shah has been in jail for 39 years on a common charge namely speeches followed by stone pelting.

Justice Mehta then said, "Pelting of stones in this state is not a very ordinary action."

The Supreme Court had earlier refused to grant interim bail to Shah in a terror funding case.

It however, issued notice to the National Investigation Agency (NIA) seeking its response within two weeks on Shah's plea challenging the Delhi High Court's June 12 order denying him bail in the case. The high court had refused to grant him bail in the case, observing the possibility of him carrying out similar unlawful



Shabir Shah

activities and influencing witnesses couldn't be ruled out. Shah was arrested by the NIA on June 4, 2019. In 2017, the NIA registered a case against 12 persons on allegations of conspiracy for raising and collecting funds for causing disruption by way of pelting stones, damaging public property and conspiring to wage war against the Government of India.

Shah was alleged to have played a "substantial role" in facilitating a separatist or militant movement in Jammu and Kashmir by inciting and instigating the general public to sloganeering in support of the secession of J&K; paying tribute to the family of slain terrorists or militants by eulogising them as "martyrs"; receiving money through hawala transactions and raising funds through LoC trade, which were allegedly used to fuel subversive and militant activities in J&K.

The high court had said the Constitution provides for a right to freedom of speech and expression, but it also places reasonable restrictions such as public order, decency, morality or incitement to an offence.

"This right cannot be misused under the garb of carrying out rallies wherein, a person uses inflammatory speeches or instigates the public to commit unlawful activities, detrimental to the interest and integrity of the country," the high court had said.

Pradhan calls for collective singing of Vande Mataram



Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Monday called for establishing collective singing of “Vande Mataram” in every classroom as a “powerful” tradition and help it evolve into a mass movement.

Hopeful of NC’s win: CM Omar on Budgam bypoll

A day ahead of voting for the Budgam assembly bypoll in Jammu and Kashmir, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday expressed confidence that the ruling National Conference will win the election. The Budgam bypoll is being held on Tuesday as Abdullah had vacated the seat last year, retaining Ganderbal seat after winning both segments in the 2024 Assembly elections.



Fadnavis orders world-class facilities at Jyotirlinga shrines



Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Monday directed officials to ensure world-class facilities and a state-of-the-art integrated AI-based security system for devotees visiting Jyotirlinga shrines in the State.

Sri Lanka arrested 14 fishermen, CM Stalin tells Centre

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin on Monday apprised the Centre that as many as 14 fishermen were arrested and their mechanised fishing boat was seized by the Sri Lankan Navy. Underscoring that over 120 fishermen from Tamil Nadu and more than 240 fishing boats remain under Sri Lankan custody, the chief minister urged the Centre to take all steps for the early release of the fishermen and their fishing boats.



BJP confident of decisive and historic victory in Bihar polls

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The BJP on Monday exuded confidence about the NDA’s “decisive and historic” victory in the Bihar assembly polls, as it took a swipe at Rahul Gandhi over his jungle safari in Madhya Pradesh’s Satpura Tiger Reserve, asking him to enjoy his “political tourism”.

Addressing a press conference at the BJP headquarters, senior BJP leader Ravi Shankar Prasad also slammed Tejashwi Yadav, terming the RJD leader’s accusations against the Election Commission “false”.

It has become a “habit” of opposition leaders to attack “all organs of democracy” when they do not get the result they want, he claimed.

“Did we send police (security forces) or EC to Bihar. Making false allegations; he has stooped to such a level,” the BJP leader said, reacting sharply to Yadav’s claim that altogether 208 compa-



nies of security personnel from the BJP-ruled States have been deployed in Bihar for poll duties.

On Yadav criticising the EC for not disclosing the gender-wise data of electors who cast their votes in the first phase of polling, Prasad asked the RJD leader to wait. The poll panel will release data of voters, including women and youth, he said.

The BJP leader reacted sharply to Yadav’s allega-

tion that the poll panel was working as a “tool” of the BJP. “What kind of language is this?” Prasad asked the RJD leader to explain how his party’s leaders won elections in Bihar and how other Opposition leaders managed victory in various States.

“All elections are conducted by the Election Commission. They alleged that the Constitution is under threat. Be it Rahul Gandhi or his allies, they start attacking every organ of democracy — from the Election Commission and courts to Parliament — when their wishes are not fulfilled,” he added.

The BJP also took on Gandhi, calling him a “political tourist”.

“The BJP, along with the NDA, is going to register a decisive, sweeping and historic victory in the Bihar assembly elections,” Prasad asserted, adding that the people of Bihar have made up their mind to give their mandate to the NDA for yet another term because of its good governance and the works done.

“Where is Mr Tourist these days?... Heard he went for a tiger safari in Pachmarhi. Rahul Gandhi is a political tourist. Every day confirms that impression about him,” Prasad said, adding, “Rahul Gandhi ji, you keep on enjoying your political tourism. You need some rest in the forest of Madhya Pradesh.”

Gender-wise turnout ratio given at time of final turnout ECI officials on Tejashwi’s allegations

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Amid criticism of the Election Commission by RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav for “not disclosing” the male-female data of the first phase of the Bihar Assembly polls, officials on Monday underlined that the gender-wise turnout ratio is generally given at the time of final turnout.

Officials said the overall gender ratio in voter turnout is “generally” given at the time of final turnout.

While the first phase of the poll was on November 6, the second phase is on Tuesday. According to EC, approximately 65.08 per cent of record voter turnout has been registered in the first phase of polling.

Addressing a press conference in Patna, Yadav claimed that the RJD-helmed opposition coalition will not allow “vote theft or dishonesty”.

“The EC has not disclosed the gender-wise data of electors who cast their votes on November 6 even after four days have passed from the first phase of Assembly polls.

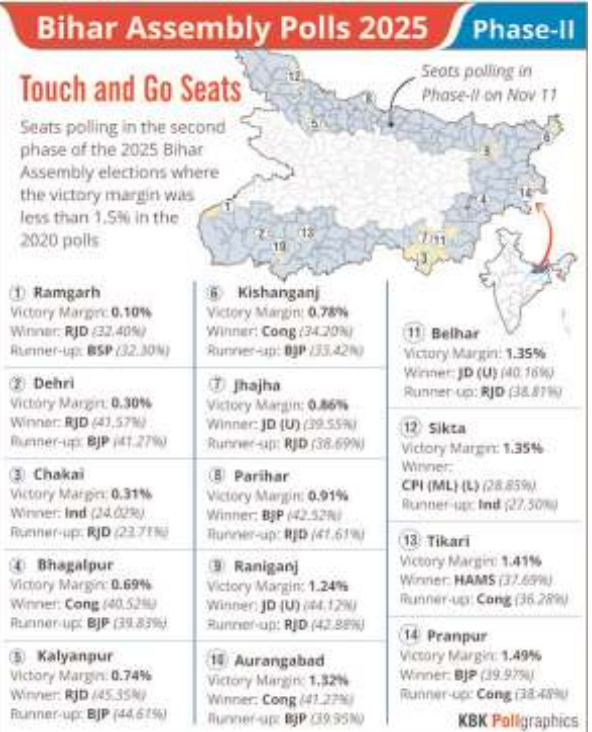
This is happening for the first time. Earlier, it was given immediately,” he claimed.

Yadav also claimed that altogether 208 companies of security personnel from BJP-ruled states have been deployed in Bihar for poll duties.

“Why have the security personnel been deployed from BJP-ruled States? We are keeping a close watch on them. Around 68 per cent of police observers are from BJP-ruled states. Why is it so?” he asked.

Responding to the allegations, EC officials said nearly 80 per cent of the police forces are deployed from the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) and only about 20 per cent of the police forces are deployed from the State armed police (SAP) which are drawn proportionately from different States according to their availability.

SAP has been taken from 24 different states, including Jharkhand, Telangana, Kerala, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Karnataka. They pointed out that



Security tightened accros Bihar for second phase vote

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Patna

Security arrangements have been tightened across Bihar for the second and final phase of the Assembly elections scheduled on Tuesday, with more than 4 lakh personnel deployed to ensure peaceful polling, officials said. Voting will be held at 45,399 polling stations, including 40,073 in rural areas, across 122 Assembly constituencies.

According to sources in the state police, there are around 8,491 critical polling station locations (PSLs) where security personnel will remain extra vigilant during the poll.

Around 500 companies (around 50,000 personnel) of the Central Armed Police Force had been engaged in pre-election duties in Bihar, and subse-

quently, 500 more companies of CAPF arrived in the State, he said. “More than 60,000 personnel of the Bihar Police have also been engaged in election duty,” a senior official said.

Around 2,000 personnel of reserve battalions from other States, 30,000 personnel of the Bihar Special Armed Police, more than 20,000 home guards, around 19,000 newly recruited constables (who are undergoing training), and nearly 1.5 lakh chowkidars (rural police) have also been engaged in the poll duty for both phases, he said.

Asked about the number of sensitive polling centres in the second phase, the officer said, “from a security point of view, all booths are equally important.”

“Gayaji has the highest

number of critical PSLs at 1,084, followed by Aurangabad (942), Rohtas (827), Nawada (690), Banka (613), Bhagalpur (574), Bettiah (526), Araria (518), Supaul (406), Bagha (368), Jamui (357), Bhabhua (325), Arwal (315), Jehanabad (287), Madhubani (282), etc.

“There are places where the number of critical PSLs are zero. These include Kishanganj, Purnea, Motihari and Sitamathi”, official said. Besides, there are 13,651 hamlets in 122 seats which have been identified as ‘vulnerable’, the official added.

EC officials and security personnel are making special arrangements to ensure smooth voting in these vulnerable areas, he said.

Proactive policing, community connect, ECI initiatives help achieve historic voter turnout, says Bihar DGP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Patna

Bihar DGP Vinay Kumar said proactive policing, improved community connect, and initiatives taken by the Election Commission of India (ECI) are the main reasons behind the “historic” voter turnout in the first phase of the Assembly polls.

The identification of potential criminals and their areas of operation in advance, adequate deployment of forces, and prompt action have not only helped the police build up strong relations with people, but also instilled confidence among voters, he said.

Bihar recorded the “highest ever” voter turnout of over 65 per cent in the polling across 121 constituencies in the first phase of the Assembly elections.

Talking to PTI, the director general of police said,

Strict vigil is being maintained in districts bordering Nepal. We will not allow anyone to take the law into their hands. Law enforcement agencies are ensuring that ECI’s guidelines are strictly followed in the State

—VINAY KUMAR, BIHAR DGP

“Proactive policing, improved police-community relations, developmental works carried out by the State government, and the initiatives taken by the EC are the main reasons behind the historic turnout”.

No violence took place during the first round of polling on November 6, he asserted.

“Now we are fully prepared for the second phase of polls, which will take place on Tuesday. Adequate security personnel have been deployed in all 122 assembly seats to ensure free and fair elections,” Kumar said.

Besides, sufficient security personnel have been deployed in areas where the first phase of polling took place to ensure “law and order and foolproof poll-related security arrangements”.

“Altogether, around 4 lakh security personnel have been deployed across the state to ensure violence-free, smooth and fair assembly polls,” the DGP said.

The districts going to polls on November 11 are West Champaran, East Champaran, Sitamarhi, Madhubani, Supaul, Araria and Kishanganj, and all these share borders with Nepal.

“Strict vigil is being main-

tained in districts bordering Nepal. We will not allow anyone to take the law into their hands. Law enforcement agencies are ensuring that ECI’s guidelines are strictly followed in the state,” said the DGP.

Kumar said that no personnel have been dropped by helicopters in polling booths for the first time in Bihar.

“Since the road infrastructure has remarkably improved in the state, especially in rural areas, we decided to send security personnel, who are engaged in poll duty, to remote areas by road. They are reaching their centres of deployment by road,” he said.

Besides, there is no requirement to relocate polling booths, for the first time in Bihar, as Maoist activities have “substantially declined” in the state, the DGP said.

NDA leaders made excuses like children: Congress

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Patna

Congress Rajya Sabha MP Syed Naseer Hussain on Monday alleged that NDA leaders “made excuses like children who underperform in exams” while campaigning in the Bihar polls, instead of presenting a report card of its 20-year rule.

Hussain, while addressing a press conference here, also accused BJP leaders of lowering the standard of political discourse by using “inappropriate language” at election rallies in the State.

“During its campaign, the NDA should have presented a report card of its 20-year rule in Bihar before the public, but they kept making excuses like children who underperform in exams,” the Congress MP from Karnataka said.

Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium to be dismantled, rebuild as 102-acre Sports City

RAJESH KUMAR ■ New Delhi

In a major development for Indian sports infrastructure, the iconic Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, located in the national Capital, will be “dismantled”, to boost India’s sports infrastructure as the sports ministry is planning to build a 102-acre Sports City, that will cater to all major disciplines and include lodging facility for athletes.

The project aims to introduce world-class sporting facilities as India continues to push for the hosting rights of the 2036 Olympic Games. Besides sporting events, the stadium is also used for non-sporting commercial activities, with concerts by Indian and international singers held regularly.

Top sources said sports cities in Qatar and Australia are being assessed to finalise the modalities. Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya was in Doha recently and it is reliably learnt that he visited the Sports City there. The Doha Sports City is spread over 617 acres. It has facilities for football, aquatics and 13 different indoor sports

besides an academy. It also houses a specialised orthopaedic and sports medicine hospital. Australia’s multi-purpose facilities include the Docklands Stadium in Melbourne that can host cricket, Australian rules football, rugby, cricket and soccer.

Sources said the iconic stadium will be dismantled. All offices inside the stadium, including the National Anti Doping Agency (NADA), the National Dope Testing Laboratory (NDTL) and the Income Tax department will be relocated as and when the project takes off. The 102 acre area of the stadium will be rebuilt but as of now, the plan is merely a proposal and therefore the time-line for the project and the estimated cost has not yet been worked out.

According to sources, the Government is still studying different models across the world where such projects have been executed. However, there is no fixed timeline for the start of construction. The redevelopment will only begin after the assessments are complete and a final plan is approved.



“We are assessing sports cities like the one in Doha. Once all of that is done, we will move ahead with the planning phase,” sources said.

“Currently the over 100 acres of land that it occupies is not being used to its optimal level. A Sports City

will ensure that we have hosting facilities for major disciplines, training facilities, lodging for athletes when they compete there and even verticals like entertainment will be covered,” he added.

