

Arunachal Govt. offers major hydropower investment with 19,000 MW pipeline

19,000 MW HYDROPOWER PIPELINE DRIVES GROWTH

Itanagar, Oct 06: Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu has pitched the state's untapped hydroelectric capacity as one of India's premier investment opportunities, highlighting that nearly 19,000 megawatts (MW) of hydropower projects are currently in various stages of active development.

Addressing a public gathering in Pasighat, the Chief Minister underscored the transformative economic potential of the power sector for the frontier state. Khandu stated that under the established financial framework, Arunachal Pradesh will continue to receive a 12% free-power entitlement from all operational hydroelectric ventures. In a significant boost to state revenue models, the Central Government has also agreed to support a 26% equity share for the state government



across upcoming major projects.

Detailing the financial mechanics, Khandu noted that the state's cumulative equity contribution across the 19,000 MW project pipeline would amount to approximately

₹15,000 crore, backed by central assistance. Highlighting the state's rapid economic growth, he pointed out that Arunachal Pradesh's annual budget expanded from ₹12,500 crore in 2015 to nearly ₹40,000 crore, driven largely by capital in-

vestments and infrastructure expansion.

Touching upon environmental and local community concerns regarding the proposed Siang Upper Multipurpose Project (SUMP), the Chief Minister reassured citizens that the immediate focus remains strictly on completing the Preliminary Feasibility Report (PFR). He emphasized that conducting technical studies does not constitute an irreversible commitment to dam construction, urging local stakeholders to allow scientific assessments to establish baseline facts before participating in statutory public consultations. Khandu reiterated that large-scale clean energy generation will secure long-term revenue streams, generate local employment, and turn Arunachal Pradesh into the powerhouse of India's green transition.

NPP upset by Nagaland setback, will emerge stronger: Sangma

Kohima, Oct 06: Meghalaya Chief Minister and National People's Party (NPP) National President Conrad K. Sangma acknowledged that the party is "very upset" following a major political setback in Nagaland, where all five of its sitting MLAs merged with the ruling Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party (NDPP) and Naga People's Front (NPF) alignment.

Speaking to reporters in Shillong, Sangma admitted that losing its entire legislative presence in the Nagaland Assembly reduced the party's official strength in the state to zero. However, he emphasized that such political realignments are not unprecedented in North-Eastern politics. Recalling similar past defection episodes in Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland, the NPP chief stated that while the developments are disappointing, political organizations must accept ground realities, adapt, and focus on



long-term restructuring.

Sangma urged party cadres, office bearers, and supporters across the region to stay united during this challenging phase. He expressed firm confidence that the NPP—recognized as a national party rooted in the North-East—remains structurally resilient and will rebuild its organizational base in Nagaland ahead of future electoral contests. Reaffirming the

NPP's broader political positioning, Sangma clarified that the party continues to be an integral constituent of the Bharatiya Janata Party-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) at the Centre and across various states in the region. He noted that while legislative alliances and government participation vary according to specific state dynamics, the party's core ideological commitment to advocating for North-Eastern interests remains unchanged. Reaffirming the NPP's broader political positioning, Sangma clarified that the party continues to be an integral constituent of the Bharatiya Janata Party-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) at the Centre and across various states in the region. He noted that while legislative alliances and government participation vary according to specific state dynamics, the party's core ideological commitment to advocating for North-Eastern interests remains unchanged.

