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PIONEER IN SHORT

AADABIDDA NIDHI SCHEME UNDER REVIEW: MINISTER

A significant update has come out regarding the 'Aadabidda Nidhi' (Women's Welfare Fund) scheme in Andhra Pradesh. During a discussion in the Legislative Council, Minister for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Kondapalli Srinivas on Friday made a statement on the implementation of the 'Aadabidda Nidhi' (Women's Welfare Fund) scheme during a debate in Legislative Council. Despite the financial hurdles, the Minister stated that the government has been consistently implementing all the promises it made.

FULL REPORT ON P2

ODISHA TO WITNESS VERY HEAVY RAINFALL

Odisha is likely to witness very heavy rainfall till Sunday morning as a well-marked low pressure area in the Bay of Bengal is set to intensify into a depression, prompting the administration to gear up to tackle the situation. The IMD issued 'red alert' (take action) for the three districts of Kalahandi, Koraput and Malkangiri, predicting over 20 cm of rainfall; 'orange warning' (be prepared) for 14 districts, forecasting 12-20 cm precipitation and 'yellow alert' (be aware) for 13 districts, predicting 7-11 cm downpour till 8.30 am on Saturday, a senior scientist at the Bhubaneswar Meteorological Centre said.

FULL REPORT ON P5

NETANYAHU SAYS ISRAEL 'MUST FINISH JOB' AGAINST HAMAS

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told the UN General Assembly on Friday that Israel "must finish the job" against Hamas in Gaza, giving a defiant UN speech despite growing international isolation over his refusal to end the devastating war in Gaza. He spoke after dozens of delegates from multiple nations walked out of the UN General Assembly hall en masse Friday as he prepared to speak. As the Israeli leader spoke, unintelligible shouts echoed around the hall. The US delegation, which has backed Netanyahu in his campaign against Hamas, stayed put. Applause rang out in other quarters as he began his speech.

FULL REPORT ON P8

QUOTE OF THE DAY



WE ARE WORKING DILIGENTLY TO ATTRACT INVESTMENTS WORTH THOUSANDS OF CRORES OF RUPEES, FORM NEW PARTNERSHIPS AND TAKE OUR TOURISM SECTOR TO A HIGHER LEVEL

— JUPALLY KRISHNA RAO, TOURISM AND CULTURE MINISTER

Govt unveils ₹4,500 cr plan to upgrade 15K km of roads

PNS ■ Amaravati

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Friday announced that the state government has formulated an action plan to improve nearly 15,000 km of roads under the Roads and Buildings Department, with an investment of Rs 4,500 crore.

Addressing the Assembly on logistics and related issues, Naidu said reducing logistics costs will also lower production costs.

"This year, we will work on all these. This government will take responsibility for laying better roads to go to any village. There will not be any issue with any road. We will make those arrange-



Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu speaking in Assembly on Friday

ments," he added, outlining the action plan.

Highlighting the importance of roads, the chief minister said, "Roads indicate culture, and in a civilised world, good roads are a basic requirement, though we may talk about IT, technology or whatever."

Under the Rs 4,500-crore action plan, he said, riding surfaces will be improved for 1,250 km of roads at a cost of Rs 400 crore; upgrades carried out for 1,433 km of state highways and other roads at Rs 600 crore, and intensive patch work undertaken for 5,946 km of roads

at Rs 500 crore. The plan also includes upgrades to an additional 2,104 km of state highways and other roads at a cost of Rs 1,000 crore, along with similar improvements to 4,233 km of roads at Rs 2,000 crore.

According to the Chief Minister, the total road network in the southern state extends to 1.6 lakh km, comprising 8,360 km of national highways, 12,643 km of state highways, 32,780 km of major district roads, 25,670 km of municipal roads, and 80,486 km of panchayat roads.

He said 23 port and harbour road connectivity projects, covering 432 km, have been identified at a cost of Rs 18,485 crore.

CONTINUED ON >> P2

'GST reforms expected to bring ₹8k cr benefit to people in AP'

PNS ■ Amaravati

Finance Minister Payyavula Keshav has stated that the GST reforms are expected to benefit the people in the State to the tune of Rs 8,000 crore. He introduced the GST Amendment Bill in the Legislative Assembly, which was duly passed.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister remarked that such a revolutionary reform like GST had not taken place anywhere else in the world and credited Prime Minister Narendra Modi for this achievement. He also mentioned that a state-wide awareness campaign was being launched to educate people about the benefits of GST. The Legislative Assembly decided to repeal the NALA Act. Revenue Minister Anagani



Finance Minister Payyavula Keshav

Satya Prasad introduced the related bill in the Assembly, which was approved by the House. He explained that the NALA Act was causing problems locally, especially in land conversion processes, which in turn was hindering industrial establishment and real estate development. Hence, the Chief Minister decided to repeal the Act.

Legislative Council approves seven bills

Seven bills that were

passed in the Legislative Assembly received approval from the Legislative Council. Ministers introduced the bills in the Council and requested their approval.

The bills that were approved were Andhra Pradesh Aquaculture Development Authority (Amendment) Bill, 2025, Andhra Pradesh Village Ward Secretariat (Amendment) Bill, 2025, Andhra Pradesh Municipal Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2025, Andhra Pradesh Municipal Laws Second Amendment Bill, 2025, Andhra Pradesh Municipal Laws Third Amendment Bill, 2025, Andhra Pradesh Municipal Laws Fourth Amendment Bill, 2025, Andhra Pradesh Municipalities (Amendment) Bill, 2025.

CONTINUED ON >> P2

Panel to probe into 'irregularities' in SKU

PNS ■ Amaravati

Education Minister N Lokesh on Friday announced in the Legislative Assembly that an investigation would be conducted into the irregularities that occurred at Sri Krishnadevaraya University in Anantapur between 2019 and 2024, and appropriate action would be taken. He mentioned that a committee would be formed to probe into misuse of funds in computer purchases, use of university vehicles for personal purposes, promotions and appointments made in violation of rules, and non-adherence to reservation norms in recruitment. He assured that a report would be submitted within 100 days and action would be taken against those responsible.

Responding to a question raised by MLAs MS Raju and Palle Sindhura Reddy during the Question Hour, Minister Lokesh said the state government aimed to ensure transparency in the administration of universities. Referring to the death of a student due to fits at Andhra University on Thursday, he said it was inappropriate for



Education Minister N Lokesh speaking in Assembly on Friday

some student unions to protest over the incident. He emphasised that though there was no fault on the part of the government, politicising the issue was not right.

He said that Vice Chancellors (VCs) are being appointed transparently. The Chief Minister has entrusted him with the responsibility of developing Andhra University into one of the top 100 Universities, he mentioned. He also expressed concern over some individuals deliberately creating disturbances in universities for selfish reasons.

Lokesh also stated in the Assembly that steps were taken to construct new buildings for polytechnic colleges that currently lacked infrastructure.

CONTINUED ON >> P2

AP braces for heavy rain, winds

PNS ■ Amaravati

Andhra Pradesh Home Minister V Anitha on Friday directed officials to remain "fully prepared" as a deep depression over the Bay of Bengal approached the state.

She ordered the immediate setting up of control rooms, installation of warning boards, and deployment readiness of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), police and fire services.

"Field-level officials must be prepared to face any sit-



uation," Anitha said in a press release, urging preventive measures in vulnerable districts prone to heavy rain and flooding.

According to the Andhra Pradesh State Disaster Management Authority (APSDMA), the depression is likely to cross the south

'ABUSIVE COMMENTS' AGAINST JAGAN

YSRCP leaders slam actor Balakrishna

PNS ■ Machilipatnam

Former minister Perni Nani strongly criticised TDP MLA and actor Nandamuri Balakrishna, saying his comments were inappropriate. He asked, "How can the son of NT Rama Rao and Basavatarakam make such derogatory remarks in the Assembly?"

In a media interaction, Perni Nani expressed his views: "Does anyone actually grasp what Balakrishna is saying or the reasons behind his words? There should be



Former minister Perni Nani speaking to the media in Machilipatnam on Friday

more decorum in the Assembly. His comments and demeanor did not reflect expected standards. His reaction to the praise of Chiranjeevi received from

Kamineni Srinivas suggested a his mindset."

Meanwhile, YSRCP leader Devineni Avinash criticised Nandamuri Balakrishna for making comments against former chief minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, a person who supported Basavatarakam Hospital during his five-year tenure as chief minister. On Friday in Vijayawada, Avinash led a protest expressing disapproval of Balakrishna's remarks made in the Assembly against Jagan Mohan Reddy.

CONTINUED ON >> P2

Woman loses ₹6 lakh to investment fraud

PNS ■ Vijayawada

A shocking incident of cyber fraud has come to light in Vijayawada, where a woman was duped by cybercriminals who promised to pay her for writing reviews of restaurants on Google Maps. Initially, the fraudsters gained her trust by making small payments. Later, they lured her into investing more money by promising high returns, claiming it was a profitable opportunity.

Enticed by the prospect of easy money, the woman ended up transferring a total of Rs 6.02 lakh in multiple installments. When she did not receive any returns or payments as promised, she realised she had been scammed and approached the police for help.

It all started with the promise of "Work from home, and earn from your couch." The victim, a 33-year-old woman from Machavaram in Vijayawada, received a phone call on August 17 from an unknown number. The caller introduced himself as an HR assistant of a restaurant, and claimed they were hiring people to write reviews of restaurants on Google Maps, promising payments ranging from Rs 5,000 to Rs 8,000 per review.

CONTINUED ON >> P2

US TARIFF ON BRANDED DRUGS

Not much impact on Indian exports, says Pharmexcil chief

PNS ■ Hyderabad

US President Donald Trump's decision to impose a 100 per cent tariff on branded or patented pharmaceutical products will have little impact on Indian generic exports to the United States, Namit Joshi, chairman of the Pharmaceuticals Export Promotion Council of India (PHARMEXCIL), said on Friday. Joshi noted that India's main pharma exports to the US are generic medicines.

"We don't export any patented or branded drugs to the US. At present, this does not apply to generics. We do not foresee much impact of this notification on the Indian



generic pharmaceutical industry," he told PTI.

Starting October 2025, the US will impose a 100 per cent tariff on branded or patented pharmaceutical products, unless a company is building its pharmaceutical manufacturing plant in America, Trump said in a social media

post. "Building" will be defined as 'breaking ground' and/or 'under construction,'" he added.

Therefore, there will be no tariff on these pharmaceutical products if construction has begun, Trump said.

India exports about USD 11 billion worth of pharma products to the US out of a total of USD 30 billion exported worldwide. According to Joshi, India has long been a cornerstone of the global supply chain for affordable, high-quality medicines, supplying nearly 47 per cent of the US's pharmaceutical requirements, particularly in the generic drug market.

CONTINUED ON >> P2

ఆంధ్రప్రదేశ్ ప్రభుత్వం

ప్రజాప్రయోజన ప్రకటన

ఆహార సరఫరా, ప్రమాణాల అమలు విభాగం

విల్లం తయారీలో హైడ్రోజెను అధిక మోతాదులో వాడే వారికి చట్టపరమైన హెచ్చరిక

కమ్యూనిటీ కృత్రిమ రంగులలో విల్లం తయారుచేసే వారిలో కొందరు విల్లం బంగారం రంగు రావడానికి హైడ్రోజెను, రంగులను అధిక మోతాదులో వాడుతున్నారు. కొంతమంది విల్లం తయారీలో పంచదారను కలిపి తయారు చేస్తున్నారు. ఇలా చేయడం చట్టవిరుద్ధం.

నియమాలు పాటించేవారికా ఆహార పదార్థాలు తయారు చేసిన వారికి ఆహార పరిరక్షణ, ప్రమాణాల చట్టం-2006, సెక్షన్ 59 ప్రకారం మూడేళ్ళ పరీక్ష కలిపి కారాగార శిక్ష, రూ. ఒక్క పదిహేడు లక్షల వరకు జరిమానా విధిస్తారు. యానశ్చ విల్లం తయారీదారులు, రైతులు, కమిషన్ డిలీవరీలు, అమ్మకందారులు, విల్లదారులు, రవాణాదారులు అంకా తప్పనిసరిగా ఫుడ్ ట్రైన్స్ లో పాటించాలి. లేదా పట్టంలో ఆహార పరిరక్షణ ప్రమాణాల చట్టం-2006, సెక్షన్ 63 ప్రకారం రూ.10 లక్షల పరీక్ష జరిమానా విధిస్తారు.

పరిహార, ఫిర్యాదుల కోసం సంప్రదించండి

సంచాలకులు
జాయింట్ ఫుడ్ కంట్రోలర్

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జాబ్ చేసినవారు : ఆహారభద్రత కమిషనర్, ఆంధ్రప్రదేశ్ ప్రభుత్వం



Tension as police thwart Sharmila's bid to go to Assembly on tractor



PNS ■ Vijayawada

Tension flared at the Andhra Ratna Bhavan here on Friday as the police stopped Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) president YS Sharmila from traveling to the Legislative Assembly in Amaravati on a tractor. The move, she said, was aimed at drawing the attention of the Chief Minister to farmers' sufferings in the State. The police, however, thwarted her attempt to travel to Amaravati on a tractor.

The APCC Chief made it clear that she would continue the protest until she was given the opportunity to meet the Chief Minister. Sharmila regretted that the farmers in the state were committing suicide due to a lack of remunerative prices for their produce. It was a shame that the state stood 3rd in the country in the farmers' suicides. "If using urea causes cancer, then doesn't the liquor you supply cause cancer?" Sharmila asked.

The coalition government was indifferent to the problems being faced by farmers. During YS Rajasekhara Reddy's regime, agriculture saw a golden era, she said, and added that it was the rice bowl of the country, she said.

ANGRAU offers aid for promoting innovations

PNS ■ Tirupati

Do you want to create innovations that benefit farmers in Andhra Pradesh and make them available to them? Want to realise your ideas through education? If yes, you can register at the Poshan Incubator located at the Regional Agricultural Research Station (RARS), Tirupati, under Acharya NG Ranga Agricultural University (ANGRAU).

"Anyone, regardless of their age or education status, can apply. If you have an idea or innovation that can help farmers, this is a great opportunity. Even if you've already developed something new, the ANGRAU will help you take it to the farming community. Students currently pursuing education can also use this opportunity to bring their ideas to life through the ANGRAU Poshan Incubator," according to authorities.

Acharya NG Ranga



Agricultural University (ANGRAU) started the Agri Business Incubation Project in 2020 at the Regional Agricultural Research Station in Tirupati. The project is jointly managed under the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana - RAFTAAR, an initiative of the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India.

Under Agri-YOCH, selected ideas and innovations receive technical advice, training, and a monthly stipend of Rs 10,000. Laboratory facilities are also

provided. To convert an idea into a working innovation, financial assistance of up to Rs 5 lakhs is offered without any repayment requirement. The programme supports ideas that benefit agriculture and allied sectors.

Under Agri-Inno, early-stage startups have a great opportunity to develop their concepts. Selected applicants receive one month of free training, along with technical support and expert mentorship. Furthermore, eligible innovations can receive financial assistance up to Rs 25 lakhs, which also does not need to be repaid. Additionally, women entrepreneurs are provided with an extra 10 per cent assistance.

College students are also given the opportunity to develop their ideas while studying. They can receive financial support of up to Rs 4 lakhs to bring their ideas into reality.

Sri Lanka releases four Kakinada fishermen

PNS ■ Kakinada

Rajya Sabha MP Sana Sathish announced that four fishermen from Kakinada, who had been detained in Sri Lanka for 52 days, were released from Jaffna jail and repatriated on Friday.

The fishermen — K Srinu Venkateswar, Karri Nookaraju Borriyya, Chanda Nageswararao, and Panthadi Brahmanandam — were arrested by the Sri Lankan Navy on August 4 after their boat reportedly drifted into Sri Lankan waters due to navigational issues. The group had earlier travelled to Nagapattinam to purchase a second-hand fishing trawler and was returning when the incident occurred.

Following their arrest, the fishermen were lodged in Jaffna jail. Although the Kayts

Civil Court in Jaffna had ordered their release along with the seized boat and instructed the Sri Lankan Navy to hand them over safely to Indian authorities, procedural delays hindered their repatriation.

MP Sana Sathish said that when the process hit a roadblock, he intervened on the direction of Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu. He coordinated with Arja Srikanth, Commissioner at Andhra Pradesh Bhavan in New Delhi.

The fishermen were officially released at 2 pm on Friday and handed over to the Indian Coast Guard at the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL) near Mandapam base, Rameswaram, by 6 pm. They are expected to arrive in Kakinada by Saturday.

Officials told to ensure MSP for farmers

PNS ■ Kakinada

Joint Collector Rahul Meena announced that 269 paddy procurement centres have been established across the district for the current Kharif season.

Speaking at a district-level

training session held at the Collectorate on Friday, he addressed officials from the Agriculture, Cooperation, and Transport Departments, emphasising the importance of following proper procedures during the paddy procurement process.

He urged field-level officers to stay informed about the key aspects of paddy procurement and to actively spread awareness among farmers. Highlighting that 85 per cent of e-crop registrations have been completed so far, he directed officials to

complete the remaining registrations by the end of the month.

The Joint Collector also stressed the importance of ensuring that farmers receive the minimum support price (MSP) as declared by the government.



Joint Collector Rahul Meena addressing district-level officers at a training programme in Kakinada on Friday

Aadabidda Nidhi scheme under review, says Minister

PNS ■ Amaravati

A significant update has come out regarding the 'Aadabidda Nidhi' (Women's Welfare Fund) scheme in Andhra Pradesh. During a discussion in the Legislative Council,

Minister for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Kondapalli Srinivas on Friday made a statement on the implementation of the 'Aadabidda Nidhi' (Women's Welfare Fund) scheme during a debate in Legislative Council.

Despite the financial hurdles, the Minister stated that the government has been consistently implementing all the promises it made. He said that the implementation of the Aadabidda Nidhi scheme is under review and guidelines still need to be framed.

He said the TDP government during its tenure (2014-19), nearly 89 lakh women received financial assistance, while the YSRCP government limited its "YSR Cheyutha" scheme to just 25 lakh beneficiaries.

During the 2024 Andhra Pradesh Assembly elections, the TDP-led alliance had promised a range of benefits under its "Super Six" guarantees. After coming to power, the government has been gradu-



Kondapalli Srinivas

ally implementing these promises.

The Aadabidda Nidhi is considered one of the most important promises made ahead of the elections. Women across the state are eagerly waiting for its implementation. During the elections, the coalition had promised to deposit Rs 1,500 per month into the accounts of women above 18 years of age under this scheme.

Minister Srinivas, speaking in the Legislative Council, confirmed that the scheme is now under review and estimates are being prepared. He emphasised that, despite inheriting a budget deficit from the previous YSRCP government, the coalition government has already implemented several promises, he said. He added that the procedural guidelines for Aadabidda Nidhi are yet to be finalised.

Police arrest climate activist Sonam Wangchuk in Leh

PNS ■ Leh

Police on Friday arrested climate activist Sonam Wangchuk, two days after protests demanding Ladakh's statehood and Sixth Schedule status left four people dead and 90 injured in the Union Territory. Wangchuk was taken into custody by a police party led by Ladakh Police chief S D Singh Jammwal at 2:30 pm, the officials said, adding that he has been shifted out of Ladakh.



While there was no official word on the charges pressed against Wangchuk, sources within the Ladakh administration indicated that the

stringent National Security Act (NSA) has been invoked against the climate activist.