The stadium complex currently houses several key

sports facilities and offices, including an archery academy, badminton courts, and the headquarters of the Sports Authority of India (SAI), the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA), and the National Dope Testing Laboratory (NDTL).

A Sports City project would require synergy between multiple ministries, including the Urban Development Ministry, and departments. Given the long-drawn process, an immediate start to it is unlikely. “It is an idea at this stage but let’s see

how the feasibility study works out. But the ministry is very serious about going ahead with it,” sources said.

Ahmedabad’s Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Sports Complex is an example closer home, having facilities for cricket, aquatics, tennis and athletics among others. It is spread over 250 acres and was built at a cost of ₹4,600 crore.

The city is currently bidding to host the 2036 Olympic Games and is set to be awarded the 2030 Commonwealth Games later this month.

“The JLN project will also be big in scale. This project will ensure that existing infrastructure, that was crumbling inside JLN, will get rebuilt,” sources added.

The Stadium, originally built for the 1982 Asian Games and later renovated for the 2010 Commonwealth Games, has long been one of India’s most iconic multi-sport venues. With a capacity of nearly 60,000, it has hosted major athletics events, football fixtures, large-scale concerts, and national ceremonies, includ-

ing Independence Day functions. The stadium has historically served as the home venue for the national athletics team and has been a key landmark within India’s sporting history for over four decades. The stadium was refurbished in 2010 at a cost over ₹961 crore.

The stadium recently hosted the World Para-Athletics Championship for which it underwent another facelift, leading to the laying of the renowned MONDO track, which is considered a faster surface that reduces risk of injury. Besides being a prime athletics venue, the stadium has a football pitch where national and international-level games have been held. It has hosted a couple of cricket ODIs as well in 1984 and 1991 before the ICC found it unsuitable for the sport due to technical reasons.

The Sports Authority of India (SAI) had recently hiked the booking price for such events and introduced a clause for penalties if the stadium was not handed back to it in good condition at the conclusion of such programmes.

Editor's

TAKE

Delhi chokes as citizens cry for breath

As Delhi's skyline blurs into smog, one question looms large: how many more years will the capital wait for its leaders to act?

It may shock outsiders, but for Delhiites this is an annual recurrence. The air is thick with smog, and breathing it is a daily torment. What would be declared a medical emergency in many countries has, in Delhi, become the 'new normal'. With the Air Quality Index (AQI) crossing 600 in parts of the national capital - a level classified as severe - the city has turned into a gas chamber where each breath feels like inhaling poison.

The annual cycle of smog, blame, and silence has returned - but this year something is different. Delhiites have decided to take no more. For a change, they are protesting in large numbers. They are no longer silent spectators. Over the weekend, hundreds gathered at India Gate, demanding immediate action and accountability from those in power.

The protest, led by concerned citizens and joined by an AAP leader, was not a display of political posturing but an expression of desperation. Residents held placards, coughed through masks, and spoke with a mix of anger and anguish. Their message was simple yet powerful: stop denying the crisis and start acting. As one protester put it succinctly, "No matter whose government it is, common people are dying."

The sentiment captures the essence of Delhi's tragedy - a political blame game that has bred dangerous inertia. For over a decade, Delhi's pollution crisis has worsened year after year - smog-choked skies, emergency meetings, and token gestures such as water sprinkling, the odd-even traffic scheme, or failed experiments like cloud seeding. What Delhi needs are permanent solutions, not cosmetic fixes.

The root causes - unchecked construction dust, vehicular emissions, stubble burning, and poor waste management - remain largely unaddressed. Meanwhile, data manipulation and denial only deepen the mistrust between citizens and the state.

Contrast this with global examples. Beijing, once infamous for its pollution, implemented a comprehensive clean-air policy combining industrial relocation, strict vehicle-emission norms, and large-scale public transport reform. Within five years, its PM2.5 levels fell by nearly 50 per cent. In London, the introduction of Ultra-Low Emission Zones (ULEZ) and incentives for electric vehicles brought significant improvement in air quality. Even Los Angeles, once synonymous with smog, succeeded through sustained investment in clean energy, public transport, and civic accountability.

Delhi needs similar political will - not crocodile tears. It requires a unified regional strategy that brings together Delhi, Haryana, Punjab, and Uttar Pradesh under a single clean-air mission. A long-term plan must address urban planning, green-cover restoration, renewable energy transition, and agricultural reform to curb stubble burning. Technology can help, but transparency and enforcement are essential.

Equally vital is civic participation. The protest at India Gate should serve as a wake-up call not only for politicians but also for citizens. Clean air is not a privilege; it is a fundamental right - and Delhi must have it.

Bridging the gaps, making headway

The India-Israel partnership is no longer merely a diplomatic success story; it has become the testing ground for a new Asian order. Whether this alliance will make the region more secure or simply more heavily armed remains uncertain



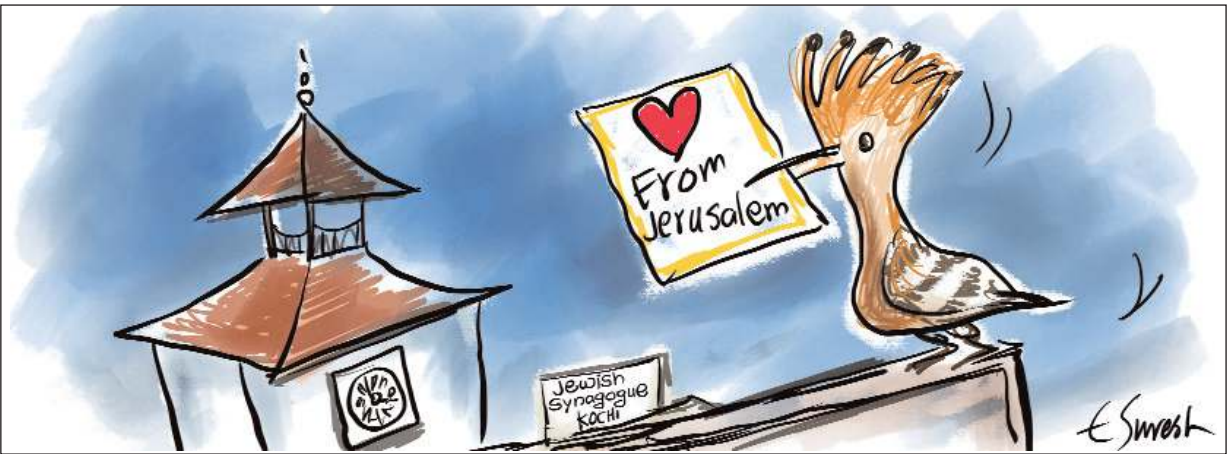
NILANTHA
ILANGAMUWA

JN Dixit, India's former National Security Adviser and one of the country's most seasoned diplomats, once wrote that the establishment of relations "with South Africa and then with Israel" was the most significant achievement of his tenure at the Ministry of External Affairs. Few comments capture so neatly the quiet shift in India's moral compass during the early 1990s. What had once been a foreign policy anchored in solidarity with the Palestinian cause and the Non-Aligned Movement was now tilting towards the emerging strategic triangle of Washington, Tel Aviv, and New Delhi. Three decades later, that tilt has hardened into one of Asia's most consequential alliances.

The historical roots of the India-Israel connection reach far deeper than the 1992 establishment of formal diplomatic ties. Jewish communities have lived in India for over two millennia. The Cochin Jews of Kerala, who trace their lineage to ancient traders arriving after the destruction of the Second Temple, built some of the oldest synagogues in the Commonwealth and enjoyed relative security unknown to Jews in most of the world. Further east, the Bene Israel settled along the Konkan coast, while smaller Baghdadi Jewish communities flourished in Kolkata and Mumbai. Even in India's far northeast, the Bnei Menashe of Manipur and Mizoram - who claim descent from one of the Lost Tribes of Israel - have, in recent decades, re-established religious and cultural links with Israel. These intertwined legacies gave both nations a foundation of shared memory long before geopolitics bound them together.

When India formally recognised Israel in 1950 but withheld full diplomatic relations, it was acting within the logic of post-colonial solidarity. Support for Palestinian self-determination was considered integral to India's moral standing in the developing world. Yet by the early 1990s, that posture had lost its strategic utility. The end of the Cold War, the collapse of the Soviet Union - India's principal defence supplier - and the global turn towards liberalisation forced New Delhi to rethink. Economic reforms under Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao in 1991 coincided with a shifting global order in which Israel was becoming an indispensable partner for the United States. Establishing relations with Israel thus became not only a matter of diplomacy but also a statement of intent: India was entering the world economy and aligning with its new security architecture.

The years that followed saw a steady deepening of the defence relationship. During the 1999 Kargil conflict with Pakistan, Israel's rapid supply of surveillance drones and precision-guided munitions filled a critical gap left by other hesi-



THE UNITED STATES, WARY OF CHINA'S RISE AND KEEN TO CONTAIN RUSSIA, VIEWS INDIA AS A DEMOCRATIC COUNTERWEIGHT IN THE INDO-PACIFIC AND ISRAEL AS ITS MOST DEPENDABLE OUTPOST IN WEST ASIA. THE EMERGING "WEST ASIAN QUAD" (I2U2) — LINKING INDIA, ISRAEL, THE UAE, AND THE US — EMBODIES A NEW ORDER WHERE HUMAN RIGHTS CONCERNS YIELD TO STRATEGIC AND COMMERCIAL INTERESTS

The writer is a Colombo based Columnist

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tant powers. Israeli firms soon became integral to India's military modernisation, supplying radar, missiles, and electronic warfare systems. Cooperation later extended into counter-terrorism and intelligence sharing after the 2008 Mumbai attacks, in which Jewish targets were explicitly struck. Israeli expertise in homeland security, border surveillance, and cyber technology found eager clients in India's expanding security apparatus.

The relationship, however, is not merely about weapons. It is also about ideas — about two nations that see themselves surrounded by threats and justified in adopting extraordinary measures of self-defence. Israel's militarised ethos and its narrative of technological resilience have appealed to successive Indian governments. For the Hindu nationalist right, Israel represents a model of a small but assertive nation that defends its majority identity against perceived existential enemies. What was once discreet military cooperation has thus evolved into an open political fraternity.

India's silence on Israel's controversial actions has grown louder over time. After backing a UN inquiry into Israel's conduct during the 2014 Gaza war, New Delhi abstained from a similar vote in 2021. By then, "strategic neutrality" had become a convenient cover for convergence. Israel's defence industry now ranks among India's top three suppliers, while Indian corporations such as the Adani Group have invested heavily in Israeli infrastructure, including the Haifa Port - a clear symbol of trust.

Last week, the Israel-India Joint Working Group on Defence Cooperation met in Tel Aviv, co-chaired by Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh and Israeli Defence Ministry Director-General Major-General (Res.) Amir Baram. It ended with a Memorandum of Understanding to expand industrial and technological cooperation. Though details were limited, reports indicate India will acquire medium-range

surface-to-air missiles worth about \$3.75 billion and convert six commercial aircraft into refuelling tankers for nearly \$900 million.

In New Delhi, Israel's Foreign Minister Gideon Sa'ar called India a "global superpower" and thanked it for promptly condemning the 7 October 2023 Hamas attacks. He noted that Prime Minister Narendra Modi was among the first leaders to call Benjamin Netanyahu - a gesture Israel says it will not forget. The symbolism was clear: both now see themselves as partners in a shared fight against "terror".

This alignment carries wider implications. The United States, wary of China's rise and keen to contain Russia, views India as a democratic counterweight in the Indo-Pacific and Israel as its most dependable outpost in West Asia. The emerging "West Asian Quad" (I2U2) — linking India, Israel, the UAE, and the US — embodies a new order where human rights concerns yield to strategic and commercial interests.

Yet contradictions persist. India still depends heavily on Russian arms and energy, and avoids criticising Moscow despite its closeness to Israel and the West. This balancing act underscores New Delhi's transactional posture but also a shared worldview: both India and Israel see themselves as civilisational states entitled to secure their interests by any means necessary.

What began as cautious diplomacy in 1992 has become a test case for Asia's future alignments. The partnership is neither pure modernisation nor moral decline but a mirror to a continent where nationalism, technology, and security define power. For Israel, it brings a vast market and a non-Western ally; for India, advanced technology, intelligence, and a partner adept at survival in a turbulent region.

The distance between Tel Aviv and New Delhi has never been shorter - and the space for moral hesitation, once a hallmark of Indian diplomacy, has almost disappeared.

The Pioneer

SINCE 1865

God and soul: Understanding the divine connection



AJIT KUKMAR
BISHNOI

2ND OPINION

THE PIONEER

There is one Supreme Being - eternal, all-powerful, and all-pervading. God is omnipotent, capable of accomplishing anything; omnipresent, existing everywhere in His subtle form; and omniscient, fully aware of the past, present, and future. As the Bhagavad *Gita* declares, "By Me, all this universe is pervaded in My unmanifest form" (9.4). He is the Creator, Controller, and Sustainer of all existence (15.1). Everything we see belongs to Him. What we call "our possessions" today did not belong to us five hundred years ago. In truth, everything is a part of God's own subtle body; we live within His vast creation.

In contrast, we souls are merely His infinitesimal parts (15.7). Our power, knowledge, and presence are severely

limited. We depend entirely on the Supreme for strength and guidance. Our physical, mental, or intellectual abilities do not make us powerful; true power lies only in divine empowerment. While God is ever awake and active, we are bound by sleep and fatigue. Our understanding is confined to a narrow present; we know nothing of our past lives and can only guess at the future. We act, but the results rest in God's hands.

This may seem unfair, yet it is a perfect design — creation could not function otherwise. Our dependency is not a weakness but a reminder of divine justice and grace. God, in His fairness, has made provisions for every shortcoming. Lord Krishna assures: "To those who worship Me with unwavering devotion, I provide what they lack and preserve what they have" (9.22). Taking shelter in God brings immense blessings. He guides the sincere seeker through intuition, dreams, or circumstances.

Prayer is not mere ritual but a channel of divine communication. Though we have free will, the fruits of our actions are dispensed by Divine Authority under the law of karma. Dharma — the eternal principle of righteousness — upholds the universe. So sacred is dharma that whenever it declines, God incarnates to restore it (4.7). Those who live by dharma and devote themselves to God become examples for others, inspiring goodness and harmony.

Every soul is unique - with distinct parents, birthplaces, timings, names, and destinies - shaped by individual karmas. Just as God is unique, so is every living being. The notion of complete duplication, even through cloning, is impossible. He has empowered me to write spiritual works and has cared for me more tenderly than a mother could. Through His mercy, I overcome challenges born of past karmas. I act, yet it is He who accomplishes. Success is His blessing, though the world attributes it to me.