Tagak takes Seva Sankalp outreach to Wakka border village

Itanagar, Oct 06: Rajya Sabha MP from Arunachal Pradesh, Tai Tagak, carried the state-wide Seva Sankalp Abhiyan outreach campaign to Wakka, one of the remote border villages located along the Indo-Myanmar international boundary in Longding district. The grassroots administrative drive, designed to deliver doorstep governance and streamline access to welfare schemes for rural populations, witnessed active participation from village elders, local leaders, Anganwadi workers, and district administration officials. During his visit, Tagak inspected local community facilities and chaired the 'Angan Milan Seva' interaction, engaging directly with residents, women self-help groups, and frontline health workers to evaluate the delivery of public services in the border belt. Addressing the gathering at Wakka, Tagak reiterated the government's commitment under the Vibrant Villages Programme to ensure that remote border hamlets receive adequate infrastructure, seamless connectivity, and direct benefit transfers without logistical hurdles. He emphasized that outreach initiatives under the Seva Sankalp Abhiyan aim to bridge administrative gaps, assist citizens with government document processing, and resolve local developmental grievances through coordinated inter-departmental camps. Local village authorities and community representatives expressed appreciation for the high-level visit, highlighting specific needs regarding road maintenance, healthcare staff deployment, and telecommunication connectivity in the border region.

PM Modi's Smart Cities Mission transforming urban landscape: Khandu

Itanagar, Oct 06: Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu stated that the Smart Cities Mission, initiated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, is fundamentally transforming the urban infrastructure landscape across the nation, including frontier regions.

Speaking after dedicating a series of major urban infrastructure projects in Pasighat, Khandu highlighted that 42 out of the 43 sanction-approved projects under the Pasighat Smart City Mission have now been successfully completed. The completed works span major municipal transformations, including modern smart road networks, the Siang riverfront development, automated solid waste management facilities, digital civic utility systems, and the Mebo entry gate infrastructure. Detailing the financial



outlay, the Chief Minister disclosed that the total project investment stood at over ₹545 crore, featuring ₹490 crore in central funding, ₹51.77 crore in state contributions, and ₹3.94 crore mobilized via scheme convergence. Khandu emphasized that with the primary construction phase drawing to a close, focus must now pivot toward civic asset maintenance, public ownership, and sustainable

urban livelihood creation. He called upon local citizens and municipal representatives to actively safeguard public infrastructure alongside administrative agencies. Highlighting the spirit of fiscal efficiency, Khandu urged state departments to maximize the convergence of central and state developmental schemes, stating that strategic policy integration yields multi-fold benefits for local economies.

Arunachal's Rupa to get 500-bed Medical City project

Rupa, Oct 06: In a major boost to regional healthcare infrastructure, the Arunachal Pradesh government has initiated preliminary ground surveys to establish a modern 500-bed Medical City at Rupa in West Kameng district.

A high-level joint delegation comprising administrative officers, health department experts, and technical survey teams conducted an extensive inspection across proposed land parcels in the Rupa valley. The ambitious healthcare project is designed as an integrated medical hub featuring a state-of-the-art 500-bed multi-specialty teaching hospital, a full-fledged medical college, and a dedicated nursing college. According to officials, the Medical City aims to address the long-standing



critical healthcare gaps across western Arunachal Pradesh, reducing the dependency of local residents on distant tertiary medical centers in Itanagar or neighboring Assam. In addition to providing advanced clinical care, emergency services, and specialized

diagnostic departments, the co-located medical and nursing institutes will significantly expand medical education capacity, training hundreds of doctors, nurses, and allied healthcare professionals locally each year. The site survey team eval-

uated geographical terrain, environmental suitability, road connectivity, water supply feasibility, and land acquisition requirements to ensure seamless master-planning for the sprawling complex. Local community leaders and district representatives welcomed the initiative, highlighting that the Medical City will generate substantial direct and indirect employment, spur civic infrastructure growth, and transform Rupa into a premier healthcare destination for the western district belt. State authorities emphasized that following the finalization of land allotment and technical clearance reports, formal foundation laying and detailed project reports (DPR) will be expedited to commence construction phases.

Hard to make Nagas stop hunting wildlife, says CL John

Mokokchung, Oct 06: Nagaland Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change C.L. John observed that convincing people in the state to abandon traditional wildlife hunting remains a formidable challenge, comparing the effort to the historical resistance faced when early Christian missionaries first introduced gospel teachings across Naga villages.