The administration also snapped mobile internet services in the Leh area as a precautionary measure. Wangchuk, a leading voice for the Leh Apex Body (LAB) and the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA), has been spearheading the five-year-long agitation for statehood and constitutional safeguards for the residents of Leh and Kargil, which form

part of the Ladakh Union Territory carved out from erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir in 2019. The Centre has strongly blamed him for inciting the recent violence but Wangchuk denied all the allegations.

"To say it was instigated by me is to find a scapegoat, rather than addressing the core of the problem, and this will lead us nowhere," Wangchuk said on Thursday, adding that the violence was a symptom of frustrated youth.

Hyd to be a premier destination for world golfers: Jupally

PNS ■ Hyderabad

"Telangana has the potential to become a golf tourism hub by attracting international players, and we will work to develop more infrastructure and make Hyderabad a premier destination for world golfers, said Tourism and Culture Minister Jupally Krishna Rao.

Minister Krishna Rao participated in the closing ceremony of the Telangana Golconda Masters Golf Tournament-2025 and delivered a speech. He said that

Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy is giving a big push to the development of tourism in the State. He said, "We are working diligently to attract investments worth thousands of crores of rupees, form new partnerships and take our tourism sector to a higher level."

He said that he is extending a warm invitation to world tourists to visit the tourist destinations in Telangana. He also said that he is going to organise international level golf tournaments in Hyderabad as a venue.

FROM PAGE - 1

Govt unveils...

He added that 4,739 km of national highway projects are currently underway in Andhra Pradesh, being developed at a cost of Rs 1.5 lakh crore. The TDP supreme highlighted that Andhra Pradesh boasts a 1,053 km-long coastline, enabling it to export goods globally and import products for the country.

Naidu said the state will collaborate with leading shipping players such as Maersk, DP World, and others to enhance logistics operations and reduce costs.

He expressed confidence that Bhogapuram Airport near Vizag will be operational by August 2026 and added that Amaravati Airport is planned to be developed as the gateway hub for the east.

Currently, Naidu said, Andhra Pradesh has six operational airports, one under construction, and eight more in development, along with other infrastructure initiatives.

'GST reforms...

Meanwhile, the Financial

Minister said that "TDP worker Thota Chandrayya, a resident of Gundlapalli village in Palnadu district, was brutally murdered. At that time, then opposition leader N Chandrababu Naidu visited the village and consoled the bereaved family. He provided Rs 25 lakh as financial aid. To support those who fall victim to politically motivated violence, a promise was made to provide government jobs. After the coalition government came to power, steps were taken in this direction. It was decided to provide a job to Thota Veeranjanyulu, son of Thota Chandrayya. Both the Chief Minister and Minister N Lokesh took initiative in this matter. There is a history of providing jobs to victims of extremist violence, and in the same way, now jobs are being provided to victims of political violence."

Panel to probe...

He mentioned that after the coalition government came to power, construction work for two college buildings had already begun.

He explained that land had been allotted for colleges in Chodavaram, Ponnur, Bethamcherla, Mydukur, and Guntakal, and land would soon be allotted in Machilipatnam, KR Puram, and Anaparthi as well. He promised that the construction of permanent buildings would be completed by utilising the Central and State Government funds, MP LADS, and CSR funds.

He stated that admissions in polytechnic colleges are currently at 70 per cent, and pointed out that conventional courses are no longer attracting students, hence there is a need to redesign those courses.

AP braces for...

Meanwhile, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) has forecast "heavy rain and thunderstorms with lightning" in parts of Andhra Pradesh until October 2.

The IMD said "heavy to very heavy rain is likely at isolated places" over North Coastal Andhra Pradesh (NCAP) and Yanam, and

"heavy rain at isolated places" over Rayalaseema on September 26.

Thunderstorms with lightning are also expected over NCAP, SCAP (South Coastal Andhra Pradesh) and Rayalaseema, with winds of 40-50 kmph at isolated locations.

Similar weather conditions are likely on September 27, with winds of 30-40 kmph over Rayalaseema, continuing until September 29.

From September 30 to October 2, isolated thunderstorms, "lightning and heavy rain" are expected over NCAP and Yanam, with strong winds persisting over coastal districts and Rayalaseema.

The IMD further said a well-marked low-pressure area over the northwest and adjoining central Bay of Bengal is likely to intensify into a depression and cross the south Odisha-north Andhra coasts around September 27 morning.

Pawan's viral fever...

This information was shared by sources from the Jana

Sena Party. On the other hand, Pawan Kalyan participated in the OG movie pre-release event held in Hyderabad on Sunday. Despite the rain, he took part in the event, getting drenched, but still addressed the gathering. He did so to avoid disappointing his fans.

However, it was reported that he developed a viral fever on Monday. Despite being unwell, Pawan Kalyan attended the Assembly sessions on Monday. Later, he visited the Goddess at Indrakeeladri temple. But from Monday night onwards, the severity of his fever reportedly increased, according to Jana Sena Party sources. Doctors have since advised him to take rest.

Still, even while suffering from the fever, Pawan Kalyan is said to have conducted teleconferences with officials regarding departmental matters. As the fever has persisted for four days without improvement and with his cough worsening, doctors have recommended that he go to Hyderabad for further medical tests.

'Abusive comments'...

The protest was held under Devineni Avinash's leadership near the Ambedkar statue in Badavapeta, where a memorandum was submitted. Speaking on the occasion, Avinash said, "YS Jagan Mohan Reddy is someone who has done a lot for the poor."

The comments made by Balakrishna in the Assembly against such a person are shameful to a civilised society. Both NTR and YSR are like gods to us. We have always respected members of the NTR family. But with these comments, whatever respect we had for Balakrishna is lost."

"Balakrishna unnecessarily insulted megastar Chiranjeevi too. Surprisingly, there was no response from the Jana Sena Party, not even from their ministers or MLAs present in the Assembly. Why are you still so submissive? When Chiranjeevi was insulted," he asked.

Woman loses...

Believing the offer to be

genuine, the woman agreed. She was then connected to a Telegram user named "Kavita Singh", who sent her a link. The woman clicked the link and began writing reviews as instructed.

She found to her horror that the money the woman transferred had gone into bank accounts located in northern states.

Based on her complaint, the police registered a case and began an investigation. The police are now working on tracing those accounts and gathering further details.

Not much impact...

"The proposed 100 per cent tariff on branded and patented pharmaceutical imports is unlikely to have an immediate impact on Indian exports, as the bulk of our contribution lies in simple generics. Moreover, most large Indian companies already operate US manufacturing or repackaging units and are exploring further acquisitions," Joshi said.

Looking ahead, Joshi said India will need to reinforce its

cost-efficiency advantage in bulk drugs and APIs—an area where the US is likely to favour India over other suppliers—and simultaneously invest in next-generation opportunities such as complex generics, peptides, biosimilars, and CAR-T therapies.

Indian pharmaceutical companies continue to ensure the affordability and availability of essential medications—from life-saving oncology drugs and antibiotics to chronic disease treatments—helping stabilise global healthcare systems, Joshi said.

"Generics will remain relevant but will gradually mature; optimising costs and capabilities in these emerging categories will shape the next phase of growth. PHARMEXCIL will continue to engage with global stakeholders to ensure that dialogue on these developments remains constructive and that the global supply of affordable, high-quality medicines remains uninterrupted," he added.

Veteran journalist ML Kotru passes away



Veteran journalist ML Kotru, former Resident Editor of *The Statesman* and a mentor to a generation of journalists, passed away in Gurugram late Thursday night. The nonagenarian Kotru also served as the India correspondent of *The Sunday Times*, London.

GST 2.0 new impetus for economy, says Scindia

Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia on Friday maintained that the next generation GST reforms, or GST 2.0, has infused a new impetus in economic activities of the country, increasing purchasing power of consumers and driving up sales of sellers. He dismissed opposition parties' criticism of the reforms as a manifestation of their 'internal negativity'.



Zoologists to assess rodent outbreak in Mizoram



Teams of Zoologists from Pachhunga University College (PUC) in Aizawl will study and assess the current outbreak of rodents, sources in PUC said. Led by Prof Lalramliana, two teams from the Zoology department of PUC set out on Thursday to visit the affected villages, while one team set out on Friday, the sources said.

Bagori range of Kaziranga National Park reopens

The Bagori (western) range of Kaziranga National Park (KNP) was opened for tourists on Friday ahead of Durga Puja festivities, with only jeep safari being allowed on a limited circuit initially, officials said. The western range, which falls in Nagaon district, was opened so that tourists can visit it during the puja holidays. The park was closed for tourists in May.



Pray to Maa Durga to bring Parivartan in Bengal: Shah

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ Kolkata

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday prayed to Maa Durga to bring *Parivartan* in Bengal so as to transform it into *Sonar Bangla* (golden Bengal).

Shah who was in Kolkata to inaugurate Durga Puja pandals including the one at Raja Santosh Mitra Square which is organised by State BJP leader Sajal Ghosh said, "Today I prayed to Maa Durga that let there be a *Parivartan* in Bengal Assembly elections in 2026), so that a new Government can be formed that can build a real golden Bengal."

Saying that the people of Bengal deserved a safe, secured, peaceful and prosperous life with opulence as was envisioned by Poet Laureate Rabindranath Tagore, "once a *Sonar Bangla* is built the people of Bengal will once again be prosperous, safe secured leading a peaceful life as



Union Home Minister Amit Shah speaking during a meeting with senior BJP workers from the Champaran and Saran regions regarding the upcoming Bihar Assembly elections in Bettiah, Bihar

Kavi Guru Rabindranath Tagore dreamt of."

Shah who later visited the iconic Kalighat Kali temple also inaugurated the Durga Puja pandal of the BJP-backed Paschim Banga Sanskriti Mancha at the Eastern Zonal Cultural Centre (EZCC) in Salt Lake.

The Home Minister's visit

assumes importance against the backdrop of approaching State elections which are a mere 7-8 months away. Incidentally Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee had also been inaugurating several hundred Durga Puja pandals in the State. She had also declared a special grant of more than ₹1 lakh each to

State's 3,000 Durga Puja committees.

In an apparent bid to blunt the Trinamool Congress' campaign against the BJP calling it an anti-Bengal party Shah invoked social reformer Ishwar Chandra Vidya Sagar on his 205th birth anniversary saying India would never forget his contribution to the cause of education not only in Bengal but the entire country.

"We cannot forget what Vidyasagar ji did for education in Bengal and the entire country. He dedicated his entire life to the Bengali language, the State's culture and the education of women. Today, on behalf of crores of BJP workers, I bow to the feet of Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar," he said.

The Trinamool Congress was however prompt to react saying there was no need for the BJP to usher in Sonar Bengal as the Chief Minister had already done that before.

Abhishek Banerjee slams Shah over *Sonar Bangla* pitch

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Kolkata

TMC national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee on Friday launched a blistering attack on Union Home Minister Amit Shah over his *Sonar Bangla* poll pitch, accusing the BJP-led Centre of withholding ₹2 lakh crore in dues to West Bengal and "disregarding" State's cultural icons.

Addressing the media at Vidyasagar College on the 205th birth anniversary of 19th-century social reformer Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Banerjee criticised Shah for not visiting the college, where the icon's statue was broken during a rally before the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, or paying homage to the educationist during his trip to Kolkata.

"First, you should ask Amit Shah — when will you release our funds worth ₹2 lakh crore that you owe to us? If he says AITC is lying, then ask him to choose any channel of his choice and I will come for a debate with



facts and figures," Banerjee told reporters.

The comments came hours after Shah inaugurated the Durga Puja celebrations at Santosh Mitra Square in north Kolkata, where he said he prayed before Goddess Durga for the emergence of a Government in Bengal after the next Assembly polls that would transform the State into *Sonar Bangla* (Golden Bengal).

"I have prayed before Maa Durga that after this election,

a Government should be formed in Bengal that can build *Sonar Bangla*. Bengal should once again become safe, prosperous, peaceful, abundant and fertile. And we should be able to build the Bengal of Kavi Guru Rabindranath Tagore that he had envisioned," Shah said at the event.

Countering him, Banerjee said the BJP has failed to replicate its "golden" promises in States where it has been in power.

At her maiden solo rally in Bihar, Priyanka Gandhi calls Rahul a 'real patriot'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Motihari (Bihar)

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Friday called her elder brother a "real patriot" who travelled a distance of "4,000 kilometers on foot" to listen to common people and understand their problems.

Vadra who had briefly joined her sibling for "Voter Adhikar Yatra" in Bihar last month, made the remark at Motihari while addressing her first solo rally in the State. "I am not saying this because he is my brother. But Rahul Gandhi is a real patriot.

Only a real patriot can cover 40,000 km on foot, just to listen to the people of his country and learn from them what issues they felt strongly about," said the Wayanad MP, in an obvious reference to the Bharat Jodo Yatra taken out two years ago.

Hitting out at the NDA, which rules the Centre and shares power in the State, Vadra claimed that the BJP's sole concern has been to win elections by hook or by crook, and hold on to power thereafter.

"To this end, the BJP has been raising caste and religious divides during elec-



Congress General Secretary and MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra speaking during the Shakti Adhikar Program at Sadaqat Ashram in Patna, Bihar on Friday

tions and raising the infiltration bogey. Now, realising that the old tricks do not work, it has taken recourse to vote theft," said the 52-year-old Congress leader.

She was visibly amused when her quizzical remark, "Do you know who have been in power in Bihar for the last 20 years" evoked shouts of "Those who steal votes" from the crowds. "You have made things so easy for me," quipped Vadra, with a wide grin.

The Congress leader, who is arguably the most sought-after "star campaigner" of her party, had struck a rapport with the crowds by starting

her address in Bhojpuri, the local dialect.

As the audience burst into applause in response to the suave leader uttering *kaa haal ba* (how are things going for you all), she followed it up with the remark "the time has come to change the situation (*haal*). You people have suffered a lot. The time has come to bring in a real change".

Her rally in Bihar came days ahead of announcement of Assembly polls in Bihar, where the INDIA bloc, of which the Congress is the second largest constituent after the RJD.

2,400 Indians deported from US in 2025: MEA

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) on Friday confirmed that 2,417 Indian nationals have been deported from the United States between January 20 and September 25, marking a continued trend of strict immigration enforcement under the current US administration.

The issue has gained renewed attention following the high-profile repatriation of Harjit Kaur, a 73-year-old Sikh woman from Punjab, who had been living in the US for nearly 30 years without legal status. Her deportation earlier this week has sparked conversations around the humanitarian dimension of immigration policy.

Addressing the media, MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal reiterated India's position against illegal migration, while emphasising the country's commitment to building safe and legal migration pathways.

"India stands firmly against illegal migration. At the same time, we want to promote legal avenues for skilled professionals, workers, and families," Jaiswal said.

Responding to questions on the deportations, Jaiswal clarified that Indian authorities follow a due process before accepting any deported individual.

"Whenever there is a person who is referred to us for deportation, we first carry

out a background verification. Once their Indian nationality is confirmed, we take them back. This has been the process followed with the US as well," he added. This process, he said, ensures that individuals are not wrongly repatriated and that countries cooperate in line with international norms.

Jaiswal also acknowledged the role of illegal migration networks, visa fraud, and unscrupulous agents in facilitating unlawful entry into foreign countries. He said the Indian government is coordinating with state authorities to identify and take legal action against such agents.

"We are working closely with state governments to crack down on those who promote or profit from illegal migration. These networks not only break the law but also endanger the lives and futures of individuals," he said.

The deportation of Harjit Kaur, who had lived quietly in the US for nearly three decades, has drawn public attention due to her age and long-term presence in the country. Though her case followed legal protocols, it has highlighted the need for humane approaches in dealing with long-term undocumented residents.

Indian officials declined to comment on the specifics of her case but reiterated that the MEA evaluates each case independently based on nationality and documentation.

Rahul backs students protesting against paper leak in Uttarakhand, calls BJP 'paper chor'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ New Delhi

Extending his full support to students protesting against a recent paper leak in Uttarakhand, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Friday said unemployment is directly linked to "vote chori", and alleged that the other name of BJP is "paper chor".

In a post on X, the Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha also alleged that the BJP is not bothered about jobs for the youth but about remaining in power through *vote chori* (vote theft) during elections.

"Today, BJP's other name is 'Paper Chor'! The repeated paper leaks across the country have ruined the lives and dreams of millions of hardworking youth," he said in his post in Hindi.

Gandhi said the recent paper leak in Uttarakhand Subordinate Services Selection Commission (UKSSSC) graduate-level examination is the latest example, where lakhs of youth toiled day and night but BJP dashed all their hard work through theft.

"We have been continuously demanding that a strong and transparent

system be created to stop paper leaks. But the Modi government is turning a blind eye to this, because they are not concerned about youth unemployment, but about their own power," Gandhi alleged.

Noting that unemployment is the biggest problem facing the country today, which is directly linked to "vote chori", the Congress leader alleged that "the 'paper chors' know that even if the youth don't get jobs, they will remain in power by stealing votes during elections".

"The youth are on the

streets, raising the slogan *Paper Chor, Gaddi Chhod* (paper thieves, leave the throne)," he claimed. Asserting that this is not just a fight for jobs for the youth, Gandhi said it is a fight for justice and democracy. "I stand firmly with every student and youth in this fight for justice," he said, using the hashtag *#PaperChorGaddiChod*.

Gandhi had coined the term "vote chori" during his recent Voter Adhikar Rally in poll-bound Bihar to highlight his allegation that polls had been "rigged" in the country.

Vijay's TVK preps for campaign in Namakkal, Karur

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Namakkal

Ahead of actor-politician Vijay's campaign in Namakkal and Karur on Saturday, the Tamilaga Vetri Kazhagam (TVK) has made elaborate arrangements, expecting a massive public gathering.

Arterial roads are already decked with banners and party flags, and to serve the crowds that gather early to catch a glimpse of their leader, the TVK district wing is arranging free distribution of over 10,000 water bottles, starting Saturday morning.

A party functionary said bottles bearing Vijay's image will be supplied in all

areas he is scheduled to visit. "It is a festival mood here... We are celebrating this occasion like a festival," he said. Police personnel have implemented traffic regulations and other measures to ensure public safety and prevent any untoward incidents during the campaign.

During his political tour of Nagapattinam and Tiruvarur districts, Vijay had targeted DMK President and Chief Minister MK Stalin over his foreign trips, fishermen and farmers' issues and by alleging "family dominance".

The chief of the fledgling TVK had asserted in Tiruvarur that his party's goal is to ensure that there



is no "family dominance" in Tamil Nadu, hitting out at CM Stalin and blamed him for blocking the State's progress.

Meanwhile, in a statement issued on Friday, TVK appealed to cadres and supporters to adhere to guidelines that need to be met during the visit of the party chief. It also requested the supporters not to follow the vehicle in which Vijay is travelling while visiting the districts.

"The cadres should not climb on Government and private buildings, trees, EB lamp posts and transformers. Pregnant women, elderly and students are requested to stay indoors and watch the address of

the leader on television from their respective residences," the statement said.

"Party supporters should ensure that they do not cause any kind of hindrances to ambulances and other vehicles during the meeting," it said.

Following the directive of the police department, the party said, supporters should not indulge in any kind of activities as part of welcoming Vijay during his visit. "Cadres should not burst crackers. They should not place any digital banners or flagpoles without receiving the necessary approval. They should behave in such a way for the upkeep of law and order," the party urged.



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SC dismisses plea seeking ban on book ‘The Satanic Verses’



The Supreme Court (SC) on Friday refused to entertain a plea seeking a direction to ban Salman Rushdie's controversial novel "The Satanic Verses". The plea came up for hearing before a bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta.

The counsel appearing for the petitioners referred to the Delhi High Court's November last year order. The HC had closed the proceedings on a petition challenging the Rajiv Gandhi Government's decision to ban the import of "The Satanic Verses" in 1988, saying since authorities have failed to produce the relevant notification, it has to be presumed that it does not exist.