Truly, God micromanages every aspect of my life. Naturally, I worry for my loved ones. When illness or hardship strikes, I pray earnestly. Yet I have learnt that change cannot be forced; with kindness and connection to God, transformation follows. The divine influence works quietly but surely. In conclusion, one must see the larger picture. Engage in *bhakti* (devotion), *yajna* (sacrifice), and *dana* (charity) to draw closer to God. Devotion can take many forms — prayer, chanting, or visiting holy places.

Sacrifice includes offering time, service, or wealth for noble causes. Charity, too, extends beyond money — sharing knowledge (vidya dana) is among the greatest gifts. When we align our lives with these divine principles, we invite God's grace, live in peace, and experience true bliss.

The writer is a spiritual teacher

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sustainable travel for greener future

World Public Transport Day reminds the world of the environmental benefits of using shared modes of travel. Expanding public transport systems reduces pollution, traffic congestion, and energy dependence.

The concept emerged in the 2000s, as rapid urbanisation increased pollution and resource depletion. The initiative highlights the social, environmental, and economic importance of sustainable mobility.

Modern mass transit enables cities to cut carbon emissions and improve air quality, enhancing urban living standards. Encouraging walking and cycling also helps decrease car use. Building safe pedestrian and cycling infrastructure is vital for a smooth transition.

Meanwhile, adopting electric vehicles, e-bikes, and hydrogen-fuelled trains ensures very low emissions. Governments and communities must collaborate to make green commuting both practical and affordable for everyone. By promoting sustainable travel, cities can achieve cleaner air, reduced traffic, and healthier communities. World Public Transport Day highlights the importance of choosing shared transport over private vehicles to create a greener planet for future generations. Together, by embracing public transport, we can build a sustainable future.

CK SUBRAMANIAM | MUMBAI

Kranti restores pride and justice

It was heartening to see Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav assure that Munna Singh Goud, father of Women's World Cup-winning cricketer Kranti Goud, will be reinstated in his police job. He was dismissed in 2012 following an alleged error during election duty. The announcement came during Kranti's felicitation ceremony in Bhopal, where the Chief Minister praised her for bringing glory to the nation and her home state. This moment recalls a verse by the saint-poet Tiruvalluvar: "The son's duty to his father is to make the world ask, by what austerities did he merit such a son." Kranti, as a daughter, fulfilled this virtue by bringing pride to her father and the nation alike.

Her victory represents the strength and perseverance of Indian women who continue to shatter stereotypes. Every member of India's women's cricket team deserves praise for their remarkable 2025 World Cup triumph, proving that the daughters of our motherland are exceptional, inspiring, and worthy of celebration.

Kranti's achievement shows her hard work and dedication, bringing pride to her family and the nation. It highlights the talent and determination of Indian women in sports and may inspire many young girls to follow their dreams.

Advani's legacy of political integrity

Lal Krishna Advani, born on 8 November 1927 into a Sindhi Hindu Lohana family in Karachi, British India, recently turned 98. Often called the foster father of the BJP, he worked alongside Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the party's founding figure, to shape its growth. Advani led the *Ram Rath Yatra* and was even arrested in Bihar during Lalu Prasad Yadav's tenure.

Known for discipline and strong leadership, he earned the title "Iron Man" of the BJP. Despite opportunities to become Prime Minister, he deferred to Vajpayee, respecting party tradition.

In 2004, he led the party through the Lok Sabha election, which was ultimately lost. Praised by opposition leader Shashi Tharoor for his commitment, decency, and service, Advani remained loyal even when sidelined in 2014.

His integrity was evident during the Jain Hawala case, when he resigned from Parliament until cleared. Controversial remarks on Jinnah cost him the BJP presidency, yet his influence endured. The 1990 Rath Yatra and slogan "Mandir Wahin Banayenge" strengthened the Ram Janmabhoomi movement and BJP's rise. Advani's loyalty and guidance during critical times reflect his principled leadership and devotion to the party and nation.

RAMANJANEYA NAGARA | BENGALURU

AI CHATBOTS SHOW PROMISE, BUT HUMAN THERAPISTS ESSENTIAL

OpenAI, an American artificial intelligence research and deployment organisation, has recently reported that it has enhanced ChatGPT's responses, enabling the chatbot to more reliably recognise mental health issues during sensitive conversations.

AI-based tools may offer a promising supplement for addressing mental health concerns, but they cannot replace the human touch essential for emotional well-being. F AI applications may also provide inaccurate or potentially harmful advice and raise privacy concerns, underscoring the need for caution and the continued importance of the human-therapist relationship.

A recent Stanford University-led study indicates that AI therapy chatbots are

significantly less effective and, in some cases, potentially harmful compared with human therapists. The study found that licensed human therapists responded correctly to crisis scenarios in 93 per cent of cases, whereas AI bots managed fewer than 60 per cent. This highlights that mental health care requires not only clinical problem-solving but also human understanding, empathy, and the ability to navigate interpersonal relationships. Therapy is fundamentally about building trust and human connections, which AI, regardless of its sophistication, cannot fully replicate. While AI may support mental health initiatives, it should be viewed as an adjunct rather than a substitute for professional human care.

R SIVAKUMAR | CHENNAI

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

Physics Nobel Prize 2025: Quantum computing is the future

The work of three Nobel laureates marks the dawn of a new computational era — one that merges physics, technology, and imagination to push the limits of what humanity can calculate, communicate, and comprehend

FIRST
Column



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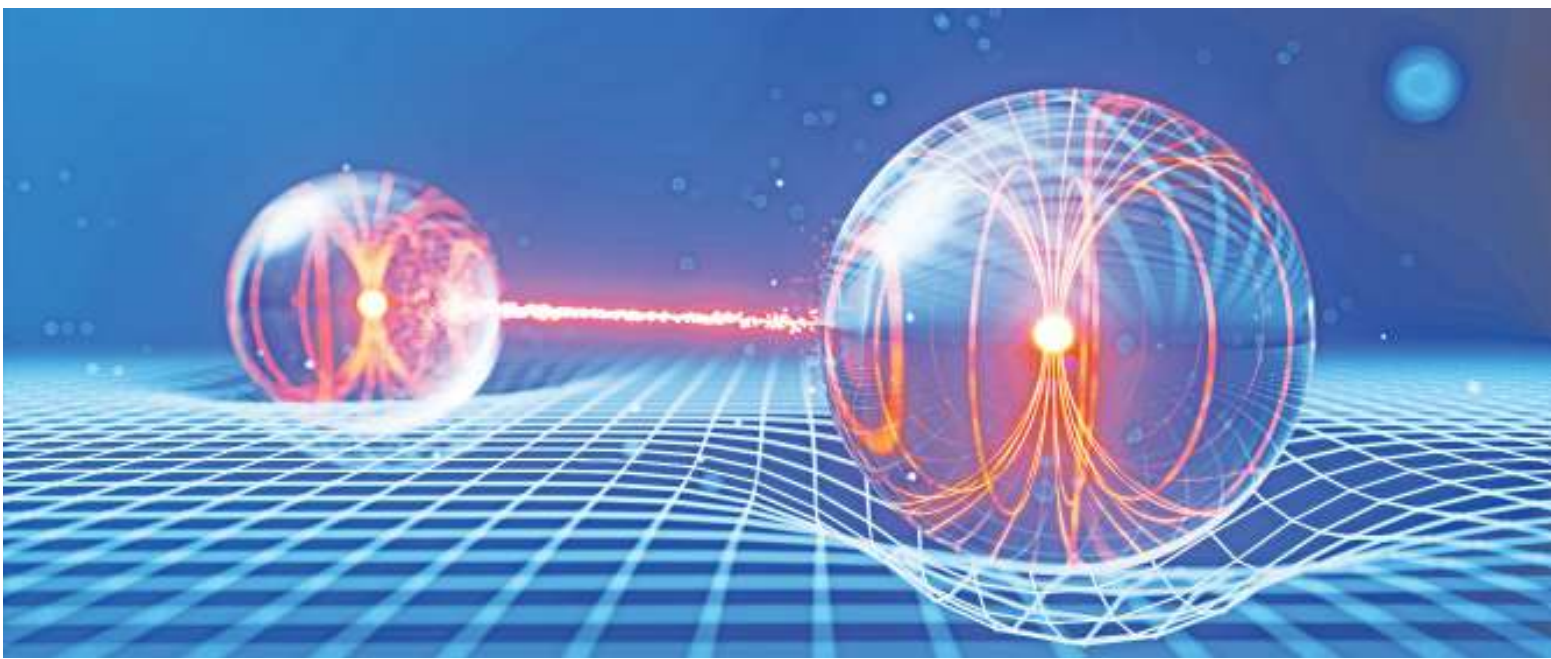
Century old Quantum Mechanics can explain how a single sub-atomic particle cross the energy barrier through tunneling, be located at multiple places simultaneously, occupies discrete energy levels and emits energy in quanta as it moves from higher energy level to lower energy level.

Three US Physics Professors; namely John Clarke, University of California Berkeley, Michel H Devoret Yale University, New Haven CT and University of California, Santa Barbara and John M Martinis University of California Santa Barabara, were awarded this year's Physics Nobel Prize. Quantum mechanics has advanced from single particle to macroscopic level, and during 1984 and 1985 these Professors have conducted experiments wherein quantum behavior has been observed at macroscopic level, where billions and trillions of Cooper particles (two electrons closed system) are involved.

The Professors had discovered macroscopic mechanical tunneling and quantized energy level in a system large enough to be kept in hand. When they made this discovery in 1984 and 1985, Martinis was a PhD candidate, Devoret was a postdoctoral fellow and Clarke was their professor and supervisor. Two of the three Laureates have links with Google. Besides his professorship Devoret, is Chief Scientist of Google Quantum AI, while Martinis headed Google's Quantum AI lab till 2020.

How Quantum Mechanics is different from Classical Mechanics? We have seen in our day today life that when a ball is thrown against a wall, it rebounds on the same side and never crosses to the other side of the wall. In sharp contrast to this, atomic particles under quantum mechanical principles cross the barrier through tunneling, located at multiple positions simultaneously and can occupy discrete energy levels.

In 1973 Physics Nobel Prize was won by Brian Josephson for discovering the flow of electric current between two superconductors separated by an insulator. This has been a very useful finding and superconductor-insulator-superconductor junction has been used in various experiments like measurement of fundamental physical constants and



GOOGLE'S
QUANTUM AI
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RECENTLY
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CHIP' HAS RUN
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AND OBTAINED
13,000 TIMES
FASTER RESULT
AS COMPARED
TO THE RESULT
FROM TOP
SUPERCOMPUTER

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Karnataka, and a
postgraduate in Physics

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magnetic field etc. and is commonly called as Josephson junction. This set-up was utilized by Nobel Laureates in the series of experiments they conducted in 1984 and 1985 meticulously isolated the set-up from its environment and ensured that the quantum effects are not destroyed by interference. They were successful in demonstrating the flow of electron through the set-up and also found the electrons exhibiting quantum mechanical behavior.

The superconducting chip separating another superconductor by an insulator had electric current flowing without any resistance. The electrons coordinate and move together in a single wave. The voltmeter reading showing zero initially starts showing value corresponding to a discrete energy level confirming that the particle has crossed the wall (the insulator) through tunneling. Though the scientists have not been able to conclude the maximum size of the system exhibiting the quantum behavior, but the experiments conducted in 1984 and 1985 by the Nobel Laureates have confirmed that the system as large as the set-up chosen by them did show quantum behavior. The discovery led to the building of quantum-bits (qubits) — unit of information in quantum computers.

The discovery has been extensively

used in mobiles, cameras, transistors in computer microchips and optic cables etc. that are part of our lives these days. The next generation quantum technology such as quantum cryptography, quantum computers and quantum sensors are the way forward from these inventions.

These discoveries have far reaching consequences and have been providing breakthroughs in many fields of medicine, chemistry and environment etc. The quantum behavior in superconducting circuits has led to the creation of superconducting qubits, the building blocks of quantum computers and can perform intricate calculations far beyond the reach of a classical computer, marking the dawn of a new computational era. Google

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Sycamore processor, co-developed by martinis has already demonstrated quantum supremacy by solving problems faster than any existing supercomputer.

The implications extend far beyond computing. In cybersecurity, quantum technology challenges current encryption models, driving innovation in post-quantum cryptography to safeguard credentials, financial data, and national digital infrastructures. If appropriate innovations are not done, our personal data, bank accounts etc. can be hacked using quantum computers. Quantum key distri-

bution (QKD) further enhances data privacy, allowing secure communications based on unbreakable principles of Quantum Physics.

In industrial applications, quantum enhanced sensors can detect minute changes in temperature, magnetic fields or vibrations, revolutionising areas like predictive maintenance, manufacturing quality control and energy management. These sensors could form the backbone of quantum secure industrial networks, protecting critical systems from cyber threats while improving performance and efficiency. We are aware that information is stored in any normal computer as bits, which are either 0 or 1. Quantum computer uses qubits that can be understood to be behaving like a spinning coin in air with 0 and 1 at the same time. Group of qubits can become linked indicating that when we learn about the one we get to know something about the other too. The two traits are utilised in a quantum machine and bring out several possibilities in parallel.

Google's quantum AI team has recently reported that its 'Willow Superconducting chip' has run a new test and obtained 13,000 times faster result as compared to the result from top supercomputer. This test is called Quantum Echoes and can be repeated and checked using other quantum machines. Google calls it as 'ver-

ifiable quantum advantage'. Earlier quantum advantage demos produced one off random results and thus, were not verifiable. Quantum Echoes, however, measure the number called 'out of time order correlator' (OTOC), which would again emerge when another quantum computer follows the same step. Thus the number is specific irrespective of the quantum computer used. The similar output can be obtained after redoing/ rechecking and hence it is 'verifiable'.

We encounter chaos in natural processes, which is generally characterized by the high sensitivity of a system towards small perturbations. The notable examples being weather patterns, wherein a small change in initial conditions leads to different outcomes over time and population dynamics where a small shift in local population can affect the entire ecosystem. Chaos is also found in quantum systems, like dynamics of magnetisation in atomic nuclei subjected under magnetic field varying with time and flow of electrons on high temperature superconductors. Quantum computers are ideal for simulating such chaotic systems.