Speaking as the chief guest during the Wildlife Week 2026 celebration held at Town Hall in Mokokchung, the Minister emphasized that while customary practices and forest dependence are deeply rooted, community mindset shifts are



urgently required to prevent catastrophic biodiversity loss. John underscored that constitutional protections under Article 371A grant special land rights to Naga commu-

nities, but clarified that these provisions do not permit indiscriminate forest clearance, commercial logging, or illegal poaching of protected fauna. The Minister urged local vil-

lage councils, youth organizations, and church authorities to lead conservation efforts from the grassroots level rather than relying solely on departmental enforcement.

He noted that while several villages had declared community conservation reserves and temporary hunting bans in previous years, commitments in certain pockets have begun fading over time. Highlighting the statutory mandate, John called on citizens across Nagaland to strictly abide by the provisions of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, and support local forest officers in protecting endangered wildlife corridors.

Ugeng SUMP site violence injures security personnel, damages property

Itanagar, Oct 06: Violent clashes broke out at the Ugeng survey site entry point for the proposed 11,000-MW Siang Upper Multipurpose Project (SUMP) in Arunachal Pradesh's Siang district, leaving over eight security personnel injured—including a CRPF Assistant Commandant—and causing significant damage to public and private property.

According to district administration and police reports, the conflict erupted when a mob of 100 to 150 anti-dam protesters armed with daos (machetes), lathis, and stones charged toward security forces enforcing prohibitory orders approximately two kilometers from the Preliminary Feasibility

Report (PFR) survey site. During the confrontation, CRPF Assistant Commandant Gajendra Singh Sonigra of the 174th Battalion suffered severe sharp-weapon injuries while fending off an attack and was subsequently airlifted for specialized medical care. Seven other personnel sustained varying injuries.

The mob also vandalized camps, set fire to three nearby houses, damaged temporary CRPF shelters, and damaged government property. Security forces responded with tear gas canisters and a lathi charge to disperse the crowd and regain control over the area. Police have registered a case regarding the assault and arson, arresting at least

five individuals, including two women. Reacting to the incident, Home Minister Mama Natung strongly condemned the physical assault on security forces, appealing to local anti-dam forums and community members to maintain peace. Natung reiterated that the state government led by Chief Minister Pema Khandu remains fully open to constructive dialogue, emphasizing that the ongoing PFR exercise is purely a technical feasibility study rather than a final commitment to construct the dam. Additional security contingents have been deployed across Ugeng, Riga, and neighboring villages in Siang district to prevent further escalation.

ICFAI University Nagaland confers degrees on 530 graduates

Kohima, Oct 06: ICFAI University Nagaland celebrated a major academic milestone by conferring degrees on 530 graduating students during its 8th Convocation ceremony held at the university campus in Sovima, Chumoukedima district.

The grand ceremony brought together university dignitaries, faculty members, state officials, parents, and graduating scholars across various disciplines. Out of the 530 degree recipients, 381 students graduated with bachelor's degrees across management, commerce, arts, and computer applications, while 147 scholars completed postgraduate programs including MBA, MA, and M.Com. In addition, two research scholars were awarded Doctorate of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degrees for their advanced contributions in humanities and management studies. Addressing the congregation as the chief guest, prominent educational leaders urged the graduating cohort to leverage their academic skills toward constructive nation-building, social innovation, and regional development across the North-East. Emphasizing the importance of continuous learning and professional ethics in an evolving global economy, speakers commended the university for fostering academic excellence and vocational capability among youth in Nagaland.

DPDB monthly meetings held across Longleng, Zunheboto, and Meluri

Kohima, Oct 06: Monthly District Planning and Development Board (DPDB) meetings were convened across Longleng, Zunheboto, and Meluri districts in Nagaland to review ongoing infrastructure projects, evaluate departmental performance, and formulate local development agendas. In Longleng, the meeting was chaired by MLA and DPDB Chairman B. Bangtick Phom at the DPDB Hall. The session commenced with the introduction of newly posted members, followed by a detailed PowerPoint

presentation from Senior Superintendent of Police Yanger Jamir on the activities and security operations of the District Executive Force (DEF). The chairman instructed the Forest Department to present its departmental report at the next monthly meeting. In Zunheboto, administrative officials and board members reviewed inter-departmental development schemes, focusing on rural infrastructure, healthcare delivery, and educational monitoring across the district. The board emphasized strict inter-departmental