The petition was filed in the top court through advocate Chand Qureshi.

It alleged the book was available due to the order passed by the HC. The Centre had banned the import of the Booker Prize-winning author's "The Satanic Verses" for law-and-order reasons in 1988, after Muslims across the world viewed it as blasphemous.

Delhi HC directs parties not to share Sunjay Kapur's property papers



Delhi High Court (HC) on Friday barred all parties involved in the dispute over late Sunjay Kapur's property not to share details, including those of his personal assets and liabilities, with the media. Justice Jyoti Singh passed the directions and said, "A copy of the 'will' be supplied to the defendant subject to the undertaking that it will be used discreetly and that the party or advocates would not leak it to public."

The court was hearing Priya's plea seeking permission to file the list of his personal assets and liabilities in a sealed cover with the parties to be bound by confidentiality, or in the alternative, constitution of confidentiality club.

The court on September 25 said the filing of the list of personal assets and liabilities of Kapur in a sealed cover may be "problematic" since his two children with former wife and actor Karisma Kapoor have the "right to question the assets disclosed".

Tirupati laddu row: SC stays AP High Court order faulting CBI over probe

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Supreme Court (SC) on Friday stayed an order that faulted the CBI Director for allowing an officer not from the court-appointed SIT to probe into the adulteration of ghee used in the famed Tirumala Tirupati Temple's laddu prasadam (religious offerings).

The Andhra Pradesh High court said the CBI Director acted in violation of the top court's directions while carrying out a probe into "adulterated ghee" being used to prepare prasadam.

Granting relief on the plea of the CBI director, a bench comprising Chief Justice BR Gavai and Justice K Vinod Chandran observed there was nothing wrong if a particular officer was asked to assist in the probe when the head of the probe agency himself was monitoring the investigation. "If SIT wants to appoint a particular officer, what is wrong with that," the bench asked.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for CBI, said the Director personally convened a meeting with SIT members, reviewed the case, and permitted



Rao to continue as an investigating officer, albeit in a limited role. "He is only a record keeper," the law officer said.

The submission was opposed by the counsel for the respondent who said, "IO is not a record keeper."

The counsel for the respondent, who originally moved the High Court, said the top court's order had explicitly specified the SIT's composition and it ought to have two CBI officers nominated by the CBI Director; two officers nominated by the Andhra Pradesh Police and a senior officer from the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI). He argued that allowing any other officer to participate violated the top court's mandate.

SC nod to JSW Steel's take over of BPSL

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Changing its earlier order, the Supreme Court (SC) on Friday upheld JSW Steel's ₹19,700-crore resolution plan for debt-ridden Bhushan Power and Steel Limited (BPSL), bringing down curtains to a prolonged legal battle that spanned nearly eight years. A bench comprising Chief Justice BR Gavai and Justices Satish Chandra Sharma and K Vinod Chandran upheld the February 17, 2020 verdict of the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT).

The NCLAT had allowed JSW Steel to acquire BPSL for ₹19,700 crore by providing it immunity from prosecution by the Enforcement Directorate.

"We do not find any merit in the appeals. The appeals are therefore dismissed. The impugned judgment dated 17th February 2020 passed by the NCLAT is upheld," CJI Gavai, who authored the 136-page judgment for the bench, held and dismissed challenges to the plan.

The court reserved its verdict on August 11 on appeals filed by the former promoters and operational creditors of Bhushan Power and Steel Limited (BPSL) challenging the JSW Steel resolution plan.

A bench comprising former top court judge Justice Bela M Trivedi and Justice Satish Chandra Sharma on May 2 had set aside a resolution plan of applicant JSW Steel Limited for BPSL, holding it illegal and in violation of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC).

The verdict was critical of the conduct of all key stakeholders in the resolution process, the resolu-



tion professional, the Committee of Creditors (CoC) and the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) for enabling what it termed a "flagrant violation" of the IBC.

The CJI-led bench later allowed the review pleas against the top court's verdict and decided to hear them in open court. On July 31, the bench recalled the May 2 verdict that had ordered liquidation of BPSL while setting aside a resolution plan of JSW Steel Limited for the ailing firm.

The bench observed that the May 2 judgment, authored by Justice Trivedi did not "correctly consider the legal position in a series of judgments". One of the key issues was whether earnings before interest, tax, depreciation, and amortisation (EBITDA) generated during the resolution period should go to the creditors or remain with the company. The CoC was seeking

₹3,569 crore in EBITDA and ₹2,500 crore in delay-related interest. The CJI said, "Before we conclude the present matter, we may just point out the disastrous results which may have ensued in the event the contentions raised in the present appeals of the promoters-cum-directors of the Corporate Debtor were accepted or if the stand of the CoC with regard to EBITDA was accepted."

The bench said the resolution applicants submitted their bids and the request for resolution plan does not provide for treatment of EBITDA.

"After a prolonged delay on account of a variety of reasons enumerated hereinabove, the Resolution Plan was implemented. The Corporate Debtor in the present case was running into substantial losses which has now become a profit-making entity earning sub-

stantial profits," the verdict said. It said JSW invested huge amounts in modernisation and expansion of corporate debtors.

"Not only that but thousands of employees have been earning their livelihood on account of the Corporate Debtor running as an ongoing concern due to the Resolution Plan being implemented by the SRA — JSW. As such, the very purpose for which the IBC was enacted — namely, to ensure that the Corporate Debtor continues as a going concern — has not only been achieved, but the Corporate Debtor has been transformed from a loss-making to a profit-making entity," it added.

If, after the implementation of the resolution plan, the JSW has converted a loss-making entity into the one making profits, can it be penalised for that, the verdict asked. "Suppose instead of the corporate

debtor being converted into a profit-making entity, the losses would have increased, can the Corporate Debtor claim refund of the amount paid? If we permit the claim not to be part of the Resolution Plan which has been approved by the CoC and the NCLT to be raised at such a belated stage, it could open a Pandora's Box and the very purpose of the IBC providing sanctity to the finality of the Resolution Plan duly approved would stand vitiated," it said. The bench said this issue has already been decided already.

BPSL was among the 12 large corporate defaulters, often referred to as the RBI's "dirty dozen" as identified in June 2017 for insolvency resolution.

With admitted claims of over ₹47,000 crore from financial creditors and more than ₹600 crore from operational creditors, the case soon became one of the largest insolvency proceedings in the country. JSW Steel emerged as the highest evaluated bidder in October 2018 and subsequently secured approval from the CoC.

However, the resolution process became mired in litigation after investigative agencies, including the CBI and ED, initiated proceedings against BPSL and its promoters on allegations of fraud and money laundering.

In September 2019, the NCLT approved JSW's plan subject to conditions, which were later modified by the NCLAT in February 2020. Few appeals were followed and led to filing of pleas in the top court. The SRA was represented by Karanjawala and co team comprising Nandini Gore and Tahira Karanjawala in the proceedings.

SC allows manufacturing of green crackers

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Supreme Court (SC) on Friday allowed certified manufacturers to produce green crackers on the condition that their sale is not carried in Delhi-NCR without approval. A bench headed by Chief Justice BR Gavai also asked the Centre to take a fresh look at the absolute ban on the manufacture of firecrackers in Delhi-National Capital Region (NCR).

The bench, also comprising Justices K Vinod Chandran and NV Anjaria, directed the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) to consult all stakeholders, including the Delhi Government, manufacturers, and sellers, before arriving at a final decision.

"In the meantime, we permit the manufacturers who are having the certification of green crackers as certified by NEERI (National Environmental Engineering Research Institute) as well as PESO (Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organisation) to manufacture. However, this will be subject to an undertaking by the manufacturers to this court that until further orders



passed by this court, they would not sell any of their crackers in the prohibited areas," it ordered.

The conditional order permitting certified manufacturers to produce green crackers till the plea is heard again on October 8 on filing of the MoEFCC report on the issue assumes significance as earlier on April 3, a bench headed by former top court judge Justice AS Oka, refused to relax the ban on the manufacture, storage and sale on firecrackers in Delhi-NCR.

Justice Oka had noted that air pollution levels remained alarming for a considerable time and a large section of the population worked on streets and was the worst affected by pollution. On

Friday, the CJI-led bench battled for a balanced approach keeping in mind the right to livelihood of workers employed in such manufacturing units and the fact that such a complete ban is hardly implemented fully. The orders were passed while hearing the 1985 PIL of MC Mehta relating to environmental concerns in Delhi-NCR.

The bench said while curbing pollution was essential, an absolute ban was not "practical or ideal". The court illustrated it with the prohibition on mining in Bihar, which inadvertently gave rise to powerful illegal mining mafias. "It will be appropriate that the Union of India comes forward with a solution after

taking all the stakeholders, including the Delhi Government, the manufacturers and sellers of crackers, on board. As has been experienced, that despite there being a complete ban, the ban could not be implemented," the bench said. The order went on, "As was noticed by us in one of the judgments wherein in the State of Bihar, a complete ban on mining, had led to illegal mafias engaging in the business of mining. In that view of the matter, it is necessary that a balanced approach must be adopted."

Senior advocate Balbir Singh and K Parmeswar, appearing for some manufacturing units, argued that the April 3 order, which extended the firecracker ban in NCR throughout the year instead of just during the winter pollution season, was in conflict with its 2018 judgment in the Arjun Gopal case. The bench declined to examine the issue at this stage.

Parmeswar, however, urged the bench to permit manufacturing under strict monitoring, suggesting that companies could declare quantities publicly and make detailed disclosures to ensure compliance.

Delhi HC questions Sameer Wankhede over maintainability of plea against web series

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Delhi High Court (HC) on Friday questioned IRS officer and former NCB zonal director Sameer Wankhede over maintainability of his defamation suit against actor Shahrukh Khan and his wife Gauri Khan owned Red Chillies Entertainment and Netflix for allegedly maligning his reputation in their series 'The Ba***ds of Bollywood'.

Justice Purushendra Kumar Kaurav asked Wankhede's lawyer as to how the plea was maintainable in Delhi.

Senior advocate Sandeep Sethi, representing Wankhede, said the web series is meant for across cities, including Delhi, and the officer has been defamed here. However, he said he would amend the plaint accordingly.

The court granted him time to file an amended application after which it would hear the matter. Wankhede's plea has



sought permanent and mandatory injunction, declaration and damages against Red Chillies Entertainment Private Limited, Netflix and others, for what he alleges is "false, malicious and defamatory video" of the production house and broadcast by Netflix as part of their television series. Wankhede sought ₹2 crore in damages which he wants to be donated to the Tata Memorial Cancer Hospital for cancer patients.

"This series disseminates a misleading and negative portrayal of anti-drug enforcement agencies, thereby eroding public confidence in law enforcement institutions," the plea said.

SC to cut backlog of cheque dishonour cases

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Expressing concern over the pendency of "staggeringly high" number of cheque dishonour cases in district courts of major cities, the Supreme Court (SC) has issued fresh guidelines to reduce the backlog that included voluntary compromises and release of accused on probation.

A bench of Justices Manmohan and NV Anjaria while dealing with the cheque bounce cases where the Bombay High Court reversed the concurrent finding of the district courts to release the accused, tweaked the 15-year-old guidelines on compounding of offences under the Negotiable Instrument (NI) Act.

It said this court takes judicial notice of the fact that despite repeated directions by this court in various judgments but pendency of cheque bouncing cases under the NI Act in district courts in major metropolitan cities of India continues to be staggeringly high.

Referring to data from the National Judicial Data Grid, the bench said as on September 1, the pendency of Section 138 cases in Delhi district courts was 6,50,283, Mumbai district courts was 1,17,190,



and Calcutta district courts was 2,65,985. "This pendency is putting an unprecedented strain on the judicial system as in some States, cases under Section 138 of the NI Act constitute nearly fifty per cent of the pendency in trial court (in Delhi section 138 NI Act cases constitute 49.45 per cent of total trial court pendency)," it said.

Tweaking the existing top court guidelines, the bench underlined the necessity owing to a huge pendency of such case and the falling interest rates in the last few years.

Under the revised guidelines, if the accused pays the cheque amount before recording of his evidence (namely defence evidence), then the trial court may allow compounding of the offence without imposing any cost or penalty on the accused.

"If the accused makes the payment of the cheque amount post the recording of

his evidence but prior to the pronouncement of judgment by the trial court, the magistrate may allow compounding of the offence on payment of additional 5 per cent of the cheque amount with the legal services authority or such other authority as the court deems fit," it said.

The top court said similarly, if the payment of cheque amount is made before the sessions court or a high court in revision or appeal, such court may compound the offence on the condition that the accused pays 7.5 per cent of the cheque amount by way of costs.

"Finally, if the cheque amount is tendered before this court, the figure would increase to 10 per cent of the cheque amount," it said.

The bench said in its recent verdict it was held that the offence under Section 138 of the NI Act was quasi-criminal in character and compound-

able for the proceeding was essentially a civil proceeding and open to the parties to enter into a voluntary compromise. "Not only a voluntary compromise can bring the proceedings under Section 138 NI Act to an end, but the accused under the said offence are entitled to benefit under the Probation of Offenders Act, 1958," the order read.

The top court decided to issue fresh guidelines saying the service of summons on the accused in a complaint filed under Section 138 of the NI Act continued to be one of the main reasons for the delay in disposal of the complaints.

The punishment under the NI Act, the top court said, was not a means of "seeking retribution" but more a means to ensure payment of money and promote credibility of cheques as a trustworthy substitute for cash payment.

The top court issued procedural guidelines fusing it with the new criminal procedural law Bhartiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 (BNSS) and said that under Section 138 of the NI Act, service of summons shall not be confined through prescribed usual modes but shall also be issued dasti that is summons shall be served upon the accused by the complainant in addition.

States Focus



HARSHWANTI BISHT TO GET ENVIRONMENT AWARD

Renowned mountaineer and educationist Dr Harshwanti Bisht will be conferred with the 2025 Kedar Singh Rawat Environment Award for her work in saving birch forests in the Gangotri region, among others. The decision to award Bisht was unanimous, secretary of the Kedar Singh Rawat Environment Award Selection Committee, Mangla Kothiyal, said on Friday. She has been working for more than four decades in mountaineering and to protect the environment of the Greater Himalayas. Bisht, who has served as the president of important national institutions such as the Indian Mountaineering Institute, has worked to raise public awareness for the conservation of Bhoj trees in the Gomukh and Bhojwasa areas, the origin of the Ganga.



AFRICAN SWINE FEVER DETECTED IN KERALA'S THRISSUR DISTRICT

Authorities on Friday confirmed an outbreak of African swine fever in a village in this central Kerala district. According to officials, the infection was detected in pigs in the sixth ward of Mulankunnathukavu panchayat, after tests carried out at a Government lab in Bhopal. A rapid response team has been deployed to contain the spread, they said. The team under the leadership of the Animal Husbandry Department has begun operations to prevent the spread of the disease, an officialsaid. Officials have declared a one-km zone around the affected farm as infected, and a 10-km belt around it as a surveillance zone.

Andhra Pradesh braces for heavy rain, winds: Minister orders preparedness

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
Amaravati

Andhra Pradesh Home Minister V Anitha on Friday directed officials to remain "fully prepared" as a deep depression over the Bay of Bengal approached the State. She ordered the immediate setting up of control rooms, installation of warning boards, and deployment readiness of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), police and fire services.

"Field-level officials must be prepared to face any situation," Anitha said in a press release, urging preventive measures in vulnerable districts prone to heavy rain and flooding.

According to the Andhra Pradesh State Disaster Management Authority (APSDMA), the depression is likely to cross the south Odisha-north Andhra coasts on Saturday morning, bringing extremely heavy rainfall at isolated places.

"Moderate to heavy rain" is forecast in Eluru, Krishna, NTR, Guntur, Bapatla, Palnadu, Prakasam, Nellore, Godavari districts, Kurnool and Nandyal, with squally coastal winds reaching up to



Andhra Pradesh Home Minister V Anitha

50 kmph. Fishermen have been warned against venturing into the sea till Monday, while the public has been advised to avoid crossing overflowing canals or taking shelter under trees and unsafe structures.

Meanwhile, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) has forecast "heavy rain and thunderstorms with lightning" in parts of Andhra Pradesh until October 2. The IMD said "heavy to very heavy rain is likely at isolated places" over North Coastal Andhra Pradesh (NCAP) and Yanam, and "heavy rain at isolated places" over Rayalaseema

on September 26. Thunderstorms with lightning are also expected over NCAP, SCAP (South Coastal Andhra Pradesh) and Rayalaseema, with winds of 40-50 kmph at isolated locations. Similar weather conditions are likely on September 27, with winds of 30-40 kmph over Rayalaseema, continuing until September 29.

From September 30 to October 2, isolated thunderstorms, "lightning and heavy rain" are expected over NCAP and Yanam, with strong winds persisting over coastal districts and Rayalaseema.

Odisha to witness very heavy rainfall till Sunday

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
Bhubaneswar

Odisha is likely to witness very heavy rainfall till Sunday morning as a well-marked low pressure area in the Bay of Bengal is set to intensify into a depression, prompting the administration to gear up to tackle the situation.

The IMD issued 'red alert' (take action) for the three districts of Kalahandi, Koraput and Malkangiri, predicting over 20 cm of rainfall; 'orange warning' (be prepared) for 14 districts, forecasting 12-20 cm precipitation and 'yellow alert' (be aware) for 13 districts, predicting 7-11 cm downpour till 8.30 am on

Saturday, a senior scientist at the Bhubaneswar Meteorological Centre said. Heavy rain has been lashing the coastal and southern regions of the state, including the State Capital Bhubaneswar, since this Friday morning. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) said that the low pressure area, which has intensified into 'well-marked system', will develop into a depression over the next 24 hours.

"The system is very likely to cross the south Odisha-north Andhra Pradesh coasts in the morning of September 27," the IMD said.

The weather agency said wind speeds reaching 35-45

kmph and gusting to 55 kmph is very likely to prevail over the Bay of Bengal and along and off the Andhra Pradesh-Odisha-West Bengal-Bangladesh coasts till the evening of September 26. Squally wind speeds will reach 40-50 kmph, gusting to 60 kmph, along the eastern coast from the evening of September 26 till the afternoon of September 27.

As sea conditions would be very rough from the evening of September 26 till the afternoon of September 27, the fishermen were advised not to venture into the sea during the period.

Meanwhile, the Malkangiri district administration,

which has already cancelled the leaves of all government employees in the wake of the situation, also announced the closure of all schools and educational institutions.

"There has been continuous rainfall in various parts of the district, leading to a situation that may be difficult for young children to navigate. Therefore, to avoid any untoward situation and keeping the safety of the children in mind, all government, aided, and private schools will remain closed," Malkangiri Collector Somesh Kumar Upadhyay said in an order.

Similarly, the district administrations of Koraput

and Nabarangpur have also cancelled the leaves of all the employees and instructed them to remain stationed at the headquarters in view of the changed weather situation.

Officials of the Water Resources Department said that 5.64 lakh cusecs of water was flowing through Mundali Barrage near Cuttack at 9 am after release through 20 sluice gates of the Hirakud Dam upstream.

The department put the districts located downstream, particularly in the Mahanadi Delta, on alert and asked the administrations to prepare for a flood-like situation, if it arises.

PM, Congress pay tributes to Manmohan Singh

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Friday paid tributes to former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on his birth anniversary and recalled his contribution to the country in various roles.

Modi said in a social media post, "Tributes to former PM Dr Manmohan Singh ji on his birth anniversary. We recall his contributions to our nation during his long years in public life."