A quantum computer simulating OTOC signals from a physical system in nature such as molecules, whose system parameters are not fully known can be compared with OTOC signals against the real world data about the physical system and observe when they best agree. A more precise estimation of system parameter can be made as compared to any other technique. The echo number thus, can track any small disturbance spreading through the material and has tremendous scope in guiding the design of alloys, cleaner catalysts and zero-in on a chemical battery that can last longer.

The physics of Nuclear Magnetic Resonance is being extensively used in Medical Science especially in MRI. Google has shown that how Echoes paired with NMR data can act like a molecular ruler. Structural features of real molecule can be compared to find how a drug might bind to a protein making a clear scope for quick discovery of drugs. It opens the way for examining the complex quantum behavior and possibilities of breakthrough in climate technology, environment, electronics and Chemistry. Quantum precision measurement is advancing medical imaging, environmental monitoring, and even space exploration, opening new frontiers in scientific discoveries.

India's entry into international carbon market: A defining moment for the country



SHINGLE SEBASTIAN | GOPAL K SARANGI

While the COP 30 discussions are underway to resolve some of the complex global challenges of climate change, exploiting the international carbon market as a source of climate action is also going to be a key source of climate action. India's signing of the Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) with Japan under Article 6.2 of the Paris Agreement marks a pivotal step in India's engagement with international carbon markets. Article 6.2 provides a broad, decentralised cooperative approach that allows countries to trade Internationally Transferred Mitigation Outcomes (ITMOs), thereby driving technology transfer, climate finance, and innovation. For India, the signing of Article 6.2 has turned out to be a propitious moment in driving the highly desired technology transfer and much-needed climate financing.

A robust institutional framework is in place

India moved early to establish the institutional framework for such cooperation. On May 30, 2022, the Government of India notified the National Designated Authority for Implementation of Article 6 of the Paris Agreement (NDAIAPA), the body responsible for approving projects eligible for ITMO transactions. This was followed, on 17 February 2023, by a public announcement listing the activities India would initially consider eligible for trading under Article 6.2. Most recently, in August 2025, the NDAIAPA was amended to reflect evolved decisions under Articles 6.2 and 6.4.

The eligibility list spans green hydrogen and ammonia, sustainable aviation fuel (SAF), compressed biogas, high-efficiency industrial technologies, renewables with storage (stored component), offshore wind, solar thermal, HVDC lines linked to renewables, ocean energy, and carbon capture, utilisation and storage (CCUS). These activities were strategically chosen to catalyse technology transfer and mobilise much-needed international finance, with an initial three-year scope and provision for revision and expansion.

However, since developing countries already have targets under their NDCs, establishing a robust institutional framework becomes crucial to ensure transparency and integrity in international transfers. Though India has created the institutional framework, the next critical phases involve strengthening processes for project

authorisation, monitoring and verification (MRV), as well as the allocation and transfer of ITMOs within agreed timelines. Establishing these mechanisms, supported by a Project Implementation Agency (PIA) and a steering committee to oversee synergies across domestic and international carbon markets, will be essential to ensure readiness for full-scale cooperation and transparent ITMO transfers under Article 6.2.

Besides, speed matters because bilateral pipelines are forming now. Global activity is narrow but deep. Hence, it is an opportune time for India to become an integral part of such evolving bilateral pipelines.

Where do opportunities sit?

India's eligibility list under Article 6.2 opens distinct avenues for sectors positioned to deliver high-integrity, internationally transferable mitigation outcomes (ITMOs). In clean-energy carriers, green hydrogen and green ammonia can serve as financing bridges to scale electrolyser capacity and decarbonise export-oriented value chains. Developers that align early with partner-

country measurement, reporting, and verification (MRV) standards can secure premium pricing and long-term offtake agreements. Sustainable aviation fuel and compressed biogas provide complementary routes, enabling incremental abatement beyond domestic demand by supplying ITMO-linked volumes to countries pursuing aviation decarbonisation targets. For the private sector, this framework presents early-mover advantages. Industries such as steel, cement, chemicals, and refineries can integrate best-available technologies and enter cooperative agreements that de-risk upfront capital expenditure through bilateral ITMO-linked arrangements. Renewable energy players combining storage and HVDC infrastructure can position projects for system-level emission reductions verified by international buyers. Carbon-removal ventures using CCUS technologies offer an additional frontier, where private developers securing storage-site assessments, robust monitoring plans, and long-term buyer commitments can anchor India's first wave of removal-based ITMOs from industrial clusters.

Beyond technology deployment, each cooperative agreement must be evaluated through four lenses — contribution to India's Net Zero commitment, promotion of technology transfer along with intellectual property rights, assurance of sustainable climate finance, and acceleration of local sustainable development. These priorities ensure that India's participation in international carbon markets strengthens both climate and socio-economic objectives.

What lies ahead?

As India moves from readiness to implementation under Article 6.2, the focus must shift to

strengthening institutional processes for authorisation, registry, and ITMO transfers, while fostering technology transfer and innovation in sectors like hydrogen, CCUS, and offshore wind. With the NDAIAPA, the Carbon Credit Trading Scheme (CCTS), and the Japan MoC in place, success now depends on how effectively India mobilises regulators, industries, financiers, and project developers to turn readiness into credible international cooperation and measurable climate outcomes. The following areas require strategic policy thrusts to reap optimum benefits from the international carbon market:

- **Strengthening governance and institutional architecture:** India must operationalise a clear governance structure by constituting Project Implementation Agencies (PIAs) for each bilateral mechanism to oversee project authorisation, MRV, and ITMO transfers. The Article 6.2 registry should be embedded within the CCTS, enabling unified credit tracking and direct transfers to buyer-country registries. This system can maintain a "knowing-basis" link with the international registry for transparency while preserving national control. Countries lacking domestic registries may temporarily rely on the international platform, but India's design should prioritise sovereignty and traceability.

- **Building a pipeline of bankable projects:** The NDAIAPA should curate a strong pipeline in sectors where India holds an edge - green hydrogen, compressed biogas, offshore wind, and CCUS. Fast-tracked feasibility studies, pre-approval templates, and a dedicated facilitation cell can help developers meet buyer-country expectations and streamline MRV compliance.

- **Catalysing private-sector participation:** The private sector shoulders the key responsibility for driving implementation. Early adopters in steel, cement, refineries, fertilisers, and transport should be encouraged to form consortia with financiers and technology providers. A blended-finance or guarantee window under the CCTS can reduce risk, while clear ITMO pricing norms - via benchmarks, auctions, or bilateral formulas - will create predictability and investor confidence.

- **Expanding and deepening bilateral partnerships:** Beyond Japan, India should deepen partnerships with Switzerland, Singapore, the UAE, and South Korea to broaden market access and technology collaboration. Regular inter-ministerial coordination and proactive negotiation of new MoCs can strengthen India's position as both a supplier of high-integrity credits and a shaper of global carbon-market norms.

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The quiet revolution on the field: Let every girl play



ISHANI
SIROHI

"Start them young." The phrase echoes in playgrounds, on gym floors, and at kitchen tables where parents debate the next move for their child. But all too often, it's implicitly aimed at boys; boys in cleats, boys on courts, the boys who wear the hero's jersey. And when girls do slip into shoes and gear, the question persists: "Is sport really for me?" That quiet hesitation has cost generations of girls an experience that builds not only strength but also self-belief. The good news? That tide is finally turning.

The Moment That Moved a Nation

When the Indian women's cricket team lifted the World Cup, the celebration wasn't just about victory; it was about rewriting perception. Among the most touching stories was that of Amanjot Kaur, whose father, a carpenter, carved her first bat by hand because they couldn't afford one. That simple act of faith became a symbol of possibility, proof that equality often begins with a parent's belief. Every such story is a quiet revolution in a society that still needs reminding that girls belong on the field too.

A Foundation

I was fortunate — both my parents served in the Indian Army. In our household, discipline and fitness weren't optional; they were part of everyday life. That early structure became the foundation that led me to be a kettlebell sport world champion, a field most in India barely know exists. Kettlebell lifting isn't about machines or mirrors; it's about rhythm, precision, and the endurance to keep going when your body says stop. It's a test of willpower measured not in weight but in minutes of unbroken focus. Those lessons shaped me far beyond the platform. They taught me resilience, patience, and the quiet confidence that only effort can buy. That's what sport gives every girl — strength that spills into every part of her life.

The Hidden Power of Play

Research from the Women's Sports Foundation (WSF) shows that girls who participate in sport perform better academically, report higher self-esteem, and build stronger leadership skills than those who don't. These gains go far beyond physical fitness; they're about mental agility and emotional maturity. Sport sharpens reflexes, strengthens focus, and teaches teamwork. It encourages young girls to make decisions under pressure and

to find balance between ambition and discipline. In a world obsessed with instant validation, sport offers something lasting — character. Despite progress, India still faces a wide participation gap. Studies show that girls are more likely to drop out of sport during adolescence, citing safety issues, social expectations, and lack of facilities. The Sports and Society Accelerator and Dalberg report Active Equity found that many girls are discouraged from outdoor play by age 14, while boys are urged to compete longer and harder. Bridging that divide requires more than policy; it needs a mindset shift. Schools and parents must see sport as essential education, not a luxury.

If inspiration had faces, they would look like Mary Kom and PV Sindhu. Mary Kom — mother of four, Olympic medalist, and six-time world champion — has shown that motherhood and mastery can coexist. Sindhu's grace and ferocity on the badminton court redefined what Indian femininity in sport looks like. They didn't just win medals; they won mindshare. They made it possible for young girls to imagine a life where sport isn't a rebellion — it's a right. Across cities and towns, a new generation of Indian women is redefining what it means to be an athlete. They are engineers who run marathons, teachers who box before school, and professionals who lift weights after work. They are the hybrid athletes, balancing work, family, and sport without apology. This generation isn't waiting for perfect conditions. They're creating their own spaces, founding local clubs, and mentoring the next line of girls who will one day take their place.

They represent the India that's coming - fast, fearless, and inclusive.

Why It Must Begin Early

Every child is born with potential, but it's what we nurture early that shapes it. When girls play sport young, they learn to trust their bodies, to compete, to lead, and to fail gracefully. They discover that strength isn't masculine — it's universal. Sport teaches equality long before society does. On the field, a good pass or a strong finish earns respect, not gendered judgement. That's how you build confident women and balanced men — by letting every child play without bias.

The Final Whistle

India has proved its daughters can lift, run, punch, swim, and shine on the world stage. Now the responsibility lies with us — parents, educators, and policymakers — to give them that start earlier, stronger, and freer. Every time a girl steps onto a field, she does more than play. She shifts the narrative, inspires others, and when girls play, they win twice: once in sport, and once in life.

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FROM THE

WORLD

FRANCE

Sarkozy to be released

Former French President Nicolas Sarkozy will be released from prison and placed under judicial supervision, a Paris appeals court ruled Monday, less than three weeks after he began serving a five-year sentence over a scheme to finance his 2007 election campaign with funds from Libya. Sarkozy, 70, was expected to leave Paris' La Santé prison in the afternoon. He will be banned from leaving the French territory and from being in touch with key people including co-defendants and witnesses in the case, the court said. An appeals trial is expected to take place later, possibly in the spring. Sarkozy became the first former French head of state in modern times to be sent behind bars after his conviction on September 25. He denies wrong doing.

USA

Man kills three co-workers

A 21-year-old man shot and killed three co-workers at a San Antonio, Texas, landscape supply company and then died after shooting himself, authorities said Sunday. Two men and a woman died in the shooting Saturday at the business on the city's north side, according to the San Antonio Police Department. Other employees ran from the scene when the gunfire erupted around 8 a.m., KSAF-TV reported. Police responded and secured the area, and hours later they found the gunman with a self-inflicted gunshot wound, officials said. He was identified by police as Jose Hernandez Galo. While the motive for the shooting wasn't immediately known, Police Chief William McManus said during a Saturday news conference that it was not random.

Fung-wong displaces 1.4 million people in the Philippines

ASSOCIATED PRESS
■ Manila

Typhoon Fung-wong blew out of the northwestern Philippines on Monday after setting off floods and landslides, knocking out power to entire provinces, killing at least eight people and displacing more than 1.4 million others. The typhoon was forecast to head northwest toward Taiwan.

Fung-wong lashed the northern Philippines while the country was still dealing with the devastation wrought by Typhoon Kalmaegi, which left at least 224 people dead in central provinces on Tuesday before pummeling Vietnam, where at least five were killed.

Fung-wong slammed ashore in northeastern Aurora province on Sunday night as a super typhoon with sustained winds of up to 185 kph (115 mph) and gusts of up to 230 kph (143 mph).

The 1,800-kilometre (1,100-mile)-wide storm weakened as it raked through mountainous northern provinces and agricultural plains overnight before blowing away from the province of La Union into the South China Sea, according to state forecasters.

One person drowned in flash floods in the eastern province of Catanduanes, and another died in Catbalogan city in eastern Samar province when her house collapsed on her, officials said. In the northern



Members of the Philippine Coast Guard clear fallen trees in Virac, Catanduanes as Typhoon Fung-wong affects in Philippines

province of Nueva Vizcaya, three children died in two separate landslides and four others were injured, police told The Associated Press. An elderly person was killed in a mudslide in Barlig, a town in northern Mountain Province, according to officials.

Another landslide in Lubuagan town in nearby Kalinga province killed two villagers, and two others were missing, provincial officials said on late Monday.

More than 1.4 million people moved into emergency shelters or the homes

of relatives before the typhoon made landfall and about 318,000 remained in evacuation centres on Monday.

Fierce wind and rain flooded at least 132 northern villages, including one where some residents were trapped

on their roofs as floodwaters rapidly rose. About 1,000 houses were damaged, Bernardo Rafaelito Alejandro IV of the Office of Civil Defence and other officials said, adding that roads blocked by landslides would be cleared as the weather

improved on Monday.

"While the typhoon has passed, its rains still pose a danger in certain areas" in northern Luzon, including in metropolitan Manila," Alejandro said. "We'll undertake today rescue, relief and disaster-response opera-

tions." Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. Declared a state of emergency on Thursday due to the extensive devastation caused by Kalmaegi and the expected damage from Fung-wong, which was also called Uwan in the Philippines.

Tropical cyclones with sustained winds of 185 kph (115 mph) or higher are categorised in the Philippines as a super typhoon to underscore the urgency tied to more extreme weather disturbances.