Singh headed the Congress-led UPA Government between 2004 and 2014, and his tenure as finance minister in the government led by PV Narasimha Rao between 1991 and 1996 is considered an epochal period as India initiated market reforms and loosened State control of the economy.

Born in 1932 in a part of



Punjab which is now in Pakistan, Singh rose from a humble background to become a distinguished economist and entered public life later. He died in December last year.

In a social media post, Kharge said they remember the contribution of Singh in nation-building. He was a gentle architect of India's economic transformation.

"A man of humility and wisdom, he carried himself with quiet dignity, letting his

actions speak louder than his words. His vision of economic reforms opened new doors of opportunity, creating a thriving middle class and lifting countless families out of poverty," the Congress chief said.

He said Singh believed deeply in fairness and inclusivity, ensuring that growth went hand in hand with compassion through welfare measures that touched the lives of millions. His leadership showed us that integri-

ty in public life is not just possible, but powerful, Kharge noted in his post.

Rahul Gandhi, in a separate post, said he pays his humble respects to him. "His unwavering commitment to nation-building, his bold decisions for the poor and marginalised, and his historic contribution to building a strong economy will continue to guide us," Rahul Gandhi said in his post. "His simplicity, humility, and honesty are a source of inspiration for all of us," Rahul Gandhi added.

Singh was the country's prime minister from 2004 to 2014, when he headed the Congress-led UPA Government and was considered the architect of economic reforms in the country.

Singh was the finance minister in the PV Narasimha Rao Government between 1991 and 1996, during whose tenure large-scale economic reforms were initiated and the state's control on the economy was loosened.

Singh library with 1,200 books encapsulating journey of country



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
New Delhi

Sections dedicated to Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Indira Gandhi, multiple volumes of "The Encyclopedia of the Congress", as well as the party's poll manifestoes, are part of a library named after former prime minister Manmohan Singh in the Congress headquarters.

The library was inaugurated by Congress Parliamentary Party chief Sonia Gandhi on Friday in the presence of Singh's wife Gursharan Kaur and

other members of the family, as well as party president Mallikarjun Kharge and former party chief Rahul Gandhi.

The library houses about 1,200 books, to begin with, which encapsulate the journey of the country and the Congress.

"Today, on the occasion of Dr Manmohan Singh ji's birthday, we inaugurated the Dr Manmohan Singh Research Centre and Library at Indira Bhawan, New Delhi. Dr Singh's life and work are a beacon of simplicity, honesty, and dedication," Rahul Gandhi said in a post on Facebook.

MP Congress to hold training camp for district presidents at Pachmarhi

GIRISH SHARMA ■ Bhopal

The Madhya Pradesh Congress will organise a 10-day residential training camp for its district presidents at Pachmarhi from November 2 to 12, 2025, in what is being seen as a major organisational exercise ahead of future electoral battles.

State Congress General Secretary (Organisation) Sanjay Kamle confirmed that AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge and Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi will guide participants during the programme. Rahul Gandhi is expected to remain present for at least

two days, while Kharge will interact with the district chiefs on key sessions.

The Congress high command has long considered district presidents the backbone of the party organisation. They serve as the crucial link between grassroots workers and state leadership, responsible for mobilising cadre, shaping local strategies, and executing central directives on the ground. A well-trained and motivated district unit is often viewed as the foundation for the party's electoral performance.

In Madhya Pradesh, where the Congress is seeking to revive its organisational



strength after recent political setbacks, the role of district presidents becomes even more significant. Earlier training and orientation camps for district heads —

including the one held in 2023 at Pachmarhi — were designed to prepare leaders for election campaigns, instill ideological clarity, and improve booth-level man-

agement. The upcoming programme is being positioned as a continuation and expansion of that effort.

According to party insiders, the sessions will include modules on leadership development, effective communication, social media outreach, and strategies to counter the BJP's dominance in the state. Special emphasis will be placed on welfare schemes, grassroots activism, and connecting with youth and women voters. Senior Congress leaders from the state are also expected to join the camp, ensuring direct interaction between the central leadership and local units.

By convening district presidents in a single intensive programme, the Congress high command aims to reinforce discipline, unity, and accountability within the organisation. With both Kharge and Rahul Gandhi set to lead sessions, the camp also signals the importance the central leadership attaches to Madhya Pradesh, a state that remains politically pivotal. Party strategists believe empowering district presidents with clear direction and renewed motivation will be critical in building a robust ground force capable of carrying forward Congress's message in the months ahead.

India engaged with US over H-1B visa fee: MEA

ASHOKE RAJ ■ New Delhi

India is actively engaging with the United States and key stakeholders to address concerns over the Trump administration's recent decision to impose a one-time \$100,000 fee on new H-1B visa applications. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Friday that it remains in dialogue with US authorities and hopes Indian talent mobility will be fairly considered in the final decision-making process.

Speaking at a press briefing, MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said that discussions are ongoing with various levels of the US Government, the Indian embassy in Washington, and the business sector. He emphasised that the movement of skilled Indian professionals benefits both economies.

"We want to remain engaged with all concerned, including the industry, and we hope that these factors will receive due consideration," Randhir Jaiswal said.

The controversial fee, announced last week by US President Donald Trump, is part of a broader policy to curb what the administration calls abuse of the H-1B visa program and protect American jobs. Indian nation-



Ministry of External Affairs Spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal addressing a press conference in New Delhi on Friday

PTI

als, who have historically received over 70 percent of all H-1B visas, are expected to be the most affected.

The US Department of Homeland Security has confirmed that the \$100,000 fee applies only to new petitions, not renewals or extensions. Petitions filed before September 21, 2025, are not affected.

Several US medical associations, led by the American Medical Association, have urged the Government to exempt international doctors from the fee, citing healthcare concerns. India's finance ministry has warned that the fee could disrupt services exports and remittances if not addressed through diplo-

matic channels. Indian IT stocks have reacted negatively to the announcement. Major firms like Infosys, TCS, and Wipro saw share prices drop as concerns grow over increased costs and potential loss of business.

India is using a multi-pronged approach, Diplomatic discussions with US counterparts through the embassy in Washington and high-level meetings, including on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly. Coordinating responses across ministries, including commerce and economic affairs, to analyse the long-term impact. Leveraging ongoing bilateral trade talks to push for reconsideration

or exemption of the fee for certain sectors. Highlighting the potential humanitarian and economic disruptions this policy could create. "We believe that Indian talent has contributed immensely to the US economy in fields like technology, healthcare, and academia," Jaiswal said.

The US Government has opened a 30-day public comment period for feedback on the proposed rule. India is expected to formally submit its concerns during this time, along with inputs from industry groups, professional bodies, and diaspora organisations.

There is also speculation that the proposed fee could face legal challenges within the US, especially from businesses and medical institutions that rely on foreign talent.

While the outcome of the rule is yet to be determined, India is pushing for a balanced approach that maintains strong economic, and people-to-people ties. The MEA reiterated its commitment to legal migration pathways and emphasised that skilled professionals play a vital role in US-India relations.

Meanwhile, concerns remain over potential ripple effects across industries, especially in IT, healthcare, and research sectors.

PM to unveil rail, telecom projects in Odisha on September 27

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Bhubaneswar

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to visit Odisha on September 27 during which he will flag off an Amrit Bharat Express, unveil railway projects worth ₹1,700 crore and BSNL's Swadeshi 4G stack.

From Jharsuguda, he will also announce the expansion of eight IITs, grant super-specialty status to MKCG Medical College and Hospital in Berhampur and VIMSAR hospital in Sambalpur, launch a national skill development programme and provide aid to 50,000 beneficiaries under the Antyodaya scheme.

This will be the Prime Minister's sixth visit to Odisha in 15 months since the BJP came to power in the state in June, 2024. Initially, the place for his public meeting was fixed at Berhampur in Ganjam district, but it was later changed to Jharsuguda due to a forecast of heavy rain in southern Odisha on Saturday.

"We have made preparations for holding the PM's event keeping in view the weather conditions," a senior minister, who along with Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, inspected the meeting venue.

Apart from the CM, several Cabinet ministers, Chief Secretary Manoj Ahuja, DGP YB Khurania and others visited the spot.

The PM's tour on Saturday will be unique in the sense that he has never visited any other state so many times in little more than a year, Revenue and Disaster Management Minister Suresh Pujari, who is in charge of the meeting venue at Jharsuguda, said. "This shows his love for Odisha and his commitment to the development of the state under his Purvodaya Mission," he said.

All the previous five visits of the Prime Minister since June 2024, were confined to Bhubaneswar.



Editor's

TAKE

Development is non-negotiable

As India seeks to position itself as a developed nation by 2047, development must remain the non-negotiable foundation of policy and governance

Nelson Mandela's pledge to his nation was to uphold the Constitution, serve the well-being of the people, and liberate all people from the continuing bondage of poverty, deprivation, suffering, and discrimination. Indeed, that has to be the goal of any nation that wants to call itself great and is developed in the true sense.

India's cherished goal of becoming 'viksit' by 2047 can only be realised if we, as a nation, push forward development and brace the challenges with grit and determination. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's inauguration and foundation laying of development projects worth over ₹1.22 lakh crore in Banswara, Rajasthan, is a reminder that development is not a choice but a national necessity.

For any society to remain cohesive and for all sections of the population to feel empowered, development must stand as the Government's foremost priority. It is the only path that ensures dignity, opportunity, and economic strength for all citizens – from farmers in remote villages to entrepreneurs in bustling cities. The Prime Minister's emphasis on clean energy projects, solar initiatives, nuclear power expansion, and modernised infrastructure reflects an understanding of this essential truth.

In today's interconnected world, electricity is not merely about lighting homes; it powers industries, enables education, facilitates healthcare, and connects citizens to the global economy. By investing in energy security – both renewable and nuclear – India is not only addressing present needs but also future-proofing its economy against global challenges. Equally significant is the focus on inclusive growth. Rajasthan's tribal communities, long marginalised, have been placed at the heart of these initiatives. Water supply projects, new rail and road connectivity, healthcare expansion, and employment drives are not just about physical assets – they are about restoring dignity and creating equal opportunities for communities historically left behind. Development, when it reaches the last person in the line, binds society with a sense of shared destiny.

The projects in Banswara are a striking example of this philosophy. From clean drinking water schemes to the PM-KUSUM solar programme for farmers, the Government is signalling that every section of society – whether urban middle class, rural farmer, or tribal villager – must have equal access to the dividends of growth. Development is a social contract between the State and its people. The approach of all-round development recognises that infrastructure, employment, healthcare, and education cannot be separated from one another; they form the ecosystem in which prosperity grows. Banswara's moment is not just Rajasthan's gain but India's promise – that growth will not be confined to metros but will flow into villages, tribal belts, and marginalised regions. In that promise lies the hope of a stronger, fairer, and an egalitarian India.

Being simple as the route of success

It has not even created, with sufficient vigour, its own school of thought. Yet the truth is that when comparative strategy formulation begins, being simple and direct, succeeds as nothing else can



VINAYSHIL GAUTAM

A literature survey on strategy, be it personal, group, or institutional, has been attempted multiple times since the period when such literature was first recognised to exist. Various schools of thought have been marked, debated, and accepted or rejected. This has given rise to various schools of thought, from the passivist approach to the activist approach. Indeed, to have a strategy is considered basic to the act of survival, and everyone practices some strategy at some level, irrespective of the size of the institution or the stature of the individual. This is not the place to get into the lengthy literature survey of what is available, as such an effort would literally take thousands of man-hours.

There are additionally regional differences in the quality of analysis from one region to another, reflecting various schools of thought according to languages, according to regions, and according to times.

An illustration may help. Going by the time dimension, human history is divided into ancient times, medieval times, and modern times. Such distinctions are useful, but once one starts analysing problems, issues can and do arise. Ancient times obviously begin with time immemorial, but it takes on a literature survey only when issues of periodisation are solved. There can be no beginning of history unless some evidence is there to mark the times. The marking of the times can be architectural, linguistic, or indeed any traces which the people of the time left behind for posterity to find and analyse.

Obviously, all human beings spoke, and since time immemorial, there must have been a language; otherwise, no community of Homo sapiens could have survived. They needed to talk to each other and relate to one another. However, spoken language leaves no tracks, and for language to survive, it must have a script; without a script, no traces can be found. One of the oldest languages in the world is the language used by the Egyptians.

They used it in their active commerce, rigorous warfare, running of the state, and commercial activities, and for everything else which human beings need to communicate over to keep the civilization going. The script which they used has been called hieroglyphs. Hieroglyphs have been deciphered, and Egyptian writing on walls, pillars, and elsewhere can be deciphered to know about the times. It was largely pictorial, and later on, the study of languages shows that these scripts evolved; pictures gave way to simplified presentations, and static alphabets evolved into flowing alphabets linked with each



The Pioneer

SINCE 1865

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other. That is another story.

The number of scripts across the world is huge. There is the Roman, the Devanagari, the Chinese, the Arabic, and the list goes on. Each of these mother scripts had its own dominant language; illustratively, the Roman script was known for its Latin and Greek languages. Devanagari was known for its Sanskrit and Pali texts, and this list also goes on with variations of languages which came to be written in scripts such as Arabic or Chinese. Modern-day Urdu, for example, has a strong influence from the Arabic script, and unlike Roman or Devanagari, which is written from left to right, it follows the right to left flow typical of the Arabic script.

The difference in flow from left to right and right to left is so obvious that it needs no further explanation or elaboration. Similarly, the Chinese script has its own characters, and unlike the Roman or the Devanagari scripts, it has its alphabets in a discrete manner and does not have the flow which the Roman or the Devanagari texts have.

Be that as it may, ultimately, language generated its own typologies, and civilizations were fathered also according to linguistic delimitation or differentiation. The languages and the sub-languages which arose are too many to relate in the limited space of this text. Soon enough, civilizations started communicating on linguistic overtones.

There were authors who saw language as a distinctive force across cultural boundaries, and a noted British author even attempted what he called the "History of English-speaking People." The interesting dimension of this history was that ethnically it included Americans, Africans, Asians, Australians. Even though English was written in Roman script, other languages attained prominence using

the Roman script while having a different identity of their own. Interesting references can be found by going through the narratives in French, Portuguese, German, and the list can be long. The Slavonic script is pervasive in Russian and other similar languages, creating even more varieties in human typology.

Be that as it may, the long and short of the matter is that as the scripts multiplied, so did the languages, and so did the strategies. The quest for success became a subject matter in its own right, and even literature surveys reflected the amount of thought devoted to the concept of success, along with the growing number of strategic options that emerged.

In this medley of competitive success strategies, one thing that has skipped much attention is that it is the urge to be successful has led to all these schools of thought. Indeed, not too much attention has been paid to being simple and straightforward for achieving success.

Since nobody is expected to be simple or straightforward, perhaps being simple and straightforward gives rise to the greatest amount of success stories. This has rarely been studied in sufficient academic depth. It has not even created, with sufficient vigour, its own school of thought. Yet the truth is that when comparative strategy formulation begins, being simple and direct, succeeds as nothing else can.

Perhaps the time has come to take a look at this point of view and realise that not only is honesty the best policy, but being simple and straightforward has the potential of being one of the best strategies. At least, as long as few people see it as a possibility, for being successful in life, being simple is worth a try. The matter needs careful thought and must be explored for due action.

PIC TALK



A potter makes a 'diya' at a workshop ahead of Diwali festival in Prayagraj.

PHOTO: PTI

DIGITAL EXPERIENCE

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TOURISM TRANSFORMATION MUST PRIORITISE LOCAL COMMUNITIES

World Tourism Day 2025 focuses on inclusive development of local communities and economies through responsible tourism. However, studies estimate that tourism contributes roughly 8 per cent of the world's carbon emissions. It also causes resource degradation, waste pollution, and fragmentation of fragile ecosystems. Uttarakhand's Naini Lake, facing severe degradation and a looming water crisis, is a stark example.

The recent surge of natural disasters in Himalayan states reflects unchecked infrastructure development undertaken in the name of commercial tourism. Landslides, flash floods, and earthquakes have become increasingly common in the Himalayan foothills, Western Ghats, and other ecologically vulnerable regions. The 2024

Wayanad landslide and the Dharali disaster this year serve as tragic reminders. Encouragingly, both travellers and communities are recognising the urgency of sustainability.

A recent report shows that 73 per cent of Indian travellers consider sustainability a top priority while planning trips. Government initiatives such as Travel for LIFE, Swadesh Darshan 2.0, and the Blue Flag Beach initiative have delivered promising outcomes. Beyond official programmes, community-driven models like Kerala's Responsible Tourism Initiative highlight the importance of grassroots participation. Tourism must evolve into a vehicle of sustainability, strengthening livelihoods while protecting natural and cultural heritage.

PRASUN K DUTTA | WEST BENGAL

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

Stillness within, strength against worldly chaos



SADGURU SRI MADHUSUDAN SAI

2 THE PIONEER

ND OPINION

All of us seem to be in a perpetual rush, all the time. There is noise, pressure, endless demands from the external world, and we hardly have a moment to breathe. Many of us try to manage duties, chase desires, and somehow keep up. But often, we end up feeling restless, even a little lost.

At times like this, finding inner peace feels really important. Ancient Indian wisdom has something to say about it. It shows ways to step back, calm the mind, and see things clearly. Spiritual living, built on truth and balance, offers a way forward.

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

but for one who has failed to do so, the very mind will be the greatest enemy." It is a simple idea, yet so true. If the mind is restless, even small issues seem huge. But if it is calm, big problems appear small. Spiritual living helps us look inward, away from distractions, and notice what truly matters.

The *Kathopanishad* tells a story that makes this clear. A young seeker, Nachiketa, asks Yama, the lord of death, about life and peace. Yama says: "The good and the pleasant approach the human being.

The wise, examining both, distinguish one from the other. The wise choose the good over the pleasant." It is easy to see why so many of us stay stuck in chaos. Often, we pick what feels easy or nice on the surface, even if it becomes a source of trouble later.

The spiritual path asks something different. It asks us to choose what is good, such as truth, discipline, and compassion. At first, it may seem hard and unattainable, yes, but it leads to ultimate freedom and joy. Inner peace also comes from knowing yourself. The *Kathopanishad* compares the body to a chariot, the senses to horses, and the mind to reins.

The Self, or *Atman*, is the master. If the senses run wild, life gets messy and confusing. But if the mind holds the

reins carefully and listens to the Self, the way forward becomes clearer. In practice, this means taking moments of quiet every day – praying, meditating, or just sitting and watching our mind.

Like a pond settling when the wind stops, the mind can become still if we pay attention. In that quiet, we feel connected to everything. The *Gita* says: "The yogi, uniting the self with the Self, sees the same in all beings." That kind of vision reduces fear, anger, and restlessness. Spiritual living is also about kindness. Seeing others as part of the same Self makes

compassion natural. Hearts soften, and minds clear. Peace is no longer only personal because it spreads to families, friends, communities, and even the wider world. In the end, clarity is not somewhere out there. It is inside. Following the Self, guided by the *Gita* and the *Upanishads*, shows us how to live in harmony.

The world might stay noisy, chaotic, and messy. But inside, there can be silence, strength, and joy. That is the gift of spiritual living – the kind of peace that stays untouched, unperturbed, and timeless.

The writer is a spiritual leader and founder of the One World One Family mission

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

IAF could have balanced 1962

CDS General Chauhan's assertion that the use of the IAF in 1962 would have slowed the Chinese offensive considerably is unexceptional.

Many military experts and historians have affirmed this earlier. In 1962, India had clear air superiority in the Himalayan skies. The Chinese Air Force (PLAAF) lacked high-altitude bases near Tibet; its airfields were deep inside mainland China.

By contrast, India had operational bases in Assam, West Bengal, and closer forward locations. Yet the political leadership, especially PM Nehru and Defence Minister Krishna Menon, panicked and chose not to use airpower, fearing retaliatory Chinese strikes.

The Army's plea for air support was denied, leaving ill-equipped Indian soldiers to suffer defeat. Statesman Rajaji observed that not using the IAF was strategically and morally questionable when soldiers were dying.

Had India pressed its air assets, even if not yielding outright victory, the outcome would have been more balanced against a superior force.

Wars cannot be fought with timidity or misplaced faith in non-violence. Timely deployment of the IAF in 1962 could have significantly mitigated India's losses and altered the course of the conflict.

V JAYARAMAN | CHENNAI

Ladakh protests reveal trust deficit

The violence in Ladakh highlights a serious trust deficit between the Centre and the people. Though the Government has conceded demands – such as 95 per cent job reservation for locals, recognition of languages, and enhanced representation – local perceptions remain unaddressed.

Civil society bodies and youth in Ladakh feel aspirations for statehood and Sixth Schedule inclusion are being diluted or delayed. Meanwhile, the Centre views protests as politically motivated or externally influenced. Such mistrust in a sensitive border region cannot be allowed to fester.

The Centre must pursue a two-track strategy: reassure Ladakhis through transparent timelines on constitutional safeguards and sustained dialogue with both Leh and Kargil representatives, while firmly isolating violent elements. Only political engagement, not dismissive allegations, can heal divides.

Respecting Ladakh's identity and autonomy within the Union will reinforce national security. Ignoring these aspirations risks alienation in a region of critical geopolitical importance. Addressing Ladakh's concerns through dialogue and safeguards is essential to maintain regional stability and national security.

GOPALASWAMY J | CHENNAI

Pakistan's aid and dependency

For decades, Pakistan has received international aid yet remains mired in fragility and dependency. The core reason is systematic diversion of funds from development to defence.

Rather than investing in infrastructure, education, or industry, resources are absorbed by the military. The establishment, which dominates the civilian government, ensures defence allocations remain untouchable, citing India as a perpetual threat.

This security-first approach has left Pakistan's economy stagnant, infrastructure underdeveloped, and social indicators among the weakest in South Asia. Ordinary citizens see no benefit from foreign assistance, while political leaders appear powerless against military dominance.

International donors, despite repeated interventions, find their aid failing to create grassroots change. Unless Pakistan realigns its priorities and channels resources towards genuine development, the cycle of debt and dependency will persist. Without bold reform, Pakistan's "begging bowl" image will endure, preventing stability or self-reliance. Without redirecting funds to development, Pakistan's cycle of dependency will continue unabated.

N SADHASIVA REDDY | BENGALURU



Sanae Takaichi and Japan's historic reckoning

For the first time since the war, Japan finds itself on the brink of a political turning point. As the moment of decision nears, Takaichi's ascent embodies both a historic breakthrough and an uncertain gamble — forcing the nation to confront whether it can balance tradition with the demands of transformation

FIRST
Column



NILANTHA
ILANGAMUWA

Japan has never confronted the raw contradiction inherent in its postwar democracy: a nation reconstructed from devastation, yet shackled by entrenched hierarchies that dictate who may wield authority. The first week of next month, however, a singular possibility emerges. Sanae Takaichi, former economic security minister and unflinching conservative, positions herself as the foremost contender to assume the premiership, an office long monopolised by men. Her candidacy is not merely symbolic; it exposes the fissures in Japan's political system, its gender inequities, and the enduring influence of historical power brokers, while raising profound questions about legitimacy, merit, and risk in governance. Takaichi's ascent is neither conventional nor superficial. Born in 1961 in Nara Prefecture, she briefly explored entertainment before committing to political life. Her studies at Kobe University were complemented by exposure to American legislative procedures as an aide in the US House of Representatives — an experience that endowed her with strategic insight unusual among Japanese lawmakers.

Entering the Diet in 1993, she quickly manoeuvred the LDP's factional matrix, becoming a protégé of Shinzo Abe, whose influence and legacy continue to bolster her standing. This mentorship, combined with her skill at coalition-building within the party, positions her as a candidate with both institutional acumen and grassroots resonance. Takaichi is resolute. She is an unabolegetic nationalist, frequenting the Yasukuni Shrine and advocating constitutional revision to formally recognise the Self-Defense Forces.

These positions signal loyalty to the LDP's conservative base while simultaneously provoking unease in China and South Korea, for whom such gestures evoke historical trauma. Yet Takaichi's platform is not monolithic. Recently, she has articulated policies addressing Japan's persistent gender inequities: partial tax deductions for childcare, corporate incentives for in-house care, and advocacy around women's health informed by her personal experience with menopause and caregiving responsibilities. In these measures, she manages the



The Pioneer
SINCE 1869

TAKAICHI'S
GENDER
INTRODUCES AN
ADDITIONAL
DIMENSION OF
SCRUTINY, BOTH
DOMESTIC AND
INTERNATIONAL.
THE HISTORICAL
RESONANCE OF
HER CANDIDACY
IS EQUALLY
COMPELLING

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tension between ideological orthodoxy and pragmatic responsiveness.

Takaichi distinguishes herself as a fiscal dove, advocating government expenditure to counter inflationary pressures while signalling the possible necessity of issuing government bonds under exigent circumstances. Her public remarks last week, warning that reliance on tax revenue alone may be insufficient to combat rising consumer prices, reflect a willingness to confront Japan's entrenched bureaucratic orthodoxy. Historically, such boldness echoes the fiscal interventions of the Abe administration, whose policies were partly facilitated by covert CIA funding and Cold War-era machinations to stabilise Japan against leftist influence.

Takaichi's political biography is punctuated by moments that reveal both resilience and calculated audacity. In the 2024 LDP Leadership contest, she narrowly lost to Shigeru Ishiba in a runoff, illustrating her capacity to command substantial support even in a field dominated by male elders. Her repeated candidacies reflect strategic patience and an understanding of the party's factional undercurrents, where loyalty networks, not merely public opinion, determine outcomes. Unlike Shinjiro Koizumi, whose political capital derives from dynastic inheritance,

Takaichi's influence rests on cultivated alliances and personal reputation — a precarious but potentially liberating position in a system long dominated by hereditary claims. The broader context magnifies the stakes. Japan continues to rank dismally on the World Economic Forum's Gender Gap Index, placing 118th among 148 countries, with women representing only 15.7 per cent of the lower house.

No woman has ever held the prime ministership, the finance ministry, or the governorship of the Bank of Japan. Internationally, a female premier would alter perceptions of Japan's modernity and commitment to inclusivity, but domestically, her tenure could be precarious. Scholars such as Hiroko Takeda of Nagoya University caution against the "glass cliff" phenomenon, where women ascend to leadership precisely during periods of instability, only to bear disproportionate blame for systemic failures. With the LDP weakened after consecutive electoral setbacks, the next prime minister will face a fractured legislature, rising inflation, and geopolitical tensions that demand deft negotiation with both domestic opposition and international actors. Takaichi's potential premiership would also engage the unresolved dialectic between conservatism and modernisation. Her hardline

stances on nationalism and security are juxtaposed with nascent advocacy for gender-sensitive economic policies — tax breaks for childcare and protections for caregivers.

This duality challenges simplistic classifications of her as merely reactionary or progressive; she embodies a calculated hybridity, presenting an image palatable to conservative party elders while cautiously courting broader urban and younger constituencies. Such strategic adaptability has precedents in Japan's political history, where leaders like Hayashi and Moteji addressed factional rivalries and bureaucratic resistance.

Yet Takaichi's gender introduces an additional dimension of scrutiny, both domestic and international. The historical resonance of her candidacy is equally compelling. Postwar Japan, emerging from the devastation of World War II, was shepherded into democracy under Allied supervision, with American authorities even influencing the structure of political parties and suppressing leftist movements — some through clandestine financial support for conservative actors. The LDP's early hegemony owes, in part, to these interventions, which entrenched a culture of factionalism and male-dominated hierarchy that persists today. Takaichi's

rise, therefore, is not simply the ascension of a single politician; it is a confrontation with the enduring legacies of occupation-era manipulation, factional patronage, and institutional gender bias. Furthermore, Takaichi's personal narrative lends an uncommon dimension to her candidacy. Her experiences juggling professional obligations with caregiving responsibilities resonate with a substantial segment of Japanese society, particularly women who face structural impediments to career advancement. By invoking her struggles with menopause and child-rearing, she frames policy debates in human terms, challenging the traditional detachment of Japanese policymaking from lived experience. In doing so, she redefines what leadership might entail in a society where policy and personal experience are often segregated.

Yet controversy is inseparable from possibility. Takaichi's unabolegetic nationalism and engagement with historically sensitive issues, such as Yasukuni visits and advocacy for Taiwan security partnerships, have drawn criticism from neighbouring states and some domestic moderates. Analysts note that any failure on her part could reinforce misogynistic narratives, portraying her tenure as a deterrent example rather than a step towards inclusivity. Conversely, a successful premiership would not merely be symbolic; it would recalibrate power dynamics within the LDP, potentially encouraging a generation of women to pursue political office in a system historically structured against them. Ultimately, the question of whether Japan is prepared for a female prime minister transcends Takaichi herself. It interrogates the resilience of democratic institutions in a party-dominated polity, the elasticity of entrenched gender norms, and the capacity of voters and politicians alike to reconcile ideological conservatism with the exigencies of modern governance.

Sanae Takaichi's candidacy is at once emblematic and exceptional: emblematic of the LDP's enduring factional machinery and exceptional for its potential to disrupt decades of patriarchal orthodoxy. Her rise is simultaneously a challenge to the established order, a reckoning with history, and a speculative exercise in political futurism. Will Japan finally elevate a woman to prime minister, or will entrenched norms keep Takaichi in the realm of "almosts"? We shall know in just a few days.

Ladakh Unrest: A serious warning Delhi cannot afford to ignore



ANIL
ANAND

At a time when China is breathing down India's neck and the Government of India is investing heavily in building strategic infrastructure — roads, bridges, and airstrips — to thwart Beijing's expansionist designs, internal unrest in Ladakh is the last thing the country can afford. A flare-up along the McMahon Line in Arunachal Pradesh or on the Line of Actual Control in Ladakh weakens India's defence posture.

At such a critical juncture, domestic turbulence in Ladakh is neither in the public interest nor in the nation's security interest. For Ladakhis, preserving their tribal identity has always been paramount. Their history shows that whenever their ethnicity or rights came under threat, they rose in protest. Traditionally, their agitations have been peaceful, deeply rooted in Buddhist and Gandhian values. Yet, the violent turn of events in Leh on September 24, 2025 has shaken the region. As the youth wing of the Lehigh Body (LAB) stormed the streets, leaving four people dead and dozens injured, shockwaves spread across India. This eruption of violence was all the more unsettling as it came just ahead of the Centre's much-anticipated talks with the LAB-Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) scheduled for October 6. What was supposed to be a decisive phase in dialogue now stands overshadowed by bloodshed. The discontent is not sudden. When Ladakh was carved into a Union Territory on 5 August 2019, after the abrogation of Article 370 and the bifurcation of Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakhis initially celebrated the move.

Their long-standing demand for UT status had finally been met. But expectations quickly turned into disappointment when promises of safeguarding tribal identity under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution were left unfulfilled. The Sixth Schedule — applicable in certain north-eastern states — protects the land, jobs, and culture of indigenous communities. For Ladakh, whose population is small and vulnerable to demographic change, these guarantees are seen as essential. The Centre's reluctance to act decisively fuelled frustration. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which had once enjoyed popular support in Ladakh, paid the price in the 2024 general election when it lost its lone Lok Sabha seat. The message from the



electorate was unambiguous: people's aspirations were not being met. What added weight to this discontent was the historic unity forged between Leh, dominated by Buddhists, and Kargil, dominated by Shia Muslims. Once bitterly opposed, the two regions came together under a common cause — protection of their rights and political empowerment. This rare solidarity strengthened local demands but also posed a challenge to New Delhi's political calculations. The government, however, appeared to underestimate these warning signs.

Instead of urgently addressing Ladakh's concerns, it seemed more focused on consolidating political ground. This delay proved costly. The anger of Ladakh's Gen-Z, already restless due to high unemployment, spilled onto the streets. A bandh call turned violent, government offices and police vehicles were attacked, and the BJP office in Leh was set on fire. The tragic irony was that this happened while educationist and climate activist Sonam Wangchuk was on a 35-day hunger strike demanding protection for Ladakh. Shocked by the turn of events, he suspended his fast, calling it a "Gen-Z revolution." The immediate provocation behind the youth's action remains debated. Was it Wangchuk's fiery rhetoric? Was it the Centre's dismissive handling of their demands? Or was it the re-entry of veteran BJP leader Chewang Thupstan into the political space, signalling a new twist in the negotiations? Whatever the trigger, the violence was the outcome of long-festering grievances and a communication gap between Delhi and Ladakh.

Instead of calming the waters, the government's response added fuel to the fire. BJP's IT cell head Amit Malviya blamed a local Congress councillor for inciting the youth and went further to accuse Rahul Gandhi of being responsible. Soon after, the Home Ministry directly named Wangchuk, accusing him of

inciting violence through his speeches. Such hasty statements only harden positions and make dialogue more difficult. At a time when trust-building is critical, scapegoating activists and political rivals risks derailing the peace process.

The LAB had demanded urgent talks, pointing out that their members had been on hunger strike since 10 September. But the Centre, instead of responding with sensitivity, announced the next meeting for October 6, without consulting the protesters. To the youth, already battling hopelessness and rampant unemployment, this felt like a dictate rather than dialogue. Their sense of exclusion boiled over into anger.

The unemployment crisis is indeed central to the unrest. A recent survey revealed that 26.5 per cent of graduates in Ladakh are unemployed, more than double the national average of 13.4 per cent. Only the Andaman and Nicobar Islands reported worse figures. With no Sixth Schedule protection in place, Ladakhi youth fear that outsiders will corner jobs and land, leaving locals marginalised in their own homeland.

This anxiety is not unfounded; it reflects the stark vulnerability of a small tribal population competing against a wider influx. The way forward is clear: politics must take a back seat, and Ladakh's core demands must be addressed with urgency. Delhi must move beyond optics and political one-upmanship.

Dialogue should not be treated as a mere formality but as a genuine exercise in listening and resolving grievances. The protection of Ladakh's identity through constitutional safeguards, and the urgent creation of employment opportunities, must be the government's priority. Any delay only deepens resentment and leaves the ground fertile for unrest. India faces enormous security challenges along the northern frontier. A disturbed Ladakh only emboldens China's designs to challenge India's territorial integrity. New Delhi cannot afford to let local discontent turn into instability at the borders.

The message from Leh is loud and clear: Ladakhis are not against the nation, but they want their rightful place within it. Ignoring their voice risks not only alienating the people but also compromising national security.

The events of September 24, should serve as a wake-up call. Ladakh's youth have signalled that their patience is wearing thin. It is now up to the Centre to show wisdom, restraint, and empathy. Peace in Ladakh is not just a regional necessity; it is a national imperative.

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Can India truly sustain its clean power future?

SUPRIYA KAUSHIK

AI's insatiable appetite for computing power is rapidly reshaping global priorities in energy and infrastructure. A 2024 McKinsey report projects that demand for AI-ready data centre capacity will expand at an annual average rate of 33 per cent between 2023 and 2030, with nearly 70 per cent of this growth geared towards infrastructure capable of handling advanced AI workloads.

This transformation is not confined to the developed world; India too is experiencing a surge in data centre investments. As of April 2025, India's total capacity stood at 1,263 MW, with projections of more than \$100 billion flowing into the sector by 2027, growing at a CAGR of over 24 per cent between 2023 and 2029. Mumbai, Chennai, and Delhi NCR have emerged as the country's main AI hubs. But hidden beneath this momentum lies an irony: the very infrastructure that underpins large language models (LLMs) and other AI systems is beginning to complicate global energy transition goals. According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), data centres consumed about 415 terawatt hours (TWh) of electricity in 2023, roughly 1.5 per cent of global consumption.

That figure has grown at nearly 12 per cent annually over the past five years. The IEA now projects demand to more than double to 945 TWh by 2030, exceeding Japan's entire electricity use today. This escalating demand is already straining national grids. Ireland provides an early warning sign. In 2023, data centres accounted for 21 per cent of the country's electricity consumption, a factor contributing to rising blackouts.

In response, authorities froze approvals for new centres around Dublin until 2028. Elsewhere, the pressure is prompting governments and companies to turn back to fossil fuels as a stopgap. In the US, federal agencies were asked this year to identify retired coal plants that could be repurposed to supply electricity to AI data centres.

Pennsylvania's former Homer City Generating Station, once the state's largest coal-fired plant, is being redeveloped with a \$10 billion investment to house seven gas-fired turbines dedicated to powering on-site centres. Similarly, utilities in Georgia have delayed shutting coal-fired plants that were scheduled for closure under earlier decarbonisation commitments, citing the electricity needs of expanding data hubs. The pattern is visible globally. In the UK, demand for AI and cloud facilities is outpacing the grid's ability to provide stable electricity, pushing developers to explore direct connections to main gas pipelines. Singapore, after imposing a moratorium on new data centre projects in 2019



due to energy concerns, lifted the freeze in 2022. It now hosts over 70 facilities and plans to raise capacity by nearly a third in the coming years. China, with the largest concentration of data centres in Asia, still relies on coal for more than half of its power supply. Most of its facilities remain concentrated in coal-heavy eastern provinces. India's story is more complex. While the country is racing to establish itself as a hub for AI infrastructure, its coal-heavy energy mix — where fossil fuels still account for over 70 per cent of electricity generation — raises tough questions. The national grid is ageing and already stressed by peak demand surges and transmission losses. Unless carefully managed, the rapid buildup of AI-ready data centres could amplify these vulnerabilities.

At the same time, India has an opportunity to chart a different path. Retired coal plants are already being earmarked for nuclear energy projects, though not yet explicitly linked to AI-related demand. With careful foresight, India could ensure that new AI data centres are built in tandem with renewable energy integration, smart grid upgrades, and strong efficiency standards.

This would prevent the country from locking into carbon-intensive growth patterns and instead position it as a model for balancing digital and energy transitions. The rise of AI does not have to stall global decarbonisation. With proactive policies and open public debate, India and other fast-growing economies can turn a potential energy liability into an asset. By aligning data centre expansion with renewable power and grid modernisation, governments can not only meet the needs of the AI revolution but also accelerate the shift towards resilient, sustainable energy systems. In this sense, the challenge of powering AI could become a catalyst for strengthening the very foundations of the clean energy transition.

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FROM THE

WORLD

HONG KONG

Bill regulates apartments

Hong Kong lawmakers passed a bill on Friday mandating a minimum size, an exclusive bathroom and other standards in subdivided apartments - a common living arrangement in one of the world's least affordable cities. About 220,000 people live in dwellings created by dividing regular apartments, including migrants, workers, students and young professionals. Some of the spaces have a toilet bowl next to the cooking area.

IRAQ

Oil exports to resume

Iraq will resume exporting oil from the country's northern, semi-autonomous Kurdish region through Turkey's Ceyhan port after exports had been halted for more than two years, officials said on Friday. The resumption, which starts on Saturday, is a step toward boosting Iraq's oil revenues and stabilising the relationship between the central government in Baghdad and the Kurdish region, even as disputes over revenue sharing and field management persist.

MALI

French diplomats expelled

Mali's ruling junta has declared an end to counterterrorism cooperation with France and expelled five French Embassy employees, according to a confidential letter seen by The Associated Press on Thursday, amid diplomatic tensions between the countries. A note dated September 17 from Mali's Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the French Embassy in the capital, Bamako, said the five staff had been declared "personae non grata" and announced "the cessation of all international cooperation in the fight against terrorism."