The Philippines has not called for international help following the devastation caused by Kalmaegi, but Teodoro said the United States, the country's long-time treaty ally, and Japan were ready to provide assistance. Authorities announced that schools and most Government offices would be closed on Monday and Tuesday. More than 325 domestic and 61 international flights were cancelled over the weekend and into Monday, and more than 6,600 commuters and cargo workers were stranded in ports after the coast guard prohibited ships from venturing into rough seas.

The Philippines is hit by about 20 typhoons and storms each year.

The country also has frequent earthquakes and has more than a dozen active volcanoes, making it one of the world's most disaster-prone countries.

US shutdown fuels flight delay nightmare

ASSOCIATED PRESS
■ New York

The pain Americans are facing at airports across the country is expected to get worse this week if Congress is unable to reach a deal to reopen the federal Government. US airlines cancelled more than 1,500 flights Saturday and more than 2,900 Sunday to comply with an FAA order to reduce traffic as some air traffic controllers, who have gone unpaid for nearly a month, have stopped showing up for work.

As of early Monday, airlines had already cancelled nearly 1,600 flights for Monday and nearly 1,000 for Tuesday.

The Senate took a first step toward ending the shutdown Sunday, but final passage could still be several days away and experts have said it



will take time for flights to go back to normal even after the Government reopens.

Many airports are facing significant delays for flights that haven't been cancelled as well, with airports in Newark,

Orlando, Chicago and Detroit all facing departure delays of more than an hour and increasing, according to Flight Aware.

This is the second pay period that air traffic controllers have

not received any pay for their work. The head of the air traffic controllers union, Nick Daniels, will hold a press conference Monday morning to address the impact the shutdown is having on them.

Cho meets PM Hun to push effort to fight criminal cyberscams

ASSOCIATED PRESS
■ Phnom Penh

South Korea's foreign minister met on Monday with Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet, keeping up pressure to suppress burgeoning large-scale online scam operations that have been blamed for the brutal death of a Korean student.

Hun Manet said on social media that he had met with Foreign Minister Cho Hyun but did not provide details of their talks in the Cambodian capital, Phnom Penh.

Seoul's foreign ministry said last week Cho's visit would include discussions on cooperating to eradicate scam-related crimes in Cambodia and launching a joint police task force on the problem. Cho is scheduled to depart on Tuesday.

Crude bomb explodes outside Grameen Bank HO in Dhaka

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Dhaka

A crude bomb exploded outside the head office of Bangladesh's Grameen Bank, founded by Muhammad Yunus, in Dhaka's Mirpur on Monday, police said.

"Two miscreants on a motorcycle arrived and hurled the crude bomb in front of the road of the Grameen Bank at around 3.45 am," a police official said. "Nobody has been arrested yet, but by now we have launched a campaign to track down the miscreants," the officer-in-charge of Mirpur police station told reporters.

The attack was one of the many instances of sporadic violence that have hit Dhaka amid brewing tensions in Bangladesh's political landscape. Early on Monday, unidentified men also exploded improvised bombs in front of a business outlet of one of Yunus' advisers and set two buses ablaze in the capital. Police said no casualty was reported in the attacks in front of Grameen Bank, and the Prabartana — a business owned by fisheries and livestock adviser Farida Akhter.

Yunus, who is currently the Chief Adviser of the interim Government, founded the Grameen Bank in 1983 and won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2006 for his work in poverty alleviation and the empowerment of poor women through it.

According to police, the explosions in Prabartana at the Mohammadpur area occurred around 7:10 am, when two motorcycle-borne miscreants "hurled the crude bombs in front of the establishment, both of which exploded with loud bangs." One of the crude bombs also landed inside the premises of

the outlet. Meanwhile, police said "unidentified miscreants" also exploded crude bombs at two places in the city's posh Dhanmondi area.

Motorcycle riders detonated two bombs near Ibn Sina Hospital, said to be run by Jamaat-e-Islami, and another two in front of a major crossing. Separately, a 50-year-old man, "listed gangster", was shot down in front of a hospital in the old part of Dhaka hours later.

Police said they were looking for clues to identify his assailants.

He had narrowly escaped an attack in 2023, three months before which he was released on bail after spending 26 years in prison, The Daily Star newspaper reported. The incidents came as police escalated their vigil, staging security drills across the city ahead of November 13, when Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal (ICT-BD) is set to fix the date for handing its verdict against deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina after trial in absentia.

The ICT-BD prosecution team demanded Hasina's capital punishment, particularly for her attempts to ruthlessly tame last year's violent student-led street protest dubbed the July Uprising, which toppled her Awami League regime.

The Bangladesh capital has been witnessing frequent flash marches for the past several months when Hasina's now disbanded Awami League activists suddenly appear on the streets, stage processions and then disperse.

Police said they arrested over 3,000 activists of the "banned party" until last month, and the figure increased as raids were carried out every day to arrest more.

WORKERS PROTEST OVER UNPAID WAGES

Dhaka: About 100 Bangladeshi workers who were employed by Malaysian companies rallied Monday to demand unpaid wages, fair compensation and an end to alleged abuse by Malaysian employers. The Migrant Welfare Network, a Bangladeshi migrant group based in Malaysia and Bangladesh, organised the protest at the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment in Bangladesh's capital Dhaka. The demonstrators said the event was organised to protest what they say is widespread mistreatment of migrant workers in Malaysia, one of Southeast Asia's richest nations. They demanded unpaid wages and compensation for 431 Bangladeshi workers they said were exploited by two Malaysian companies, Mediceram and Kawaguchi Manufacturing. The Associated Press could not immediately reach the companies for comment.

Many factories in Malaysia and other Southeast Asia countries rely on migrant workers, often from Bangladesh, Myanmar and Nepal, to fill labour-intensive jobs in manufacturing, plantations or construction. Local workers usually avoid such jobs because of their poor conditions and low wages. The Migrant Welfare Network urged Bangladeshi and Malaysian authorities and international buyers to take immediate action to ensure workers receive wages already owed, fair compensation and "justice for systemic abuses."

Trump pardons Rudy Giuliani, others who backed efforts to overturn 2020 results

ASSOCIATED PRESS
■ Washington

President Donald Trump has pardoned his former personal lawyer Rudy Giuliani, his former chief of staff Mark Meadows and others accused of backing the Republicans' efforts to overturn the 2020 election, a Justice Department official says.

Martin, the Government's pardon attorney, posted on social media a signed proclamation of the "full, complete, and unconditional" pardon, which also names conservative attorneys Sidney Powell and John Eastman. The proclamation, posted online late Sunday, explicitly says the pardon does not apply to Trump. Presidential pardons apply only to federal crimes, and none of the Trump allies



President Donald Trump waves to the crowd alongside Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth

were charged in a federal case. But the move underscores Trump's efforts to continue to rewrite the history of the 2020 election he lost to Democrat Joe Biden.

The White House didn't immediately respond to an email seeking comment

Monday. Also pardoned were Republicans who acted as fake electors for Trump in 2020 and were charged in state cases of submitting false certificates that confirmed they were legitimate electors despite Biden's victory in those states. The proclama-

tion described efforts to prosecute those who were involved in the 2020 election schemes "as a grave national injustice perpetrated on the American people" and said the pardons were designed to continue "the process of national reconciliation.



Pakhtunkhwa CM booked for controversial remark

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Peshawar

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi has been booked under the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (PECA) for making "false, misleading and derogatory statements" against state institutions. The case was filed by the National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA), Islamabad, on behalf of the State on Sunday. According to the FIR, Afridi made a "controversial" remark related to mosques. According to the NCCIA, the inquiry revealed serious allegations against Afridi, who allegedly made "false, misleading, and derogatory statements against state institutions". A video of these remarks from outside Rawalpindi's Adiala Jail, where jailed former premier Imran Khan is lodged, was uploaded on the official YouTube channel of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI).



Mexico to send more troops after mayor's killing

ASSOCIATED PRESS
■ Mexico City

Mexico President Claudia Sheinbaum and her security Cabinet said on Sunday that the Government is sending more troops to the western state of Michoacan and will invest more than \$3 billion to try to quell the state's persistent violence. The announcement came a week after a 17-year-old gunman shot and killed a popular mayor during Day of the Dead festivities, spurring protests in towns across the state and demands that the federal Government take action. Sheinbaum recognized the pain and indignation expressed after the assassination of Uruapan Mayor Carlos Alberto Manzo. "His cowardly murder hurts, not only his family and his community, but all of Michoacan and the country," the president said at the National Palace Sunday.

Zelenskyy seeks Patriot systems from US

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Kyiv

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said on Monday he wants to order 25 Patriot air defence systems from the United States, as Ukraine desperately tries to fend off relentless Russian aerial attacks that have brought rolling blackouts across Ukraine on the brink of winter. Zelenskyy acknowledged that the Patriot systems are expensive and that such a large batch could take years to manufacture. But he said European countries could give their Patriots to Ukraine and await replacements, stressing that “we would not like to wait.”

Combined missile and drone strikes on the power grid have coincided with Ukraine's frantic efforts to hold back a Russian battlefield push aimed at capturing the eastern stronghold of Pokrovsk. Meanwhile, international peace efforts appear to have dissipated, nearly four years after Russia invaded its neighbour. Zelenskyy said Ukraine recently received more Patriot systems from Germany. It is not known



how many Patriot systems are in Ukraine. But on the whole, air defences remain stretched thin across wide expanses of Ukrainian territory, and the threat to the pro-

vision of heating and running water in the bitter winter is acute. NATO is coordinating regular deliveries of large weapons packages to Ukraine. European allies and Canada

are buying much of the equipment from the United States. The Trump administration is not giving any arms to Ukraine, unlike the previous Biden administration. Russia's

attacks on energy infrastructure have grown more effective. It launches hundreds of drones, some equipped with cameras to improve targeting, that overwhelm Ukraine's air

defences, especially in regions where protection is weaker. Also, this year, it is striking region by region, hitting local switchyards and substations, instead of taking aim at the centralised national grid.

Ukraine's Energy Ministry said on Monday that Russian attacks caused more damage to its power infrastructure, resulting in scheduled blackouts in most of the country's regions. It urged Ukrainians to rationalise their use of electricity, especially during peak consumption hours in the mornings and evenings.

Meanwhile, the two sides were locked in a battle for control of Pokrovsk, in Ukraine's eastern Donetsk region, where Zelenskyy says Russia has assembled 170,000 troops for a renewed push. There has been a relative lull in fighting in recent days, according to reports gathered by the Institute for the Study of War.

But the Washington-based think tank said it expected Russian forces to quicken the tempo of their attacks in the coming days as they move more troops into the city.

5 Indian abducted in Mali, embassy works for safe release

PRES TRUST OF INDIA

■ Bamako

Five Indian nationals were abducted in Mali last week in an “unfortunate incident”, the Indian mission here has said. The kidnapping took place on November 6 in the West African nation, the Indian embassy said in an X post on Sunday. “The Embassy is aware of the unfortunate incident of kidnapping of five of our nationals in Mali on 6 Nov 2025,” it said. The embassy has been “working closely with the authorities and the company concerned to secure their safe release as quickly as possible,” it added. While other hand some fuel stations in Mali's capital opened Monday for the first time since an al-Qaida affiliate imposed a fuel blockade on the West African nation, as supply convoys made their way through the

landlocked nation while under fire. Schools also managed to open in Bamako for the first time since the JNIM fighters' blockade began two weeks ago. “The children went to school this morning, but I remain concerned,” one parent in Bamako, Salif Traoré, told The Associated Press. “Many petrol stations are still closed due to a lack of fuel, and I don't know how long the fuel availability in the city will last.” More than 100 fuel tankers have been destroyed, with several people killed and drivers taken hostage.

On Sunday, the African Union called for “urgent international action” to combat extremism in Mali. Its statement also condemned the abduction of three Egyptian nationals there. Several countries, including France and the US, have advised their citizens to leave Mali immediately.

Russia, India to sign labour mobility accord during Putin's visit

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

■ Moscow

India and Russia are expected to sign a bilateral mobility agreement during President Vladimir Putin's visit to New Delhi in the first week of December.

This accord will establish a framework for legal migration, protection of workers' rights and expansion of skilled Indian manpower in Russia as the post-Communist nation is feeling an acute shortage of qualified and skilled workers in its expanding economy.

According to reports, the agreement will ensure legal protection for existing Indian workers and open pathways for thousands of new professionals in industries such as construction, textiles, engineering and electronics.

By the end of the year, over 70,000 Indian nationals are expected to be officially employed across Russia under the quotas managed by the Russian Ministry of Labour.

The Moscow-based Indian Business Alliance (IBA) has welcomed the forthcoming India-Russia Mobility Agreement and considers this initiative a strategic milestone in expanding India-Russia relations. “India has one of the world's most dynamic and skilled workforce and Russia is undergoing a major industrial transformation.

This agreement creates a win-win opportunity for both sides—providing skilled manpower for Russia's economy and dignified employment for Indian professionals,” said IBA President Sammy Manoj Kotwani. To avoid past cases of violation of immigration laws by Indian nationals recruited by fraudsters, the IBA has expressed its readiness to collaborate with both Governments and business partners to organise orientation and language programmes for incoming Indian workers and promote fair recruitment channels and ethical employment standards. The IBA will also coordinate with the Embassy of India in Moscow and regional Russian authorities to ensure smooth integration.