Pak PM and army chief meet Trump

PRESS NEWS SERVICE
■ New York/Islamabad

US President Donald Trump met with Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Army Chief Asim Munir at the White House, where they discussed regional security, counter-terrorism cooperation and other issues.

Shehbaz, the first Pakistani Prime Minister to visit the White House in six years, described Trump as a "man of peace" for his "sincere efforts" to end conflicts around the globe and lauded his "courageous and decisive" leadership in facilitating a ceasefire between Pakistan and India, according to a statement from the PM Office. In July 2019, then-prime minister Imran Khan travelled to Washington and met President Trump, who had accused Pakistan of lying and deceiving the US while receiving billions in aid.

Trump had previously said Pakistan offers a "safe haven" to terrorists. Trump's successor, President Joe Biden, had completely ignored Pakistan during his tenure and never even talked to any of the prime ministers on the phone, let alone inviting them to the White House.

However, since President Trump took office in January for a second term, there has been a dramatic and unexpected shift in the Pakistan-US relationship. In June, Trump held a rare one-on-one meeting with Army chief Munir at the White House.

According to the statement from PM Office, Shehbaz "appreciated President Trump's bold, courageous and decisive leadership that had facilitated the ceasefire between Pakistan and India, thereby helping to avert a major catastrophe in South Asia."

Since May 10, when Trump announced on social media that India and Pakistan had agreed to a "full and immediate" ceasefire after a "long night" of talks mediated by

Washington, he has repeated his claim nearly 50 times that he "helped settle" the tensions between India and Pakistan. India has been consistently maintaining that the understanding on cessation of hostilities with Pakistan was reached following direct talks between the Directors General of Military Operations of the two militaries. While discussing the situation in West Asia, Shehbaz lauded Trump's initiative to invite key leaders of the Muslim world this week for a comprehensive exchange of views for the restoration of peace in the region, in particular, Gaza and the West Bank. He also thanked President Trump for the tariff arrangement that was concluded between Pakistan and the United States earlier this year, the statement said.

While fondly recalling the long-standing partnership between the two countries, the Prime Minister expressed the confidence that under President Trump's leadership, the Pakistan-US partnership would be further strengthened to the mutual benefit of both countries, it said. He invited American companies to invest in Pakistan's agriculture, IT, mines and minerals and energy



Pakistan Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Syed Asim Munir wait for their meeting with President Donald Trump in the Oval Office

PEACE COMMITTEE HEAD KILLED

Peshawar: A local peace committee head was killed and his sibling injured after unidentified gunmen opened fire at his residence in northwest Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, police said on Friday. District Police Officer Shabbir Hussain Shah said the incident occurred late on Thursday night in Kot Khadak area of Tank district. The committee chief was identified as Salahuddin. His body was shifted to the district headquarters hospital and his injured brother was also taken there for treatment. The police launched a search operation in the area. However, no arrest has been made so far. The slain peace committee chief was on the target list of the local unit of the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) in the restive Tank district, due to his actions against the militants.

were also present.

Further details of the exchange were not shared, but Trump told the media before the meeting that a "great leader" was coming to the White House. "In fact, we have a great leader coming, the prime minister of Pakistan coming, and the Field Marshal of Pakistan. Field Marshal is a very great guy, and so is the prime minister, both. And they're coming," Trump said.

The meeting continued for approximately one hour and 20 minutes. It was also the second meeting between Field Marshal Munir and Trump since June.

Post-meeting photos showed both PM Shehbaz and Field Marshal Munir exchanging views with Trump, who flashed his signature thumbs-up sign during a group photo.

Sharif met Trump in New York on the margins of the UNGA session on Tuesday when the US president held a meeting with leaders from the Arab and Muslim world.

Historically, Pakistan and the US were Cold War allies and for years worked together in defeating the USSR in Afghanistan and fighting together against militancy. But their policies diverged with respect to the Afghan Taliban, and the US felt betrayed due to Pakistan's alleged ties to the militants.

Tropical storm hits Philippines, four dead



ASSOCIATED PRESS
■ Manila

Another tropical storm barrelled across Philippine islands on Friday, causing at least four deaths and the evacuations of more than 4,33,000 people from landslide and flood-prone villages long battered by typhoons. Bualoi, which has weakened since making landfall overnight, was the latest of back-to-back storms from the Pacific to threaten Asia.

Typhoon Ragasa, one of the strongest to hit in years, caused at least 25 deaths in the northern Philippines and Taiwan, mostly from flooding, before making landfall in China and dissipating over Vietnam. Bualoi made landfall in the Philippine town of San Policarpo in Eastern Samar province late Thursday with sustained winds of 110 kph (68 mph), knocking out power in east-central provinces and setting off flooding and two minor landslides, the country's disaster-mitigation agency said.

More than 4,33,000 were evacuated to Government emergency shelters as the storm approached, including in Albay province, where vil-

lagers on the foothills of Mayon, one of the country's most active volcanoes, were asked to move to safety due to possible volcanic mudflows, Bernardo Rafaelito Alejandro IV from the civil defence office told reporters.

The four deaths were in the central island province of Masbate. Three were hit separately by a falling tree, a collapsed wall and falling debris and a fourth was hit by lightning Thursday night, officials said. "We need clearing operations because most of our road networks are not really passable for food and health assistance to pass," Masbate Governor Ricardo Kho told a news conference. "We also need help to have our ports reopened as early as possible for us to receive help from different provinces." Bualoi, locally named Opong, was the 15th tropical cyclone to hit the Philippines this year.

The fast-moving storm, which has a rain and wind band of about 450 kilometers (280 miles) from its center, was blowing northwest and could blow over densely populated coastal provinces south of the capital, Manila, later Friday before entering the South China Sea.

World leaders rally for Sudan peace

ASSOCIATED PRESS
■ United Nations

Behind the scenes at the annual gathering of world leaders at the United Nations, key countries and regional organisations have been coordinating efforts to try to end the horrific war in Sudan, which has created the most devastating humanitarian and displacement crisis in the world.

Alan Boswell, the International Crisis Group's project director for the Horn of Africa, said this year's high-level General Assembly meeting, which ends on

Monday, could be "make-or-break" for stopping the conflict. "For the first time since the war broke out more than two years ago, Sudan's most influential outside powers agreed this month on a roadmap to end the war," he said in a statement.

"Now comes the huge task of trying to convince Sudan's warring parties to stop fighting." Sudan plunged into conflict in mid-April 2023, when long-simmering tensions between its rival military and paramilitary commanders broke out in the capital.



Intha ethnic people row on a long boat in a procession carrying Buddha images to a monastery during the Phaung Daw Oo pagoda festival in Inle Lake, southern Shan State, Myanmar

Israeli strikes on Yemen kills 9, claim Houthis

ASSOCIATED PRESS
■ Aden

Yemen's Houthi rebels said on Friday that at least nine people were killed by Israeli strikes on the country's rebel-held capital of Sanaa the previous day, the latest in an increase in exchanges between Israel and the Iranian-backed rebels over the war in Gaza.

The strikes on Thursday afternoon came a day after a drone launched by the Houthis wounded 22 people in the southern Israeli city of Eilat, a rare breach of Israel's air defences. According to the health ministry in the Houthi-controlled northern half of Yemen, which includes Sanaa, four children, two women and three older people were among the dead. Rebel officials also said 59 children, 35 women and 80 older people were among the wounded. Medics were still searching for victims believed to be trapped under



rubble, the rebels said, indicating the casualty tolls could rise.

The Israeli military said on Thursday it carried out strikes in Yemen, with dozens of aircraft targeting Houthi military command headquarters, military camps and security and intelligence facilities. A Houthi spokesperson, Omar el-Bekhet, said the Israeli strikes targeted residential neighbourhoods and electricity facilities and

claimed the Houthis' defence systems had thwarted a "large part of the attack."

"These crimes will not deter our people or break their will but will increase their steadfastness and resilience in confronting the Zionist crimes and continuing to support and back the honourable, oppressed, free people of Gaza," he added.

According to Sanaa residents, one of the strikes hit a building in a densely populat-

ed area in Sanaa, believed to have housed a Houthi leader. The Associated Press could not independently verify the claim. Ahmed al-Mahweity said Friday that the strikes set off intense explosions that damaged several houses in the neighbourhood.

Selim Rageh, another resident, said several cars were also damaged.

"Everyone in the area came out covered in dust as if they came out from graves," said Salem al-Qasab, a shop owner. "Thick dust rose from the ground due to the intensity of the explosions."

It was a terrifying scene, with the skies turning to clouds of black smoke and dust." Akram al-Adeiny said Thursday the explosion was so intense it brought down the ceiling of his house, though no one was injured. His colleague in a cell-phone shop lost his wife and child in one of the attacks, he said.

Netanyahu says Israel 'must finish the job' against Hamas in Gaza

ASSOCIATED PRESS
■ United Nations

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told the UN General Assembly on Friday that Israel "must finish the job" against Hamas in Gaza, giving a defiant UN speech despite growing international isolation over his refusal to end the devastating war in Gaza.

He spoke after dozens of delegates from multiple nations walked out of the UN General Assembly hall en masse Friday as he prepared to speak. As the Israeli leader spoke, unintelligible shouts echoed around the hall.

The US delegation, which has backed Netanyahu in his campaign against Hamas, stayed put. Applause rang out in other quarters as he began his speech. As he has often in the past, Netanyahu held up a visual aid — a map



of the region titled "THE CURSE." He marked it up with a large marker.

Later, he pinned a QR code onto his suit jacket and held up a board with a multiple-choice question that he read to the audience. He also frequently praised President Donald Trump, his chief ally in his political and military approach in the region. In an "unprecedented operation," the Israeli army will take

over the mobile phones of Gaza residents and Hamas operatives and his speech will be broadcast live through the mobile devices.

Netanyahu faces international isolation, accusations of war crimes and growing pressure to end a conflict he has continued to escalate. Friday's speech was his chance to push back on the international community's biggest platform.

UK to introduce digital identification cards

ASSOCIATED PRESS
■ London

British citizens and permanent residents will have to produce a mandatory digital identification card in order to get work, the Government announced on Friday, reviving an idea that has long been controversial in the UK. The Government says the plan will help reduce unauthorised immigration by making it harder for people to work in the underground economy. It says it will also make it simpler for people to access health care, welfare, child care and other public services. "It will make it tougher to work illegally in this country, making our borders more secure," Prime Minister Keir Starmer said. "And it will also offer ordinary citizens countless benefits, like being able to prove your identity to access key services swiftly — rather than hunting around for an old utility bill."



Pope makes first big Vatican appointment to fill his old job

ASSOCIATED PRESS
■ Rome

Pope Leo XIV made his first big Vatican appointment on Friday, naming an Italian legal expert to replace him as head of the Holy See's office that vets bishop nominations around the world. Leo named Archbishop Filippo Iannone as prefect of the Dicastery for Bishops. Leo, the former Cardinal Robert Prevost, had headed the important Vatican office for two years until his election as pope in May. Iannone, 67, is currently the Holy See's top legislator, as head of the Vatican's legal office. His transfer, thus, creates another important position Leo will have to fill. The appointment suggests that Leo knows well that the bishop's office has a significant legal caseload. Among other things, it evaluates complaints against bishops of abuse or negligence in handling cases of abusive clergy. After the death of Pope Francis, all Vatican prefects technically lost their jobs.



PROSPECT



S Phangnon Konyak, Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha from Nagaland, participated in the 3rd edition of the Digital Democracy Dialogue, held from 24–26 September 2025 in Panaji, Goa. She spoke in one of the sessions on the theme “Women-led Development, Women-led Society.” The event was organised by Rambhau Mhalgi Prabodhini with the support of the Entertainment Society of Goa and the Government of Goa.

ITPO SIGNS MOU WITH NEGD



An MoU pertaining to development, up gradation and maintenance of ITPO's digital platform was signed between India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO) and National e-Governance Division (NeGD). Premjit Lal, Executive Director, ITPO and Sunil Sharma, Director, NeGD signed the MoU at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi on September 23, 2025. This collaboration will enable smarter trade facilitations, seamless event experiences and enhanced digital services for all the stake holders.

BSF CELEBRATES HINDI CEREMONY TO PROMOTE OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

The Border Security Force (BSF) reaffirmed its commitment to promoting Hindi as the official language by hosting a vibrant "Hindi Ceremony" at its headquarters in New Delhi. The event, held under the leadership of BSF Director General Daljit Singh Chaudhary, was marked by enthusiasm and cultural pride, underscoring the force's significant role in advancing the use of Hindi. The ceremony commenced with the lighting of the ceremonial lamp and floral tributes to Goddess Saraswati, the deity of knowledge. Students from Kendriya Vidyalaya, BSF Chhawla, captivated the audience with a soulful rendition of Saraswati Vandana. To encourage their efforts, the Director General presented the students with mementos and cash awards. During the event, Daljit Singh Chaudhary launched the Rajbhasha Appeal and honored various BSF units for their outstanding contributions to promoting Hindi throughout the year.



Assam tops in decline of child marriages

TONY DAS ■ Guwahhati

Child marriage in India has dropped drastically, with child marriages among girls down by 69 per cent and the cases among boys by 72 per cent, according to a new report. The report, Tipping Point to Zero: Evidence Towards a Child Marriage Free India, released by Just Rights for Children (JRC), highlights arrests and FIRs as the strongest deterrents against child marriage. Assam leads with an 84 per cent decline in child marriages of girls, followed by Maharashtra and Bihar 70 per cent each, Rajasthan 66 per cent and Karnataka 55 per cent. The report was released during a side event at the United Nations General Assembly in New York. It is prepared by the Centre for Legal Action and Behaviour Change for Children (C-LAB), an initiative of JRC Partner India Child Protection. Recognising Assam's unprecedented success in curbing child marriage, Just

Rights for Children also announced the 'Champions of Change' Award for Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma. Just Rights for Children is one of the largest network with over 250 NGOs working for child protection. The findings mark a monumental shift in the country. As recently as 2019–21, three children were being married off every minute, yet only three cases were reported in an entire day. Today, awareness of child marriage laws is near universal and is a transformation unthinkable just a few years ago. The report highlights that NGOs were the main drivers of awareness about the Centre's Bal Vivah Mukti Bharat campaign launched in 2024, reaching especially high levels in Bihar 93 per cent, Maharashtra 89 per cent and Assam 88 per cent. Schools played the key role in Rajasthan 87 per cent and Maharashtra 77 per cent. Emphasising the convergence of all stakeholders and the application of the rule of



law to end this crime against children, Bhuwan Ribhu, Founder of Just Rights for Children, said at the report's launch, "India is on the verge of ending child marriage transcending the fulfillment of a Sustainable Development Goal to prove to the world that its end is both possible and inevitable. The formula is clear: prevention before protection,

protection before prosecution, and prosecution to create deterrence for prevention. This is not just India's success it is a blueprint for the world. With strong political will, robust partnerships, community participation, children's voices at the center, access to social security, and strict enforcement of the law, a child marriage free

world is within reach." Just Rights for Children works closely with the Centre, state Governments, district administrations, law enforcement agencies, community workers and village panchayats to end child marriage by 2030. In terms of education, the report found that in 31 per cent of the surveyed villages, all girls in the age 6-18 years were attending school, but huge disparities were seen in Bihar at 9 per cent and Maharashtra at 51 per cent. Poverty 88per cent, lack of infrastructure 47 per cent, safety 42 per cent and lack of transportation 24 per cent were cited as the barriers in the education of girls. Reasons cited for child marriage included poverty 91 per cent, to provide safety to minor girls 44 per cent and others cited traditions and norms as the factor leading to the prevalence of child marriage. Just Rights for Children organised the high-level UNGA side event "Creating a Child Marriage Free World: Building the Case for Prevention, Protection and Prosecution" along with the office of Dr Fatima Maada Bio, First Lady of the Republic of Sierra Leone and President of OAFIAD, the Permanent Mission of Sierra Leone and the Government of Kenya, in partnership with the World Jurist Association and Jurists for Children Worldwide. Other speakers at the event included Dr Najat Maalla M'jid, Special Representative to the Secretary General on Violence Against Children; Åsmund Aukrust, Minister of International Development, Government of Norway; Carren Ageng'o, Principal Secretary, Children Services, Ministry for Gender, Culture and Children Services, Government of Kenya; Isabelle Rome, Ambassador At Large for Human Rights, Government of France; Millie Odhiambo, Member of the Inter-Parliamentary Union; and Kerry Kennedy, President, Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights.

Department of Agriculture takes up mass cleanliness drive around Krishi Bhawan

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

The Department of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare is participating vigorously in the Swachhata Hi Seva, 2025 campaign being observed with the Theme of 'Swachhotsav' along with all its subordinate/attached/autonomous bodies/Public Sector Undertaking/field offices spread all over the country. In this regard, under "Ek Din, Ek Ghanta, Ek Saath" theme, a 'Human Chain' was formed at Gate Number 1 of Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi on Thursday. A walkathon was also organised by the Department around premises of Krishi Bhawan. This was followed by a cleanliness drive outside the



boundary walls of Krishi Bhawan and land between Kartavya Path and walls of Krishi Bhawan. Dr Devesh Chaturvedi, Secretary (DA&FW) led "Ek Din, Ek Ghanta, Ek Saath" program, After clearing the area of debris and dispos-

able waste, Secretary, DAFW instructed that a plan of regular cleaning of this area should be undertaken. He instructed that area upto 10 feet radius from walls of Krishi Bhawan should be taken into House keeping work of Krishi Bhawan, to ensure that cleanliness is maintained throughout the year. On completion of one hour cleaning, Secretary DAFW, thanked all the participants, including officers of various levels and cleaning personnel in making the exercise fruitful and suggested that everyone should at least ensure that they themselves do not litter. If they can influence others, it would be a further action towards sustaining a clean environment.

ATAB accredits over 100 Ayurveda courses in six years: Ayush Ministry

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

The Ayurveda Training Accreditation Board (ATAB) has accredited 113 Ayurveda training courses in over three countries, including India, since its establishment six years ago, according to an official statement. As many as 99 courses from 24 Indian institutions and 14 international courses in two foreign countries were accredited by ATAB, thereby significantly contributing to the standardisation and credibility of Ayurveda education on a global scale, stated the Ministry of Ayush statement, issued on Friday. In addition, ATAB has implemented a structured endorsement scheme aimed at formally recognising qualified Ayurveda profes-

sionals practising abroad, it mentioned. This scheme ensures that practitioners meet rigorous benchmarks in skills, knowledge, and ethical standards. A total of 41 Ayurveda doctors practising overseas have been formally endorsed under this initiative, creating a trusted global network of accredited practitioners. The statement was issued following a review meeting held by the Ayush ministry to assess the ATAB's performance and its ongoing efforts to expand the global footprint of Ayurveda through course accreditation and professional endorsement. The meeting was chaired by Prataprao Jadhav, Minister of State (Independent Charge), Ministry of Ayush and Minister of State for Health.

UNICEF YuWaah launches Bharat Career Aspirations report

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

UNICEF YuWaah, in collaboration with iDreamCareer, launched the Bharat Career Aspirations Report 2025 (BCAR 2025) on Friday— a comprehensive study that explores the career aspirations of students from Classes 9 to 12 across India. The Bharat Career Aspirations Report 2025 (BCAR) was released by Himanshu Gupta, Secretary, CBSE, and it builds on previous editions to offer deeper insights into the evolving career landscape and challenges faced by India's youth. BCAR 2025, the third edition of our flagship Bharat Career Aspirations Report, explores how career guidance can transform young lives. Building on insights from 2023 and 2024, this year's report goes deeper— analysing how socio-economic factors such as geography, school type, and social categories influence students' aspirations and access to opportunities. With a special focus on Government and private schools, BCAR 2025 high-



lights gaps in information, counselling, and decision-making, offering actionable solutions to help every student pursue an ambition-based career. "Career plays a vital role in shaping a child's future, and the process of career planning must begin early in the school years. The Bharat Career Aspirations Report 2025 reveals that only 10 per cent of students currently

have access to professional career guidance. To address this gap, CBSE is developing qualification standards and training modules to prepare certified career counselors. These counselors will guide students in making informed choices aligned with their interests and skills. Implementing this initiative at scale will mark a transformative step towards building a future-ready education

system that enables every child to realize their true potential," said Gupta said on the occasion. "Career guidance is not a luxury; it is a necessity for every young person to make informed choices about their future. Reports like BCAR 2025 give us the evidence we need to act together. At YuWaah, we believe collaboration between schools, Governments, and private

sector partners is key to ensuring every student has access to the right information, counselling, and opportunities to turn their aspirations into reality," said Abhishek Gupta, Chief Operating Officer, UNICEF YuWaah. The BCAR 2025 survey explores young people's career aspirations, challenges, and access to guidance through a comparative study of private and Government schools. It assesses students' self-awareness, knowledge of courses and colleges, financial considerations, and backup plans, while examining the role of counselling, key influences, and barriers in shaping career decisions. The survey further compares patterns across states, district types, socio-economic backgrounds, school types, grades, and gender. This edition, covering 21,239 students across 14 districts in seven states— Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Gujarat, Punjab, Karnataka, and Rajasthan, aims to amplify young voices and co-create a future where career choices are aspiration-driven.

Ayush unveils Prayas, integrated neuro rehabilitation centre



Ayush Ministry Prataprao Jadhav, inaugurates Integrated Neuro Rehabilitation Centre in Goa

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi/Goa

The Ministry of Ayush unveiled "Prayas", an Integrated Neuro-Rehabilitation Centre at the All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA), Goa, marking a milestone in the Ayush domain. The centre was inaugurated on the occasion of the 10th Ayurveda Day by the Union Minister of State, Ministry of Ayush (IC) and Union Minister of State, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Prataprao Jadhav, in the presence of Shripad Yesso Naik, Minister of State for Power & New & Renewable Energy, senior officials of the Ministry, and faculty of AIIA Goa. "Prayas" is among the first-of-its-kind multi-disciplinary centres in the country that brings together Ayurveda, Physiotherapy, Yoga, Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy, and modern Paediatrics under one roof. Designed to provide holistic and patient-centred neuro-rehabilitation, the Centre is especially focused on children with neurological and developmental conditions. Speaking at the inaugura-

tion, the Minister Prataprao Jadhav said: "The Ministry of Ayush is committed to creating centres of excellence that synergise traditional wisdom with modern medicine. 'Prayas' is a model of integrative rehabilitation, offering not just treatment but renewed quality of life and hope for patients and their families." Echoing these sentiments, Shripad Yesso Naik underlined the significance of rehabilitation services in tackling neurological and developmental disorders, adding that the innovative model adopted at AIIA Goa will provide "new hope for countless families navigating complex health challenges." Professor PK Prajapati, Director AIIA, mentioned, "The launch of 'Prayas' reflects AIIA's vision to pioneer innovative integrative models that address complex healthcare challenges. By combining Ayurveda, Yoga, and modern rehabilitation sciences, we aim to create evidence-based solutions that enhance paediatric neuro care and set new benchmarks in holistic healing." Professor Sujata Kadam, Dean, AIIA Goa, highlighted the signifi-

cance of the initiative and said, "With 'Prayas', AIIA Goa takes a significant step in delivering integrative, patient-centred neuro rehabilitation. Our focus is on providing comprehensive care to children with developmental and neurological challenges, while also contributing to research and training that will shape the future of Ayush-based innovations in healthcare." The inauguration was attended by senior dignitaries, including the Secretary, Ministry of Ayush, Director AIIA, Dean, AIIA Goa, and Associate Dean, along with faculty from the Kaumarbhritya (Paediatrics) Department— Dr Sumeet Goel, Dr Rahul Ghuse, Dr Samruddhi, Dr Diksha, Dr Shalini, Ms Nelisha, Ms Shefali, and Ms Janice. With this ambitious step, the Ministry of Ayush reinforces its vision of integrated healthcare that combines the best of traditional knowledge with modern practices, in line with India's National Health Policy and global best practices. "Prayas" is not just a centre—it is a promise of care, compassion, and comprehensive healing.

Chhattisgarh secures second position in JSJB 1.0 campaign

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Raipur

Chhattisgarh has secured the second position in the 'Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari' (JSJB) 1.0 campaign, marking a major achievement in water conservation and community participation, an official said on Friday. The Raipur Municipal Corporation has won the first prize for its outstanding contribution through 33,082 water conservation works, in the urban bodies category, the official said. Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai congratulated the people of the state, calling the success a foundation for securing water resources for

future generations, a Government release stated. Sai said Chhattisgarh's success in JSJB 1.0, an initiative of the Ministry of Jal Shakti (Union Ministry), has not only brought national recognition but also established the state as a model of water management for India. It reflects not just statistics but a collective consciousness that has made Chhattisgarh a source of inspiration for the nation, he said. So far, 4,05,563 water conservation projects have been completed across the state, turning the initiative into a mass movement. According to the Government release, Balod,



Rajnandgaon, and Raipur secured the top three ranks respectively in Category 1, and these districts will receive an award of ₹2 crore each. In Category 2, Mahasamund, Balodabazar, and Gariaband districts will

receive ₹1 crore each, while in Category 3, Bilaspur, Raigarh, Balrampur, Dhamtari, Surajpur, and Durg districts will be awarded ₹25 lakh each, it stated. Sai emphasised that the honour belongs to every

farmer, woman, youth, and public representative who pledged to save every drop of water. He credited the achievement to the state's "dialogue and participation-based good governance policy", describing water conservation as the cornerstone of Chhattisgarh's agriculture-based economy and long-term growth. Lauding Raipur's achievement, Sai said its model of community-driven urban water conservation is exemplary for the entire country. He urged citizens to adopt water conservation as a way of life, stressing that "saving every drop is the guarantee of future water security".



Prreya



Orange tree lanches the UK. Based, Brand Swoon In india. A celebration of. European classic s Jodhpur based. Life Style brand. Gaurav Jain Founder and creative Director. at Orange tree Banjara hills road 12 Hyderabad



Anadya



Pallavi



Manisankar



Ramu



Aashi

PARTY



Devotees perform poojas at Kanaka Durga Temple Indrakeeladri as part Dasara festival in Vijayawada on Friday. Today Goddess Alankaram is Lakshmi Devi.



Photos by- Ch.Vijaya Bhaskar



Artists performed Folk dance at Vijayawada Utsav-2025 as part of the 11day Dasara festival on Friday.



Bhajanlal Sharma - Hon'ble Chief Minister of Rajasthan Unveiling Poster of JITO CONNECT-2025 along with Rohit Kothari, Chairman JITO , Lalith Chopra Chief Secretary, B.L. Bhandari, Convener of JITO , Sushil Sancheti, Co-Convener, Goutam Sehlot, Director In-Charge, and Vishal Aachaliya, Treasurer & Others at the Poster Unveiling & Grand Date Announcement Event of JITO CONNECT-2025 at Hotel Taj Deccan, Banjara Hills in Hyderabad on Friday.



FUN

ARCHIE



GARFIELD



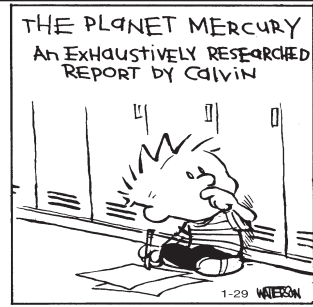
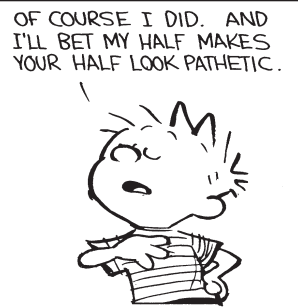
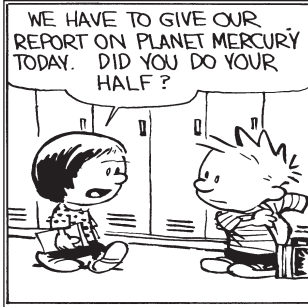
NANCY



GINGER MEGGS



CALVIN AND HOBBS



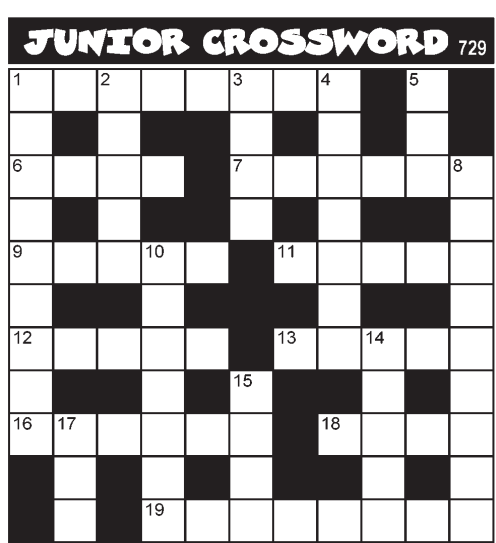
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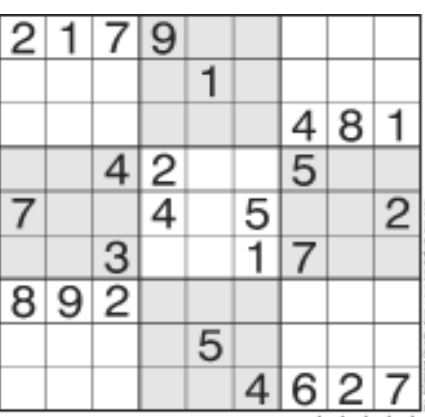
SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



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.

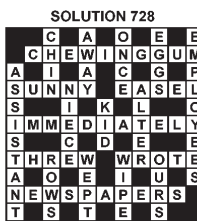
ACROSS

- Nice, enjoyable
- Decays
- An animal with a shell
- Causes pain to
- A witch's power
- Footwear
- A hot drink
- A medical professional
- Lengthy
- Inspected closely

DOWN

- Bought
- Go in
- Takes part in a play

4 A violent storm with twisting winds
5 Unwell
8 Swapped
10 Go to see shows here
14 A king or queen wears this
15 Length x width =
17 Not at home



India, US agree to early conclusion of trade pact

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

India and the US have decided to continue negotiations for early conclusion of a mutually beneficial bilateral trade agreement, the Commerce Ministry said on Friday.

The statement was issued after the return of the Indian official delegation led by Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal to New York for trade talks. The delegation returned on September 24 after holding three-day talks.

Both sides held constructive meetings on various aspects of the trade deal, the ministry said in a statement. "Both sides exchanged views on possible contours of the deal, and it was decided to continue the engagements with a view to achieving early conclusion of a mutually beneficial Trade Agreement," it added.

During the visit, the minister held meetings with United States Trade Representative (USTR) Jamieson Greer and US Ambassador-designate to India Sergio Gorr.

These deliberations were important as they took place after the US imposed a 25 per cent reciprocal tariff and an additional 25 per cent penalty on Indian goods entering the American market for purchasing Russian crude oil. At present, a total of 50 per cent additional import duty is imposed on Indian goods.



An official said that India has sought the removal of the 25 per cent penalty as it would be important for a deal.

The next dates for the negotiations have not yet been finalised.

The official also said US President Donald Trump's move to impose 100 per cent import tariffs on branded pharmaceutical drugs from October 1 is likely to have an impact on Indian

exports and the ministry is looking into it. Indian pharmaceutical companies supply a substantial proportion of drugs to US residents, with four out of ten of all prescriptions filled in the US in 2022 being supplied by Indian companies.

"The talks are on track, we are trying for the Fall deadline ... it will be in tranches," the official said.

The visit of Goyal and his officials

comes against the backdrop of recently concluded day-long discussions in New Delhi between US Chief Negotiator Brendan Lynch and Special Secretary in the Department of Commerce Rajesh Agrawal on the proposed agreement.

On September 16, the commerce ministry stated that the day-long discussions with the visiting US team on a bilateral trade deal were positive, and

both sides agreed to push for an early and mutually beneficial conclusion of the agreement.

The visit also assumed significance amid the US administration's sudden decision to hike the application fee for H-1B visas to USD 1,00,000.

In February this year, leaders of the two countries directed officials to negotiate a proposed Bilateral Trade

Agreement (BTA). It was planned to conclude the first tranche of the pact by the fall (October-November) of 2025. So far, five rounds of negotiations have been held. The pact is aimed at more than doubling the bilateral trade to USD 500 billion by 2030 from the current USD 191 billion.

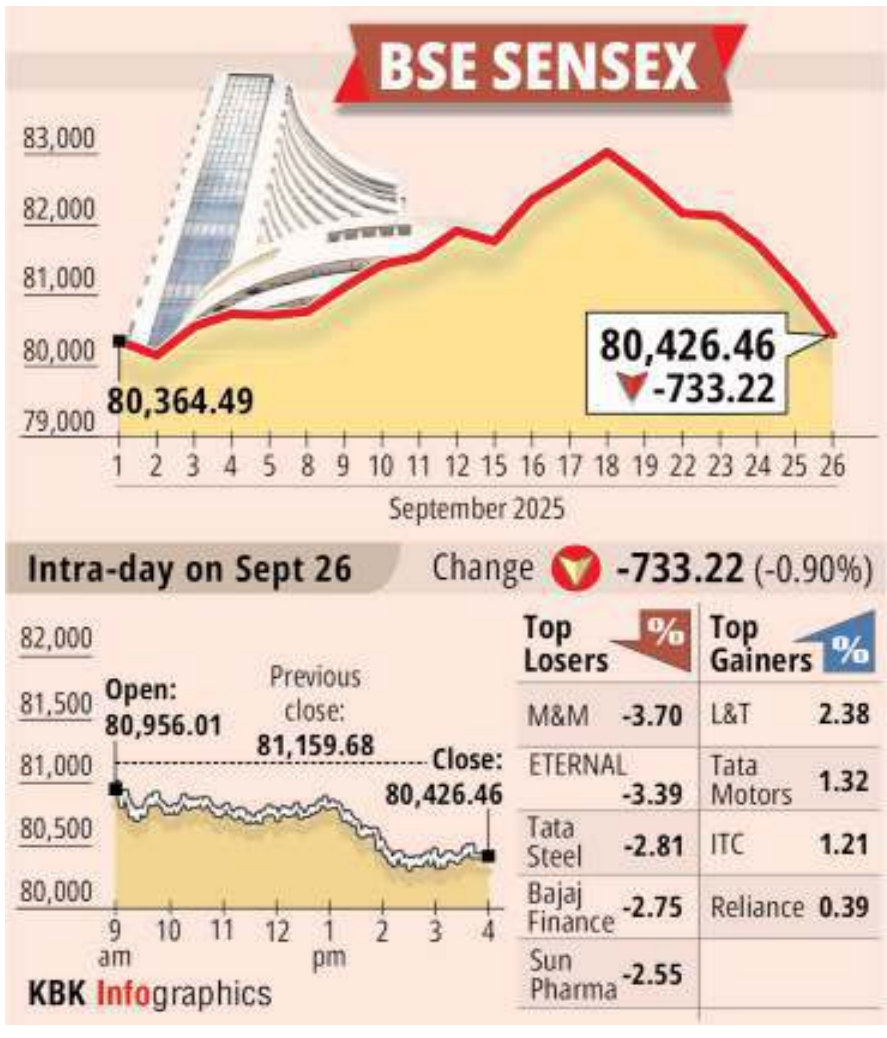
Goyal had earlier visited Washington in May for the trade talks. During that visit, he held deliberations with US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick and US Trade Representative Jamieson Greer.

The US remained India's largest trading partner for the fourth consecutive year in 2024-25, with bilateral trade valued at USD 131.84 billion (USD 86.5 billion exports).

The US accounts for about 18 per cent of India's total goods exports, 6.22 per cent in imports, and 10.73 per cent in the country's total merchandise trade.

Apart from meetings with the US government representatives on bilateral trade matters, the delegation also held discussions with key US-based businesses and investors on promoting trade and investment between India and the United States, the statement said.

The meetings with businesses and investors evoked a positive response, it said, adding business leaders reposed confidence in the Indian growth story and expressed their desire to intensify their business activities in the country.



No sanctions on buying oil from Russia: Hardeep Puri

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Mumbai

Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas Hardeep Singh Puri on Friday said that there are no sanctions on the purchase of Russian crude oil, and the world will face serious consequences if the supplies are dis-

rupted. Citing the case of Iran and Venezuela, he said India has always complied with sanctions as a responsible member of the international community.

The comments have come against the backdrop of the US imposing punitive duties of 25 per cent on India, in addition to 25 per cent tariffs, for purchasing crude oil and arms from Russia.

Speaking with reporters as critical negotiations on trade policies continue between the US and India, Puri said that Russia is the second-largest supplier of crude globally at nearly 10 million barrels a day, and warned that the world will face serious consequences if supplies are disrupted.

"Energy is something you cannot do without ... If you remove the second-largest producer, you will have to cut consumption. The consequences are pretty serious," Puri told reporters here.



imposing sanctions on Russian oil, the career diplomat-turned-politician said.

Puri said there are price caps imposed on buying from Russia and whenever there is any such talk, he asks Indian companies to buy at lower prices.

He also stated that many countries, including Turkey, Japan, and the European

Union, purchase oil from Russia.

Puri was quick to add that the discounts offered by Russia at this point in time are not that steep. The minister said a "broad equilibrium" is essential between the supply and demand for oil, and added that he expects crude to continue to trade between USD 65-68 a barrel going ahead.

Puri hinted that it is in the interest of the US — a major oil producer with a thrust on shale gas — to ensure that the prices of fossil fuels do not fall a lot.

He explained that a volatile domestic political environment sensitive to stoking inflation and the reliance on shale gas make it pertinent for the US to ensure that the prices do not fall.

State-run oil marketers autonomously decide the source of the crude oil they buy for refining, Puri said, stressing that these companies have professional management and boards as well.

Trump's 100 pc tariff on pharma unlikely to have adverse impact on domestic industry: Experts

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

US President Donald Trump's move to impose 100 per cent import tariffs on pharmaceutical drugs from October 1 is unlikely to have an immediate impact on Indian exports, as it will affect only patented and branded products, not generic medicines, pharma industry players said on Friday.

Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance (IPA), which represents 23 leading Indian pharmaceutical firms, including Dr Reddy's Laboratories, Sun Pharma, Lupin and Zydus Lifesciences, noted that Trump's latest tariff will not have implications for the generic drugmakers.

In his post on social media platform Truth Social, Trump wrote, "Starting October 1st, 2025, we will be imposing a 100 per cent Tariff on any branded or patented Pharmaceutical Product, unless a Company IS BUILDING their Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Plant in America."

The US President further clarified, "IS BUILDING" will be defined as, "breaking ground" and/or "under construction." There will, therefore, be no Tariff on these Pharmaceutical Products if construction has started.

Reacting to the development, IPA Secretary General Sudarshan Jain said in a statement, "It is not applicable to generic medicines."

Trump's statement refers to patented and branded products supplied to the US, he added.

Indian pharma companies largely export generics to the US market.

Together, IPA members drive more than 80 per cent of India's drug and pharmaceutical exports, and serve

over 64 per cent of the domestic market.