Vast scope for India, Angola to deepen economic ties: Murmu

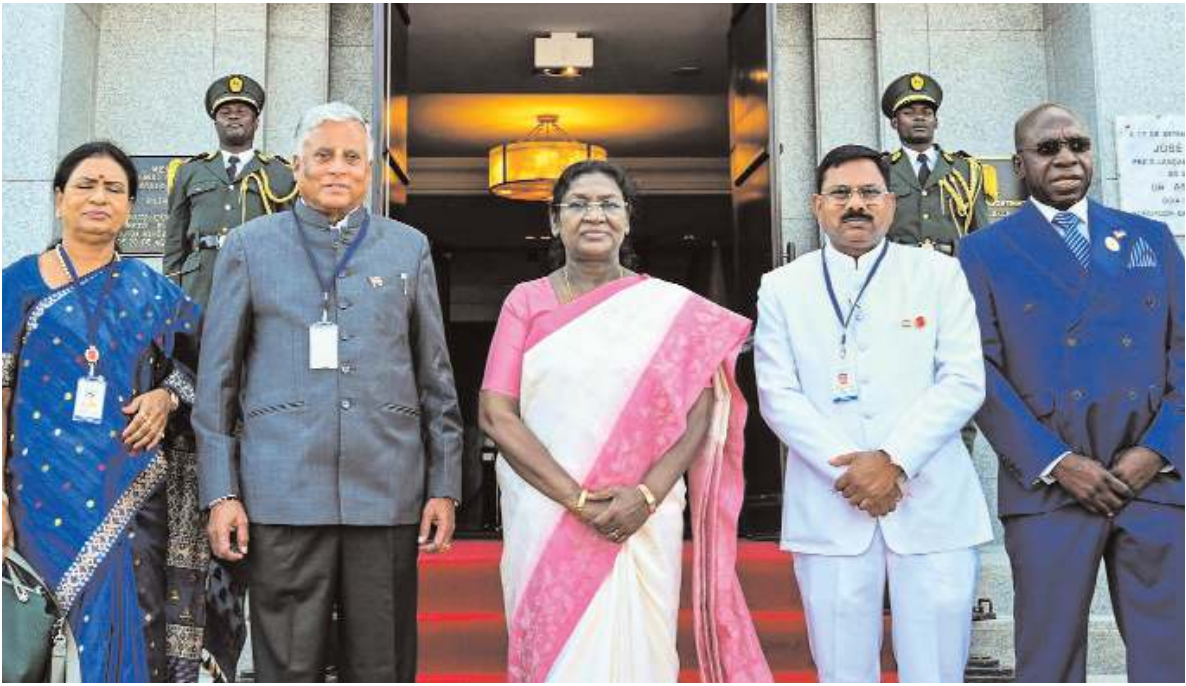
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

■ Luanda

President Droupadi Murmu on Monday said India and Angola have extensive opportunities to deepen their economic ties by exploring avenues in various sectors, including digital technology, defence, agriculture and food processing. Addressing members of the Angolan Parliament on the third day of her state visit to the African country, Murmu said trade and economic co-operation are an “important pillar” of the bilateral ties between the two countries.

“There are vast opportunities available for cooperation between the two countries in digital technology, defence, agriculture and food processing.

“Going forward, we are committed to take benefit of these possibilities to deepen our economic relations,” she said. The President added that the collaboration of the two nations in the energy sector is “continuously” making our economic ties stronger. Murmu is the first Indian President to visit



President Droupadi Murmu visiting the memorial of Dr Antonio Agostinho Neto during her official visit to Angola, in Luanda

PTI

the energy-rich country located along the Atlantic Ocean. She said the relations between India and Angola are based on “mutual respect, equality and mutual benefit” for the people of the two nations. Murmu said she was happy to note that

the Angolan Parliament has 39 per cent women members, which is a true example of gender equality and inclusive governance.

She recalled that India too has enacted a historic law providing one-third reservation to women in

the Parliament and state assemblies. The President, before the visit to the Parliament, paid floral tributes at the memorial of Dr Antonio Agostinho Neto, the first President of the country, who played a prominent role in Angola's struggle for

independence.

She also visited the National Museum of military history located in the city.

The President is on a four-day state visit to Angola, followed by a similar tour to Botswana between November 11-13.

China, Japan embroil in major diplomatic row over Taiwan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Beijing

A Chinese diplomat's aggressive comments threatening Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi for her remarks about Tokyo's potential involvement in any Chinese action over Taiwan have stirred up a major diplomatic row between the two countries.

Japan on Monday lodged a stern protest with China over Chinese Consul General in Osaka Xue Jian's social media post in which he threatened to “cut off dirty neck without a moment of hesitation” while citing a news article on Takaichi's remarks in parliament. “We must say that the post is extremely inappropriate for a Chinese diplomatic mission head,” Japan's government spokesman Minoru Kihara was quoted as saying by the Japanese news agency, Kyodo.

The post, however, had been deleted, he said. The flare-up occurred after Takaichi told a parliamentary committee on Friday that a Chinese military attack on Taiwan could be a “survival-threatening situation” for Japan, which could exercise its right to collective self-defence. Responding to the

Chinese diplomat's comments, China's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jiao told the media here Monday that Takaichi's remarks are “a gross interference in China's internal affairs” and Beijing has lodged a protest with Tokyo. Declining to comment on the Chinese diplomat's comments, Lin said it was in response to Takaichi's remarks on Taiwan, a “red line” for China. “I hope Japan will stop creating confusion and shifting blame,” he said.

Since she took over power in Japan last month, becoming the first woman Prime Minister of the country, Takaichi, who is regarded as a hawk in China, is stirring up the Taiwan pot, riling Beijing.

“The situation regarding Taiwan has become serious. We must assume the worst-case scenario,” Takaichi told the parliamentary session, highlighting recent aggressive actions by China, which has deployed warships and fighter aircraft in defence drills around Taiwan, closely located near Japan. Lin said Takaichi's remarks are “seriously damaging bilateral ties and challenging post-war international order” Lin continued.

US to press forward Israel-Hamas ceasefire

ASSOCIATED PRESS

■ Deir al-Balah

Israel on Monday returned the remains of 15 Palestinians to Gaza in the latest step forward for a US-brokered ceasefire, as a top White House envoy met with Israeli leaders to discuss the next stages of the fragile agreement.

Israel returned the bodies after Palestinian militants released the remains of a hostage Sunday. With the latest exchange, only four bodies of hostages remained in Gaza. As the first stage of the agreement reached its waning days, US President Donald Trump's son-in-law, Jared Kushner, met on Monday with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Jerusalem, according to a photo released by the premier's office.

The last ceasefire agreement in January 2025 fizzled after the exchange of hostages for Palestinian pris-



oners, with Israel launching a wave of airstrikes over Gaza. At the time, mediators were unable to bring Hamas and Israel to the table to negotiate troop withdrawal and future governance of the strip. They face a similar challenge now, as the next stage of the agreement calls for the implementation of a governing body for Gaza and the deployment of an international stabilisation force. It is not clear where either stands.

The Gaza Health Ministry said the Red Cross handed over the Palestinian bodies Monday, raising the total number received to 315. For each Israeli hostage returned, Israel has been releasing the remains of 15 Palestinians.

The ministry, part of the Hamas-run government and staffed by medical professionals, maintains detailed records viewed as generally reliable by independent experts. Only 91 of the bodies

returned so far have been identified, the ministry said. Forensic work is complicated by a lack of DNA testing kits in Gaza. The ministry posts photos of the remains online, in the hope that families will recognise them.

The handover came after Israel on Sunday confirmed it had received the remains of Hadar Goldin, a soldier killed in the Gaza Strip in 2014, closing a painful chapter for the country.

The 23-year-old was killed two hours after a ceasefire took effect in that year's war between Israel and Hamas. Goldin's family waged a public campaign for 11 years to bring home his remains. Earlier this year, they marked 4,000 days since his body was taken. Israel's military had long determined that he had been killed, based on evidence found in the tunnel where his body was taken, including a blood-soaked shirt and prayer fringes

Rescuers searching for missing migrants

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Kuala Lumpur

Malaysian rescuers searching for dozens of people still missing after a boat carrying migrants from Myanmar capsized last week recovered five more bodies on Monday, bringing the death toll to 12. The bodies of two men, two women and a boy were found in waters off northern Langkawi island, close to the Thailand border, the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency said. First Adm. Romli Mustafa said in a statement that an estimated 70 people were on board the capsized boat, based on survivors' account. Of those, 13 have been rescued over the past two days, with dozens still missing. Officials said a larger vessel carrying some 300 people departed from the town of Buthidaung, in Myanmar's Rakhine state.

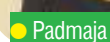
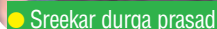


Indonesia declares late Suharto national hero

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Jakarta

Indonesia declared the former dictator Suharto a national hero on Monday, provoking outrage from rights groups who said the move was an attempt to whitewash decades of human rights abuses and corruption that took place during his 32 years in power. Suharto was a US ally during the Cold War who presided over decades of authoritarian rule, during which up to a million political opponents were killed, until he was toppled by protests in 1998. He was one of 10 people recognised by President Prabowo Subianto in a televised ceremony held at the presidential palace in Jakarta to mark National Hero Day. Minister of Culture said that Suharto played a key role during the struggle for independence against the Dutch colonial rulers, and later served as commander of a military operation.





The much-awaited New India Baby Olympic Games kicked off with great excitement and enthusiasm, bringing together hundreds of toddlers, parents, and families for a one-of-a-kind celebration of early childhood joy and fitness. Organized by GenZ Champs, the event took place at Atrium Mall, Gachibowli, showcasing the incredible energy, innocence, and playful competitiveness of India's youngest participants. Special guests, including Padmaja ambati marketing director brain bridge international school.



Photos by- Ch.Vijaya Bhaskar



AP Star Hotels Association president R V Swamy and others addressing a press conference about tourism development in Vijayawada on Monday.



Kabuni, a UK AI and sports technology pioneer, today announced their official launch into India. Their mission is to give all children and players access to transformative, professional level cricket coaching through the Kabuni sport tech platform and device. Kabuni is an AI and large language model platform that learns from the game itself, drawing on decades of cricket data, player movement and coaching knowledge to deliver personalised, data driven coaching through your phone or a Kabuni device. Sourav Ganguly, "Dada", and legendary Indian cricket captain and also Kabuni's Global Brand Ambassador, In conclusion, Nimesh Patel Founder and CEO. Kabuni breaks down every movement from a cover drive to a bowling action into measurable insights and real time feedback delivered via video, image, text and voice. "Quality coaching allows children to learn better, faster and live healthier lives. This level of coaching was only available for professionals, but now it is for everyone."

Blenders Pride Fashion Tour, India's most definitive voice in fashion, returns in 2025 with yet another spectacular edition where fashion, creativity and culture converge, and create 'The One and Only' stage that will set the tone for what's next in fashion. In a world where trends are often fleeting, Fashion Design Council of India (FDCI), the Fashion Tour brings together the India's leading designers and celebrated style icons to present experiences that breakthrough the realms of fashion, like never before. The tour will set the course in Gurugram with 'The Futureverse of Fashion' featuring designers Falguni and Shane Peacock, with Shahid Kapoor and Tamannaah Bhatia! The tour then will shift gears to Jaipur with 'High Octane Couture' where designers Abhishek Pant and Namrata Joshipura will



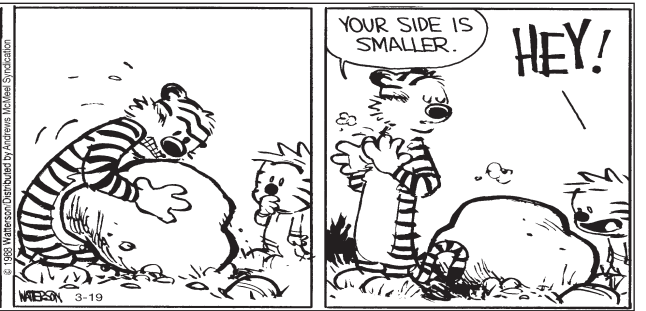
continue to set new benchmarks shaping the evolution of fashion & style in collaboration with India's finest designers & FDCI. With 'Fashion's Next Move', Sunil Sethi, Chairman, FDCI, expressed, "FDCI is thrilled with its collaboration with Blenders Pride Fashion Tour,

FUN



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SPLENDOR.

YOUR SIDE WALLONS IN DECAY
AND FILTH. MY TERRITORY
IS INFINITELY SUPERIOR
TO YOURS.



DON'T FORGET, CALVIN-- YOU'RE ALLERGIC TO PEANUTS

WATHEAD



JUNIOR CROSSWORD 771

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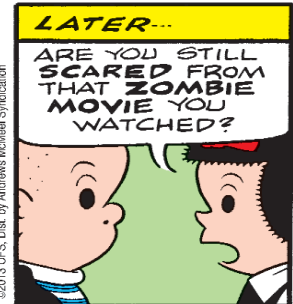
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**YIKES!
ZOMBIES!**



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DIFFICULTY RATING ★★☆☆☆

Yesterday's solution									
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2	1	4	5	8	9	6	7	3	
5	7	8	6	2	3	4	9	1	
3	9	6	1	7	4	8	5	2	

Rules

- Each row and column can contain each number (1 to 9) exactly once.
- The sum of all numbers in any row or column must equal 45.

ACROSS

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 Not remembered | 8 A kind of long bomb |
| 6 A brass musical instrument | fired under the sea |
| blown in the army | to sink ships |
| 7 Time of darkness | 11 A small river |
| 9 Very small | 13 Similar |
| 10 This is made from cream | 15 Cut exactly into two |
| 12 A symbol on playing cards | pieces |
| 14 Wear this on a foot | 16 Injured by a gun |
| 17 Lift up | |
| 18 A word of greeting | |
| 19 Allowed | |

DOWN

- 2 A keyboard instrument
3 Leaves
4 Poke this out at someone you don't like
5 Two times six minus four



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BLASÉ CAPITAL

BANKS IN BLACK



According to a recent research report by Motilal Oswal Mutual Fund, banking stocks continued to show strength, with the Bank Index rising 5.75 per cent in October, and posting 3.24 per cent, 4.88 per cent, and 12.24 per cent growth across the 3-month, 6-month, and one-year periods, respectively. The trend indicates that the banking sector is in a visibly stronger phase. Credit and deposits are growing, regulators are loosening liquidity constraints, the Government and central bank are talking about consolidation, and top banks (led by the State Bank of India) are aiming for global scale.

However, there are immediate concerns. According to some experts, the pressure on net interest margins will continue in the next quarter due to “intense competition for deposits, and potential interest rate cuts.” In terms of regulation, there are hints of higher scrutiny in areas such as cybersecurity, AI governance, and consumer protection. But compared to the private counterparts, the public sector banks seem poised to counter margin contractions. Large state-owned banks have posted good results in the second quarter this year, and are positive about the future.

Over the medium term, the potential and actual policy and regulation shifts, which include talks about privatisation and dilution, mergers among the larger banks, liquidity reforms, and faster retail growth are collectively reshaping how capital flows inside the economy. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman publicly signalled how privatisation of state-run banks can enhance financial inclusion, and why the past nationalisation did not deliver the expected outcomes. She framed the former as compatible with investors and public interest. This sparked protests among the unions, and Civil Society due to worries about job losses and rural access. Yet again, as in the 1990s, privatisation is a live policy debate, rather than an area of settled merit.

Why this matters is that privatisation changes “governance incentives, capital access, and risk allocation in large banks potentially speeding efficiency but raised distributional questions.” According to media reports, the government and the Reserve Bank of India wish to consolidate the large state-owned banks, after merging the smaller and weaker ones with the bigger and stronger ones earlier, to create larger, globally competitive institutions. The next phase may use M&As to build scale, reach and bigger balance sheets.

Larger banks, at least theoretically and according to a media report, improve funding depth, diversify loan books, and increase the ability to underwrite big projects, critical for infrastructure and industrial growth. Macro data and industry reports show that deposits and credit grew in 2025 (double-digit deposit growth and credit growth depending on the series). The RBI’s regulatory nudges will free up capital to support further lending. Many analysts see this as a concrete tailwind for margins and loan growth.

Several signals support such claims. These include the improving asset quality trends in big banks, rising retail and SME lending, digital adoption lifting low-cost deposit acquisition, and rising market valuations for major private and public banks. Industry and credit agencies have upgraded near-term credit expectations on the back of these dynamics. Stronger banks can underwrite growth, widen financial inclusion (if managed efficiently and properly), and support capital markets through issues, and bond issuances.

The State Bank of India (SBI) has set a target of being among the world’s top-10 most-valued banks by 2030. It crossed the ₹100 lakh-crore business milestone; management pointed to stronger capital buffers, and international expansion as levers to reach the targeted scale. This is part-prestige and part-strategy. It signals that India’s largest bank, which claims to be among the top 10 in terms of market capitalisation, wishes to aim for global competitiveness.

If SBI (and a couple of large private banks) enter the top 10 globally, it will change perceptions about India’s financial system, attract global investors, and make large-ticket domestic financing easier. SEBI chief Tuhin Kanta Pandey emphasised that capital market reforms, deeper domestic savings deployment, and simplified capital raising are central to financial ambitions. Hence, the regulators and market architects are pushing for reforms to make markets faster, more inclusive, and more efficient. While Pandey’s remarks stop short of a prediction that “without reforms we cannot reach \$30 trillion GDP,” his message is that structural reforms and deeper capital markets are prerequisites to sustain large-scale targets.

Policymakers and ministers have outlined the long-term vision of a \$30-trillion economy by mid-century. Officials and analysts warn that meeting such targets requires complementary reforms across finance, infrastructure, taxation, and labour. According to some, “India’s pathway to any very large nominal GDP target will be easier with deeper capital markets, larger banks, and operating reforms.”

India’s banking sector is on an upward trajectory backed by tangible policy moves, and stronger macro metrics. But the shift from “good” to “transformational” depends on policy follow-through. Careful privatisation or consolidation need to preserve inclusion, continuing liquidity/capital reforms, and parallel capital-market deepening. SEBI and bank leadership are explicit that without them the scale-up will be harder. Policy action over the next 18–60 months will matter. The Government, according to media reports, has prepared immediate blueprints, and several decisions may be unleashed over the next few months, including in next year’s Union Budget. The banks, investors, and customers are excited. So are the foreign investors, who have already queued up for action, which includes buying stakes in lucrative M&A deals on the table.

Lenskart under the market lens

It is one of the most-viewed, and highly-crazed companies that will be listed this week on the exchanges after its IPO (Initial Public Offering). As expected, the listing gains were minimal, as Lenskart’s stock opened on the National Stock Exchange (NSE) at a nearly two per cent discount, and closed a rupee above its offer price, or 0.25 per cent higher. During the day, after co-founder Peyush Bansal feverishly waited for the bell, the share price dived to below ₹363 on the NSE, or a drop of nearly ₹40, or 10 per cent, within two minutes. It recovered fast, ruled above the offer price for almost four hours, dipped down, and stayed afloat above the issue price.

Before the listing, in the grey market, the price was quoted at ₹390, or more than ₹10 below the offer price. Ambit Capital, a brokerage house, gave a ‘Sell’ rating, and estimated a target price of ₹337, which indicated a potential downside of 16 per cent. According to the brokerage, Lenskart’s was a capital-intensive model, with “limited free cash flow generation, and modest return on capital employed (RoCE) of around nine per cent,” which made its “lofty valuation hard to justify.” The institutional investors were bullish. “The business is great. The runway is great. The lead over the rivals is very good,” Kunal Shroff, managing partner, ChrysCapital,

told a website.

For weeks before the IPO, and during the period till the listing, there was a debate on Lenskart’s valuation. Some analysts said that the company’s worth, based on the offer price, was highly-stretched. Questions were asked about IPOs to SEBI officials, who wavered between allowing the market to decide the worth of new shares, and a view that valuations need to be fair and genuine. Other experts said that the eyewear company, which is now into smart AI-driven glasses, has a huge future potential, and the investors are paying for it. Despite the so-called high price, the issue was oversubscribed by more than 28 times, with the institutional figure being 45 times.

Bansal, the co-founder, said that he had no idea about a listing bell when he launched the company with others, but he realised that his vision was 20/20 from the reaction of one of his early customers. “She was a teacher who gave up reading notebooks because of her eyesight, and started crying when she wore our glasses. It reminded me that our business is not about eyesight, but dignity, pride, and possibilities,” he said at the listing event. Lenskart, according to him, transforms how people see, and wows customers.

Bansal’s business became an obsession even as the founders discussed building Indian institutions on the lines of Microsoft, and provide vision at global standards. Bansal said that they dreamt about a time when everyone in a crowded cricket stadium would wear their glasses. They were rattled when mall owners repeatedly said that the ground floor space was meant for the foreign brands, and Indian ones could go lower, or higher. They were heckled for owning a ‘chasma ka company.’ Bansal had to convince his co-founder’s prospective father-in-law that it was fine to marry his daughter to his partner. “Profit is oxygen, but purpose is breath for us. Every customer we serve is like an IPO, as the stock market rings the bell once, and customers ring it every day,” he added.

On the first day, the expert views, as we mentioned earlier, remained mixed. Shivani Nyati of Swastika Investmart maintained a ‘Neutral’ view, and cited “stretched valuations even though the company’s business fundamentals remain solid.” Another analyst, Siddharth Maurya of Vibhavangal Anukulakara felt

that with a “potential valuation of around ₹70,000 crore, Lenskart’s omni-channel presence, and aggressive international expansion stand out as key differentiators.” But he wanted the investors to do their due diligence, and look at the sustainability of margins. According to NSE data, on the first day, more than 131 million shares were traded, with a value of ₹522 million, and a market cap of ₹70,184 crore.

According to a media report, “The eyewear platform entered the market with a valuation of around ₹70,000 crore. Yet, just before its listing, its grey market premium slid from ₹108 at its peak to zero. The drop reflected a sharp pullback in appetite, suggesting investors were no longer willing to pay a premium even before the shares hit the exchange.”

Several factors can explain it. The valuation metrics put Lenskart higher than competitors like Titan, Trent, and Nykaa. Brokerages stated that while revenue growth is robust, margins have not kept pace. The market mood changed in terms of valuation despite the huge and mighty response to the IPO.

Several analysts drew some positivity from the price trend. One of them said that the investors expected miracles. The fact that the listing price, and closing price did not waver too much from the offer price indicates that the IPO pricing was almost-perfect. In such a scenario, even a great company can disappoint a little. Future share price will be determined less by sentiments, and listing expectations, and more by performance. If Lenskart can deliver on the promises, and show financial results, the price will go up. If not, it will be one of those momentary sparks, and go down the way of other IPOs, which were either issued at aggressive prices, showed awesome listing gains, and then fizzled out to quote at huge discounts.

This explains why a few analysts advise patience to the shareholders, and potential buyers. The ones who have the shares do not need to rush to sell. Ones who do not do not need to rush to buy. Existing investors can hold-and-wait for things to happen. The same is true for the buyers-in-waiting. The next few quarters, says an analyst, will prove to be the key to understanding what to do. The company, which has spread its looks in the Middle East and Asia, now seeks to zoom in on Europe. The international presence, and the growing share in India will help. Margins, though, will be a challenge.

According to another report, Lenskart is an oddity in the booming IPO space. Its weak debut can be contrasted with other high-profile ones that rewarded investors on listing days. LG Electronics, for instance, gained 50 per cent, which was one of the strongest debuts. Anthem Biosciences shot up by 27 per cent, and National Securities Depository opened 10 per cent above the issue price. The IPO market will continue to sizzle with several known companies hitting the market to raise massive sums. But Lenskart may provide a new valuation lens to decide a company’s worth. Investors too will check their vision through new non-tinted glasses, hopefully.



Some of the farmers in North India are crossing state borders to ‘illegally’ sell their Kharif produce. Apart from better prices in terms of the government-decided MSPs (Minimum Support Prices), the growers are lured by reliable procurement, better policies, and efficient infrastructure across the borders. What this implies, and what evidence proves, is that the cultivators get as much as a third less than MSPs in their own states. Thus, at present, as the Kharif produce hits the market, both the trends are in play.

It is akin to a game of Chinese Checkers, as the farmers from Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan allegedly enter the adjoining districts in Haryana and Punjab to market their produce. However, unlike the board game we mention, the on-ground “adversaries” in the states where the crop is sold do not intend to enter the “intruder-farmers” areas. All that the former wish to do is to “defend” their incomes. “When the Rajasthan farmers tried

to sell their crop in Punjab, the local authorities jailed them, and confiscated the produce,” alleges Thakur Guni Prakash of the Bharatiya Kisan Union (Mann).

The main reason why the growers need to resort to such cross-state sales is because their state governments are absent, inactive, or lack-adaisical, or they are forced to sell at much-lower-than-MSP prices to the middlemen. Prakash is incensed that farmers take on other cultivators in this cross-border dispute. “What is disgraceful is that the so-called leaders of the farmer union in Punjab help the police to get their own people arrested,” he claimed.

Let us look at how the official paddy procurement (and sales) proceeded from mid-September till now in North India. Due to efficiencies or inefficiencies, different states follow different procurement schedules. During the period under question, due to the early arrival of the paddy crop, Punjab rolled out the official Kharif procurement on September 16, and Haryana commenced the MSP operations on September 22. In both cases, the dates were earlier than Uttar Pradesh, which started MSP-based buying on October 1 in the western districts, and November 1 in the eastern ones.

Generally, the rice-marketing of the Kharif crop in North India starts in October, and dif-

MSP: Maximum Stench Price



ferent states follow schedules based on the cropping patterns, monsoons, and other factors unique to their respective states. Farmers in Punjab and Haryana, as in the other states, structure growing patterns around crops that are backed by MSPs. Although the Centre offers such prices for 22 crops, the subsidy-incentive-protection system principally favours wheat and rice, which are the major crops sold to government agencies.

While the government buyers in Punjab and Haryana were ready to take the crops at MSPs earlier, Uttar Pradesh lagged. The actual procurement in the latter state took a few more days in certain districts due to the bureaucratic processes involved. Thus, due to the early arrival of the paddy, the farmers in Uttar Pradesh faced two choices: Either

ernments have seasonal targets, and stop the purchases once these levels are reached. It is a first-come, first-bought regime.

The problem is not from the neighbouring states only. Growers from the adjoining areas, and with means (money, transport, and logistics) to carry the crop to the “mandis” (agricultural markets) in the border states to sell as quickly as they can. But the middlemen too play this game. Retailers and wholesalers from far-off Bihar allegedly carry crops to Punjab and Haryana during the procurement seasons despite the protests from the administration and local peasants.

“The condition of the farmers in Bihar remains the worst in the country. Their average household incomes are half of the national average, and one-fourth of the states like Punjab,” claims a recent statement from the Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM). The Morcha was formed as an umbrella agency to represent several farm unions, and protest jointly against the

now-repealed three farm laws. In Bihar, the procurement is through the State Food and Civil Supplies Corporation, and there is no official mandi, which offers MSPs. Since most farmers cannot approach the Corporation’s warehouses, or purchase points, this provides an opportunity for the middlemen to buy cheaper, and later sell expensively in the market.

“In the last 10 years, only 25 per cent of the paddy produce was procured by the government. Wheat has averaged less than one per cent. Bihar farmers get 30 per cent less price than the MSP,” alleges SKM. “The percentage of farmers who can avail MSP comes to less than 10 per cent of the total,” says the organisation secretary of the RSS-affiliated Bharatiya Kisan Sangh (BKS), Dinesh Dattatraya Kulkarni. He points at the farmers’ apathy, and asks, “Do the brother-farmers in Assam, Odisha, and West Bengal, get anything?”

Bihar runs a State Crop Support Scheme, which supplements MSP, and provides additional financial security. However, limited infrastructure and logistical issues affect timely procurement, and not all the farmers are aware of it, or are able to access the stipulated digital registration systems. This game of Checkers is complex. The Centre cannot force the states on MSP since agriculture is a state subject under the Constitution, and the MSP implementation requires changes in the state-level laws and rules.

Since farm price control is in the concurrent list of the Constitution, the Centre can announce MSPs, and fund procurement through the agencies like the Food Corporation of India (FCI). But it cannot unilaterally enforce MSP compliance across states. This means the states have legislative and administrative control over agricultural markets, and procurement mechanisms. This explains why the farmers demand a central legal guarantee to ensure that no crop is sold below MSP, but this will require a new law that either overrides state laws, or mandates state compliance.

In addition, many states do not have the financial capacity, or political will to procure crops at MSP. A few oppose central mandates due to ideological and political differences, or concerns about market distortion and fiscal burden. The BKS contends that the issue is not about higher procurement, MSP, or the amount spent in purchases. The concern is about how many farmers access the benefit. While India protects the growers from foreign sellers, the former, especially the small and marginal ones, need to access a wider market.

(The author has more than three decades of experience across print, TV, and digital media)

Arjun vs Leko, Praggnanandhaa vs Dubov in round 4 of FIDE WC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Panjim

India's leading Grandmasters Arjun Erigaisi, R Praggnanandhaa and P Harikrishna will look to continue their impressive run when the fourth round of the FIDE World Cup gets underway here after the first rest day.

Arjun, the country's highest-rated player, will start as the favourite against veteran Hungarian Peter Leko, while Praggnanandhaa faces the inventive Daniil Dubov, who is playing under the FIDE flag. Harikrishna, the most experienced of the trio, takes on Sweden's Nils Grandelius as he aims to stay firmly in contention.

Leko, a formidable force about 20 years back, is showing signs of his prime but may not find things easy against Arjun, who likes to go for extreme complexities.