Pharmexil Chairman Namit Joshi said, "India has long been a cornerstone of the global supply chain for affordable, high-quality medicines, supplying nearly 47 per cent of the US's pharmaceutical requirements."

"The proposed 100 per cent tariff on



branded and patented pharmaceutical imports is unlikely to have an immediate impact on Indian exports, as the bulk of our contribution lies in simple generics and most large Indian companies already operate in the US. Manufacturing or repackaging units and are exploring further acquisitions," he said.

Looking ahead, India will need to reinforce its cost-efficiency advantage in bulk drugs and APIs — an area where the US is likely to favour India over other suppliers — and simultaneously invest in next-generation opportunities such as complex gener-

ics, peptides, biosimilars and CAR-T therapies, Joshi said.

"Generics will remain relevant but will gradually mature; optimising costs and capabilities in these emerging categories will shape the next phase of growth," he added.

Emcare Pharmaceuticals also said the tariffs will have no impact on it

as it has limited exposure to the US market (less than 5 per cent) and no exposure for branded and patented drugs in the country.

Indian pharmaceutical companies supply a substantial proportion of drugs to US residents, with four out of ten of all prescriptions filled in the US in 2022 being supplied by Indian companies. As per industry sources, overall, medicines from Indian companies provided USD 219 billion in savings to the US healthcare system in 2022 and a total of USD 1.3 trillion between 2013 and 2022.

Generics from Indian companies

are expected to generate an additional USD 1.3 trillion in savings over the next five years.

Icra VP & Sector Head (Corporate Ratings) Deepak Jotwani said branded and patented drug imports are not expected to have any material immediate impact on the Indian pharmaceutical industry.

India's strength lies in generic drug exports, which are exempt from these tariffs, he added.

"However, few Indian pharma companies with exposure to non-US domiciled branded formulation/innovator drug companies, who in turn export to the US, by way of sales of APIs or intermediates to them or undertaking contract manufacturing, may face headwinds," he noted.

Echoing similar sentiments, Founder and Director at Foundation for Economic Development Rahul Ahluwalia said India's main exports are generics, so immediate impact should not be very high, but this is a troubling sign for future development of the pharma industry in India.

"We should redouble efforts to get a trade deal with the US and EU to enable our industries to have access to large markets," he added.

Head of Asia Economics at Oxford Economics Louise Loo said Asia supplies just over 20 per cent of US pharmaceutical imports by value, a meaningful commercial hit for US consumers at face value.

"We, therefore, expect the US to follow up with announcements detailing protections for some categories of products, blunting the effective tariff burden," she added.

The pharmaceutical sector, India's largest industrial export, was estimated at USD 12.72 billion in 2024.

BSNL 4G: India leaps into global league of indigenous tech

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will unveil on Saturday state-owned BSNL's 'Swadeshi' 4G stack, marking India's entry into a coveted league of nations such as Denmark, Sweden, South Korea, and China that produce and manufacture homegrown telecom equipment. This is a new era for the telecom sector, Communications Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia announced on Friday.

Scindia said that over 97,500 mobile 4G towers will be commissioned by the PM at Jharsuguda, Odisha, on September 27.

Over 92,600 mobile sites installed by Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd (BSNL) are of indigenous 4G technology, which is 5G upgradable. This is a fully-indigenous '4G tech stack' featuring a Radio Access Network (RAN) developed by Tejas Network, a core network by C-DOT and integrated by Tata Consultancy Services.

Further, more than 4,700 mobile 4G towers have been installed by both Reliance

Jio Infocomm and Bharti Airtel and 14,180 mobile 4G towers under the 'saturation project' have been funded by Digital Bharat Nidhi, according to a release.

These towers cover 26,700 unconnected villages in remote, border, and left-wing extremism-affected areas and will be a strategic enabler for digital India, serving over two million new subscribers and powering a range of e-governance services, digital payments, online education, telemedicine and citizen-centric applications.

The India-made network is cloud-based, future-ready and can upgrade seamlessly to 5G, Scindia said. The minister will be in Guwahati for the launch.

"This is a new era for the telecom sector, an era where India has entered into the domain of top countries, which produce and manufacture telecom equipment, including Denmark, Sweden, South Korea, China... India is now the fifth country. This big change in attitude, change in goals was pushed, pioneered and catalysed by the PM," according to Scindia.

The Minister said, having



perfected 4G, "we will be moving towards converting that to 5G as well". "Our 4G towers and BTSs are already serving 22 million customers across the length and breadth of our country," he added.

The PM will also unveil India's 100 per cent 4G saturation network through

digital Bharat Nidhi, where 29,000-30,000 villages have been connected in a mission-mode project.

"Today is an important day heralding, in 24 hours, the emergence of India on the global telecom footprint, not only as a service provider to 1.2 billion customers... With

the cheapest call rates and the cheapest data rate at 11 cents/GB in the world, but also tomorrow will be the day when the world will awake to India having arrived not only as a service provider, but as a manufacturer and an equipment provider of full 4G stack," Scindia said.

India eyes best-ever show at World Para Athletics games

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ New Delhi

Some of the globe's best para athletes, including blade runners, prosthetic jumpers and wheelchair-bound competitors, will showcase their awe-inspiring grit and resilience on the sporting field when the biggest-ever World Para Athletics Championships begins on Saturday.

India, a rising power in para sports, including para athletics, has rolled out top-class facilities for the 12th edition of the showpiece, which will run till October 5 at the iconic Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in New Delhi.

With 2,200 athletes and officials from 104 countries participating in the nine-day showpiece, the New Delhi edition is the biggest in history, with India joining Qatar (2015), UAE (2019) and Japan (2024) as the fourth nation to host the prestigious event.

The para athletes, numbering over 1,500, will compete across 186 medal events, 15 more than the 2024 edition in Kobe, Japan.

The championships promise top-class perfor-

mances as over 100 medalists who altogether won 308 medals in Paris Paralympics, including 112 gold, 96 silver, and 100 bronze, are set to test their mettle on the grandest para athletics stage.

There will be 101 events for men, 84 for women, and one mixed in the championship. World Para Athletics President Paul Fitzgerald said new world records will be made and new champions will be crowned, and praised India for providing top-class facilities for the event.

"This edition will be the largest single event para championships in history and credit to India for hosting this," he said.

"Spectators inside the stadium and a global audience around the world will experience the brilliance of the athletes competing in newly renovated facilities designed to maximise their skill, speed and strength."

The centrepiece of the event is the Mondo Track laid at the competition venue as well as the warm-up area, considered to be the first instance of the high performance surface at both the arenas. The track, which



THE CENTREPIECE OF THE EVENT IS THE MONDO TRACK LAID AT THE COMPETITION VENUE AS WELL AS THE WARM-UP AREA

is made of two-layered vulcanised rubber, has been widely lauded for its uniform elasticity, shock absorption, and anti-slip qualities, that enhance the performance of athletes and reduce the risk of injury.

The warm-up area has also been fitted with LED floodlights so that the athletes can also do practice

after sunset or early in the morning.

A top-class fitness centre has also been built beside the warm-up area for the use of athletes before competition.

wheelchair racer Catherine Debrunner of Switzerland and fastest para sprinter Petrucio Ferreira of Brazil.

Rehm, a four-time Paralympic champion and seven-time world champion in the men's long jump (T64), holds a world record that surpasses every Olympic gold medal jump this century. Debrunner, who

made headlines with five gold and a silver across six events in the 2024 Paris Paralympics, will compete in five races in New Delhi, aiming to replicate her monumental success in the last edition.

India's pride, Sumit Antil (left leg amputated following an accident), is a two-time Paralympic gold-medallist and defending champion in men's javelin F64. Praveen Kumar (born with a congenital impairment resulting in a shorter leg) is Paris Paralympics champion in men's T64 high jump. He is eager to complete his medal collection with a World Para Athletics Championships gold on home soil.

INDIA EYES TOP-5 FINISH: Fielding its largest ever contingent of 74 athletes, India is aiming to finish in the top five in the medal tally. The Paralympic Committee of India is hoping for more than 20 medals for the country on the back of consistently improving performances in the last two editions and the Paris Paralympics.

India won nine medals (2 gold, 2 silver, 5 bronze) in the 2019 edition in Dubai, 10 (3 gold, 4 silver, 3 bronze) in

2023 in Paris and 17 (6 gold, 5 silver, 6 bronze) in 2024 in Kobe, Japan for a sixth place finish. Deepthi Jeevanji (women's 400m T20), Sachin Khilari (men's shot put F46), Sumit, Ekta Bhyan (women's club throw F51) and Simran Sharma (women's 200m T12) will hope to defend the gold they had won in 2024.

Mariyappan Thangavelu, who won gold in 2024 in men's high jump T42, is not competing this time.

China is the most successful country in World Para Athletics Championships, having topped the medal tally in the last four editions. In 2024, China grabbed a whopping 87 medals, including 33 gold.

This time too, it has sent a big contingent hoping to continue its dominance in the championships.

On Saturday, there will be medal events in men's 5000m T11, men's 100m T71, women's 100m T71, men's 100m T47, women's 400m T20, women's long jump T37, men's long jump T11, women's shot put F41, women's shot put F36, men's shot put F37, women's discus throw F53, men's high jump T63, women's javelin throw F46.

BRIEFLY

PACER SHAMAR JOSEPH RULED OUT OF INDIA TESTS



Star West Indies pacer Shamar Joseph was on Friday ruled out of the upcoming Test series against India due to an unspecified injury with uncapped all-rounder Johann Layne replacing him in the squad.

The two-match Test series is set to begin in Ahmedabad on October 2.

"Johann Layne has replaced Shamar Joseph in the squad for the Test series against India," Windies Cricket announced on X. The board did not disclose the details of the 26-year-old Joseph's injury.

But it stated that he will be reevaluated ahead of the white-ball series against Bangladesh, starting on October 18. "Joseph has been ruled out due to an injury and will be re-evaluated ahead of the Bangladesh limited-overs series," the statement added. His injury is a massive blow to the tourists.

The Guyanese speedster has already bagged 51 wickets in the 11 Tests he has played, averaging a brilliant 21.66 with an economy rate of just over 3.

GARY STEAD RETURNS TO NEW ZEALAND CRICKET



Former BlackCaps head coach Gary Stead has rejoined New Zealand Cricket (NZC) in a new role as high-performance coach, the board announced on Friday.

According to an NZC statement, Stead's responsibilities will include "supporting player and coach development, as well as high-performance programmes." This appointment comes less than four months after Stead stepped down as head coach of the New Zealand men's team in June, following a highly successful tenure from 2018 to 2025.

During that period, he guided the team to three major finals in limited-overs cricket – the 2019 ODI World Cup, the 2021 T20 World Cup, and the 2025 Champions Trophy. He also led New Zealand to victory in the inaugural World Test Championship final (2019-2021), defeating India. "New Zealand cricket's very much been at my heart for the past 30 odd years and to be able to keep contributing to the game I love is really special," Stead said. "I'm still passionate about coaching and trying to help people learn and improve. If I can pass on some of my skills and experiences to the wider cricket network and in turn help the Blackcaps and White ferns win on the world stage – than that would be really satisfying," he added.

Barcelona rallies to defeat Oviedo 3-1 in Spanish league

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Madrid

Barcelona overcame a blunder by goalkeeper Joan Garcia to come from behind and win 3-1 at promoted Oviedo in the Spanish league.

Barcelona trailed after Garcia gave the ball away when he left the area and Alberto Reina scored for the hosts with a shot from near the midfield circle.

The Catalan club rallied in the second half with goals by Eric Garcia, Robert Lewandowski and Ronald Araujo to secure its fifth win in six league matches.

The result left Barcelona two points behind leader Real Madrid, which won 4-1 at promoted Levante on Tuesday to maintain a perfect record after six rounds.

"In the first half we struggled with the scoring opportunities but in the second we picked up the pace and got the three goals and the victory that is very important for us," Lewandowski said.

Joan Garcia's mistake came as he ventured outside the area to intercept a long pass in the 33rd minute. He used his right thigh to get the ball over one opponent and then his left foot to clear another Oviedo player, but ended up sending the ball into the middle of the



Barcelona's Ronald Araujo scores his side's third goal during a Spanish La Liga soccer match at the Carlos Tarteri stadium in Oviedo, Spain, on Thursday

field near where Alberto Reina was standing.

Reina immediately sent a booming one-touch shot over the Barcelona defenders and into the open net from about 35 meters (yards) away. The ball bounced once just ahead of the line before going in.

"I saw the goalkeeper make the mistake with the pass and I decided to take a chance," Reina said. "The moment I struck it I knew it was going to be good. It was my first goal in the first division and I'll never forget it."

Garcia was signed by

Barcelona from city rival Espanyol this summer and earned the chance to start in goal after regular Number 1 Marc-Andre Ter Stegen underwent surgery for a lower back ailment.

"He is the backup for the last line and normally he is really good. One mistake," Barcelona coach Hansi Flick said of the blunder. "We came back and we won and this is the most important."

Defender Eric Garcia equalised for Barcelona in the 56th from close range after Ferran Torres' initial attempt hit

the far post after being partially redirected by Oviedo goalkeeper Aaron Escandell.

Lewandowski scored the go-ahead goal for Barcelona with a firm header off a cross by Frenkie de Jong in the 70th, five minutes after the veteran Poland striker had replaced Raphinha.

Araujo sealed the victory with another header in the 88th after a corner kick taken by Marcus Rashford.

Oviedo, led by veteran playmaker Santi Cazorla, had scored only once this season, in a 1-0 win against Real Sociedad. It lost all of its other four matches in its return to the first division following an absence of more than two decades.

Another goalkeeping blunder was another goalkeeper mistake that allowed Elche to score a stoppage-time equalizer and earn a 1-1 draw at Osasuna.

Osasuna's Sergio Herrera charged from his net to try to block an attempt by Adria Pedrosa but didn't properly commit and the ball went through his legs, allowing Pedrosa to get to it and score.

Elche, also promoted to the first division this season, had won two of its last three matches.

Hossain wins Telangana Golconda Masters

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Hyderabad

Bangladesh's Jamal Hossain was declared the winner of the ₹1 crore Telangana Golconda Masters after the final round was abandoned due to heavy rain on Friday.

Chandigarh's Akshay Sharma finished runner-up.

The tournament result was declared on the basis of the total scores after 54 holes at the Hyderabad Golf Association.

Hossain (61-62-64), who led the field by four shots after round three, thanks to his 54-hole tally of 23-under 187, thus lifted his sixth title and first since November last year.

As a result, the 40-year-old from Dhaka, collected the winning purse of ₹15 lakh that propelled him from 14th place to 10th position in the 2025 PGTI Order of Merit.

Sharma (62-64-65) was second best as he totalled 19-under 291 after three rounds. Akshay picked up a cheque worth ₹10 lakh to climb from 34th place to 21st position in PGTI's merit list.



Khalin Joshi (65-66-66) of Bengaluru finished third at a total of 13-under 197.

Delhi's Arjun Prasad secured sixth place at 11-under 199. Arjun thus continued in second position in the PGTI Ranking with season's earnings of ₹69,71,599.

Chandigarh-based Yuvraj Sandhu, who did not play this event, maintains his lead in the PGTI's money list with season's earnings of ₹88,67,200.

Bradley hopes fans get their money's worth: Ryder Cup

ASSOCIATED PRESS
■ Farmingdale (USA)

US Captain Keegan Bradley is making sure fans get their money's worth at the Ryder Cup.

It's been 12 years from the time Bethpage Black was announced as the host of this Ryder Cup, two years since Europe celebrated victory in Rome and four days of anticipation that has been building even on a rain-soaked course Thursday.

And then Bradley announced Bryson DeChambeau would be smashing away in the opening foursomes session with emotionally charged Justin Thomas. They face Tyrrell Hatton and Jon Rahm, the fiery Spaniard who has never lost in this format.

"They're a formidable force," DeChambeau said. "But we want to send a message."

Soon after the four matches were announced, DeChambeau headed

to the range and began blasting drives to simulate the 389-yard opening hole, slightly downhill that turns hard to the right over trees, reachable by those who can fly their drive some 365 yards in the air.

"That's nothing, right?" DeChambeau said. In his last Ryder Cup, at Whistling Straits in 2021, he drove the green on the first hole and walked 364 yards to the green carrying his putter.

European captain Luke Donald has 11 players back from his winning team in Rome. He considers this a new team for a new challenge — Europe hasn't won on the road in 12 years — and he mixed up a few of his pairings.

Rory McIlroy and Tommy Fleetwood are together again. They

won both foursomes matches in Rome. But he split up Viktor Hovland and Ludvig Aberg, both with new partners.

Bradley said he had DeChambeau and Thomas in mind for a while. DeChambeau hasn't played foursomes in the Ryder Cup since 2018 — he lost matches while paired with Tiger Woods and Phil Mickelson in France — and the alternate-shot format requires a measure of conservative play so as not to give away the hole.

DeChambeau is not one to play it safe. He is an entertainer as much as an elite golfer, and Bradley expects him to hit driver off the first tee.

"We want him to do what he does, and he got up there today and

hammered one right in front of the green," Bradley said. "Bryson thrives under this sort of atmosphere. I can see him walking out there just relishing the moment and relishing the chance to get up there and hit that shot."

Thomas brings so much emotion to these matches that in an informal poll in 2023, most Europeans said he would be the one player who gets under their skin.

Europe countered by sending out the same team that put the first blue point on the board for Europe at Marco Simone. And neither Rahm nor Hatton lack emotion.

"We are facing two fantastic, very accomplished players. It will not be easy," Rahm said. "They are both players that like to get the crowd going. It will be a very energetic match. But I wouldn't say Tyrrell and I are short of energy ourselves. So I think it's going to be a lot of fun for both teams."

McGinn's early goal gives Aston Villa first win

ASSOCIATED PRESS
■ London

Captain John McGinn's early goal was enough to give Aston Villa its first win of the season as the English side beat Bologna 1-0 in the Europa League.

McGinn beat Bologna goalkeeper Lukas Skorupski with a low left-foot shot from outside the area 13 minutes into the match at Villa Park.

Substitute Ollie Watkins earned a penalty in the second half but then failed to stretch the lead with a poorly executed spot kick that was saved by Skorupski.

Villa has endured a frustrating

start domestically, with three draws and two losses in the Premier League. But it has a coach who knows how to succeed in Europe: Unai Emery is the most successful manager in the second-tier Europa League with four titles, three with Sevilla and one with Villarreal.

Emery led Villa to placings of fourth and sixth in the last two Premier League seasons and to the quarterfinals of the Champions League. But this season Villa is winless in the Premier League, scoring a single goal in five games and already eliminated from the English League Cup.

The game against the Serie A team was a rematch of their encounter last season at Villa Park in the Champions League, where Villa won 2-0. McGinn also scored one in that game.

RANGERS REMAIN WINLESS: Another team struggling in its domestic league, winless Rangers, fell to a 1-0 loss to Belgian visitors Genk at Ibrox Stadium, a result that only puts more pressure on coach Russell Martin.

Rangers midfielder Mohamed Diomande was sent off for a straight red card four minutes before halftime. But goalkeeper Jack Butland prevented the visitors from taking the lead before

the break by saving a penalty from Oh Hyeon-gyu in first-half stoppage time.

But the South Korea striker found the back of the net 10 minutes into the second half, beating Butland with a left-foot strike.

GIROUD ON TARGET: In one of the early kickoffs, veteran striker Olivier Giroud came off the bench to score a late goal and give Lille a 2-1 win over Brann.

The 38-year-old former Arsenal, Chelsea, AC Milan and Los Angeles FC striker surged into the area to meet a cross from Tiago Santos and head home the winner 10 minutes from time.