The 46-year-old defeated Bobby Cheng of Australia and Kirilil Alekseenko of

Austria without any tiebreak games which speaks volumes about his quality of play. Incidentally, Leko is a semi-retired player and his protégé Vincent Keymer of Germany is also in the fourth round, making it a rare case of *Guru and Shisya* going deep in a knockout competition.

Arjun won both his matches without any tiebreak. The Indian has won three out of his four games thus far under the classical time control and has shown the exit door to Martin Petrov of Bulgaria and Shamsiddin Vokhidov of Uzbekistan in the process.

Crowd favourite R Praggnanadhaa, meanwhile, is set to meet Dubov, known for his work as a theoretician. The Russian is also a dangerous opponent in the faster time control. He came through two tiebreak marathons against Bai Jinshi of China and Georg Meier of Uruguay, excelling due to speed and accuracy.

Praggnanadhaa was close



to being eliminated in his first outing in the second round itself but somehow survived in the tiebreaker against Uzbek-Australian

Temur Kuybokarov before prevailing over his third-round rival Robert Hovhannisyan of Armenia.

Harikrishna, on the other



hand, had a smooth sailing to the round of 32 with comprehensive victories over Arseniy Nesterov of Russia and Daniel Dardha of Belgium.

Win with white and draw with black has been the mantra for Harikrishna, who would rely on his immense

experience to get the better off Grandelius in the fourth round. World junior champion V Pranav and 109th seed Venkatraman Karthik have also impressed, reaching the fourth round after playing three matches each. Arjun, Praggnanandhaa and Harikrishna were directly seeded to the second round when they started their campaign. Defeating Algerian Ada Eddine Boulrens and Norwegian Aryan Tari in the first two rounds, Pranav came up with a stellar show against Titas Stremavicius of Lithuania and won the first game itself.

Needing just a draw in the return game, Pranav had no difficulties.

Karthik's victims include Aravindh Chithambaram and Deac Bogdan Daniel so far and the Indian will be hoping for his best games against Le Quang Liem of Vietnam.

In other interesting battles, Keymer will take on Parham Maghsoodloo of Iran, while Armenian-turned-

American Levon Aronian faces a strong challenge from Radoslaw Wojtaszek of Poland.

Complete pairings round 4 (Indians unless specified): Frederic Svane (Ger) vs Shant Sargsyan (Arm); Peter Leko (Hun) vs Arjun Erigaisi; R Praggnanandhaa vs Daniil Dubov (Fid); Matthias Bluebaum (Ger) vs Alexander Domchenko (Ger); V Pranav vs Nodirbek Yakubboev (Uzb); Andrey Esipenko (Fid) Vincent Keymer (Ger); Wei Yi (Chn) vs Parham Maghsoodloo (Iri); Alexey Sarana (Fid) vs Jose Eduardo Martinez Alacantha (Mex); Nils Grandelius (Swe) vs P Harikrishna; Samuel Sevian (Usa) vs Lorenzo Lodici (Ita); Maxime Vachier-Lagrave (Fra) vs Aleksy Grebnev (Fid); Awonder Liang (Usa) vs Gabriel Sargissian (Arm); Le Quang Liem (Vie) vs V Karthik; Sam Shankland (Usa) vs Richard Rapport (Hun); Levon Aronian (Usa) vs Radoslaw Wojtaszek (Pol); Yu Yangyi (Chn) vs Javokhir Sindarov (Uzb).

Lakshya, Prannoy eye turnaround as India seeks momentum at Japan Open

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Kumamoto (Japan)

Indian shuttlers HS Prannoy and Lakshya Sen will look to rediscover their touch, while the emerging crop will aim to turn promise into performance at the \$475,000 Kumamoto Masters Japan Super 500 tournament beginning on Tuesday.

Lakshya, who endured a lean patch before rediscovering his touch with a runner-up finish at the Hong Kong Open followed by quarterfinal appearances at the Denmark and Hylo Open, will be keen to build on that momentum.

Seeded seventh, the 24-year-old from Almora, who finished fourth at the Paris Olympics, faces a tricky opening-round opponent in Japan's world No. 25 Koki Watanabe.

Prannoy, a 2023 World Championships bronze-medallist, has struggled since his pre-Olympic bout of chikungunya hampered his preparation for Paris, where he played through pain but exited early.

The 33-year-old from Kerala, one of India's most consistent performers in recent years with a 2023



Malaysia Masters title and a runner-up finish at the Australian Open, will look to regain his form as he returns from injury.

Prannoy had retired midway through his first-round match against Indonesia's Chico Aura Dwi Wardoyo at the Korea Open in September, clutching his ribs following a cross-court smash. Back in action after more than a month's layoff,

he will open against Malaysia's Jun Hao Leong.

Among the next generation, US Open winner Ayush Shetty, who stunned former world champion Loh Kean Yew of Singapore en route the Hylo Open quarterfinals, will face top seed Kunlavut Vitidsarn of Thailand in the first round.

Tharun Mannepalili, a semifinalist at the Macau Open Super 300, takes on

Korea's Jeon Hyeok Jin, while Kiran George, who upset France's Toma Junior Popov on his way to the Hylo Open quarterfinals, will meet a qualifier.

In mixed doubles, Rohan Kapoor and Ruthvika Shivani Gadde will face the American pair of Presley Smith and Jennie Gai. There are no Indian entries in other categories. rough the 2030 season.

Manu, Esha miss 10m air pistol medal in World Championships

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Cairo

Double Olympic-medallist shooter Manu Bhaker and multiple Asian Games medal winner Esha Singh suffered a meltdown in the women's 10m air pistol final as the country's top-two shooters could not win a medal in the ISSF World Championships on Monday.

Manu, winner of the 10m air pistol individual and mixed team bronze at the Paris Olympics, had things going her way in the final before a poor 8.8 on the 14th shot saw her take a mighty tumble from the top spot to seventh as she finished with a score of 139.5.

Esha, who recently won the World Cup gold in Ningbo, China, too could not turn her dream runs into a medal as inconsistencies and nerves got the better of her on the big stage as the 20-year-old faltered with an 8.4 on the 14th shot after a superb 10.7 to finish sixth in the eight-shooter final.

China's 20-year-old Yao Qianxun earned the biggest medal of her nascent career by shooting a superb 243.0, while Hong Kong-



China's Ho Ching Shing (241.2) and Wei Qian (China, 221.4) took the silver and bronze respectively.

India got a small consolation by winning a team silver with Esha (583), Manu (580) and world No.1 Suruchi Inder Singh (577) aggregating 1740 for the second-place finish.

Both Esha and Manu came into the final on the back of solid performances in qualification. Esha, who became the youngest ever national champion in the air pistol at the age of 13 and represented India in the women's 25m pistol at the Paris Olympics, shot superbly to finish the qualification round

placed fourth with a score of 583. She even tallied a rare perfect-100 in the third series to enter the final on a high. Manu shot 580 in qualification to finish sixth and make the eight-shooter final.

She took the lead on the 13th shot in the final with a superb 10.7 but the next one — an 8.8 — led to her elimination.

The third Indian, 19-year-old Suruchi, who has won four World Cup gold medals this year to rise to No.1, shot satisfactorily to score 577 but, in a high-class field, it was only good enough to fetch her 14th place among 99 shooters.

MAHARASHTRA WINS NATIONAL T20 CHAMPIONSHIP FOR HEARING IMPAIRED

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ New Delhi

Maharashtra defeated Jammu & Kashmir by eight runs to clinch the 9th T20 National Cricket Championship for the hearing impaired here.

The Central Bank of India had partnered with the Deaf Cricket Society to conduct the tournament.

A total of 20 teams from across the country participated in the championship that kicked off on November 3 at Delhi's Essex Farm Cricket Ground in Chhawla.

The week-long championship, organised under the patronage of Dr Cyrus Poonawalla Group, brought together hearing-impaired cricketers from across the nation.

It featured players from Kerala, Chhattisgarh, Chandigarh, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Haryana, Telangana, Mumbai, Maharashtra, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Karnataka, Punjab, Odisha, Delhi, and Bengal.

The champion's trophy was handed to Maharashtra captain Pranil More by West Delhi MP Kamaljeet Sehrawat, and MCD's Deputy Mayor Jai Bhagwan Yadav.

Doan nets Eintracht 1-0 derby win over Mainz



ASSOCIATED PRESS
■ Berlin

Japan star Ritsu Doan scored late as Eintracht Frankfurt beat Mainz 1-0 in their Bundesliga derby.

Doan received the ball on the edge of the penalty area and slalomed past two Mainz defenders who probably expected him to cross the ball before he fired it inside the far post from a difficult angle in the 81st minute.

The goal lifted Frankfurt to seventh in the standings before the international break. Mainz remained second from bottom after its seventh defeat in 10 games.

Suzuki scores for FreiburgAnother Japan player, Yuito Suzuki, scored his first Bundesliga goal to help Freiburg beat St. Pauli 2-1 earlier Sunday.

The 24-year-old Suzuki, who joined Freiburg from Danish team Brøndby in the offseason, struck five minutes before the break after he intercepted St. Pauli

goalkeeper Nikola Vasilij's attempted clearance of a corner. Maximilian Eggstein made it 2-0 from close range five minutes after the break, before a goal from St. Pauli's Louis Oppie against the run of play in the 69th set up a heated finale.

Jackson Irvine went close for the visitors late on, but couldn't prevent the promoted team's seventh straight league defeat.

Undav shines for StuttgartGermany forward Deniz Undav scored twice as Stuttgart twice came from behind to beat Augsburg 3-2 at home.

The 29-year-old Undav claimed a timely brace before the international break, helping Stuttgart stay fourth ahead of Bayer Leverkusen.

It was Augsburg's fourth straight defeat across all competitions, meaning coach Sandro Wagner will have an anxious wait to see if he'll still be in charge for the team's next game against promoted Hamburger SV on November 22.

Lyon vs Wolfsburg in Women's Champions League

ASSOCIATED PRESS
■ Berlin

Old friends Lyon and Wolfsburg meet again before Bayern Munich and defending champion Arsenal renew their burgeoning rivalry in the Women's Champions League this week.

The third match-day also sees Manchester United host Paris Saint-Germain, while tournament favorite Barcelona entertains Belgian debutant Oud-Heverlee Leuven. Barcelona is among five of the 18 teams taking part in the expanded competition to start with two straight wins. Familiar facesEight-time winner Lyon and German powerhouse Wolfsburg are another two teams with perfect records before they meet for the 11th time on Tuesday.

Lyon veteran Wendie Renard, who played in all 10 of their previous meetings, could become the first player to clock 100 wins in UEFA club competitions if Lyon extends its six-game winning streak against Wolfsburg.

Germany international Jule Brandt switched between the sides in the off-season and enjoyed her best game to date for Lyon in the 3-0 win over St. Polten. Lyon had started with a 2-1 win over Arsenal. Arsenal's challengeArsenal bounced back from that defeat with a win over Benfica but will face a Bayern team determined to make a statement on Wednesday after its opening 7-1 loss to Barcelona and subsequent 2-1 win over Juventus.

Bayern has 19 goals from its last four Bundesliga



games, where, like the men's team, it appears to have no rivals. Bayern and Arsenal met in the group stage last season with both teams registering home wins.

Spanish leadersBarcelona and Real Madrid lead the league phase table after their opening games.

Barcelona thrashed Bayern and then romped to a 4-0 win at Roma, while Madrid defeated Roma and PSG.

Barcelona retained three-time Ballon d'Or winner Aitana Bonmati and Alexia Putellas amid a summer exodus due to financial problems caused by the men's team.

PSG nets last-gasp winner to beat Lyon

ASSOCIATED PRESS
■ Paris

Injury-hit Paris Saint-Germain scored the winner deep into stoppage time for the second straight game, beating Lyon 3-2 to stay two points clear at the top of Ligue 1. Lyon's defenders failed to track Joao Neves on a corner from the left and the midfielder headed in from close range five minutes into added time, one week after Gonçalo Ramos headed home in the final seconds of stoppage time against Nice.

PSG is two points ahead of second-placed Marseille and third-placed Lens, who are separated by goal difference.

After losing to Bayern Munich in the Champions League on Tuesday, PSG coach Luis Enrique was without Ousmane Dembélé (calf tear),

right back Achraf Hakimi (sprained ankle) and left back Nuno Mendes (sprained knee). Rising star Désiré Doué (thigh tear) was also missing. Midfielder Warren Zaïre-Emery, deployed at right back, put PSG ahead in the 26th minute with an angled drive which flew over the left shoulder of goalkeeper Dominik Greif. Host Lyon equalized four minutes later when Zaïre-Emery failed to track Afonso Moreira's run behind him following a long ball and the Portuguese striker slotted into the left corner.

Khvicha Kvaratskhelia, who is usually a winger, started up front for PSG and put the visitors 2-1 ahead in the 33rd after United States midfielder Tanner Tessmann lost the ball on the edge of the penalty area.

He should play for India across formats: Ganguly backs fit-again Shami

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Kolkata

Former India captain Sourav Ganguly wants to see Mohammed Shami back in the Indian team across formats as he reckons the skillful pacer is 'fit and is bowling exceptionally well'.

The Ajit Agarkar-led selection committee, however, appears to have moved on from the 35-year-old pacer, who has been ignored for the upcoming two-Test series against South Africa and last played in the Champions Trophy in March.

"Shami is bowling exceptionally well. He is fit and we saw in the three Ranji Trophy matches, where he's won Bengal on his own," Ganguly said on Monday after being announced as the global brand ambassador of Kabuni, a UK-based AI-driven sports coaching platform.

Shami has so far claimed 15 wickets to help Bengal to successive wins in their first two Ranji Trophy matches before going wicketless against Tripura. He has bowled 91 overs in three matches this season.

The veteran pacer under-

went ankle surgery following the 2023 World Cup, where he finished as the tournament's leading wicket-taker with 24 scalps at an average of 10.70.

"I'm sure the selectors are watching and there is a communication between Mohammad Shami and the selectors. But if you ask me, in terms of fitness and skill, it's the Mohammad Shami we know of.

"So, I really don't see any reason why he can't keep playing Test matches, One-day cricket and T20 cricket for India. Because that skill

is enormous," Ganguly said.

With no red-ball assignments for India over the next six months, it remains to be seen if Shami has already played his last Test — the World Test Championship final against Australia at The Oval in June 2023.

In the longer format, Prasidh Krishna and Akash Deep have become an integral part of the pace attack. For the 2027 ODI World Cup still two years away, Shami's recurring injury concerns could influence the selectors.