coordination to ensure the timely completion of state and central welfare programs. Meanwhile, in Meluri district, the meeting was chaired by Advisor for NSDMA and Inland Waterways, Z. Nyusietho Nyuthe, along with administrative heads. The board reviewed civic works and public service delivery, urging departments to maintain close coordination for the effective implementation of welfare policies. Across all three districts, DPDB chairpersons reiterated that district development boards serve

as crucial decision-making bodies at the grassroots level. Heads of offices were directed to maintain consistent attendance, ensure project transparency, and promptly resolve administrative bottlenecks to deliver public services efficiently. In addition to regular scheme reviews, administrative heads addressed logistical preparation requirements ahead of upcoming state and local electoral exercises. In Longleng, the Additional Deputy Commissioner flagged the urgent need for a designated strong room facility.

BPF Marks First Year in Office, Lists Major Achievements in Assam

Kokrajhar, Oct 06: The Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) on Monday marked the first anniversary of the Bodoland People’s Front (BPF)-led BTC government at the BTC Secretariat field in Kokrajhar.

Assam Finance, Environment and Forest Minister Jayanta Mallabaruah attended the programme as the chief guest and spoke about the development prospects of the Bodoland region.Addressing the gathering, Mallabaruah said Bodoland had entered a new phase of development after years of struggle and instability. He highlighted the region’s Gelephu Mindfulness City project, saying the initiative could create new opportunities for the region between Assam.

HC Seeks Status Report on Latest Findings in Coal Illegalities Case

Shillong, Oct 06: The Meghalaya High Court on Monday directed the state respondents to submit a status report on the 41st Interim Report filed by retired Justice B.P. Katakey in the suo motu proceedings concerning illegal coal mining in the state.A Division Bench comprising Justice Hamarsan Singh Thangkhiw and Justice Wanlura Diengdoh observed that the 41st Interim Report, submitted on September 20, 2026, was “revealing and exhaustive”.

The Bench directed the state authorities to obtain a copy of the report from the court Registry and file their response before the next hearing.The court also took on record the status report submitted by the state in connection with the 40th Interim Report, along with another report concerning the court’s August 31, 2026 order.However, as the Bench had not yet had an opportunity to examine the documents submitted on Monday, it decided to defer consideration of the reports until the next hearing.The matter has been listed for further orders and submission of the required status report on November 2, 2026.

BJP Likely to Field Kharkrang for Shillong Bypoll

Shillong, Oct 06: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is reportedly considering its chief spokesperson Mariahom Kharkrang as its candidate for the upcoming Shillong Parliamentary by-election, with party sources indicating that he is like-

ly to secure the nomination. Kharkrang, a former police officer, has been actively involved in the BJP’s organisational activities since joining the party. He has also emerged as one of ithe party and responding to criticism from opposition groups.

Smoke, Fire Cause Panic as Manas Rhino Express Halted Near Guwahati

Nalbari, Oct 06: A fire was reportedly detected underneath a coach of the Manas Rhino Express (55801/55802) on Monday, triggering concern among passengers and causing the train to remain delayed for more than an hour.

The incident occurred while the train was travelling towards Guwahati from Patiladaha.According to information available, smoke was noticed emerging from beneath coach number 155426 as the train was travelling along the route.

The situation was first noticed by Dhanmoni Roy, a security staff member of Gauhati Commerce College, who reportedly spotted the smoke when the train reached Sorbhog railway station.Despite the smoke being noticed, the



train continued its journey. However, Roy later got down at Barpeta Road and checked the affected coach. He reportedly found that flames were still visible underneath the coach, prompting him to immediately alert the railway police about the situation-

Sibamoni Bora Casts Her Vote, Confident of Winning Nagaon Bypoll



port Bora received from voters across the constituency.“She will win by a huge number of votes.

I have seen my mother working extremely hard throughout the campaign. As a family, we are 100 per cent confident that she will emerge victorious,” she said. Recalling her own involvement in the campaign, Bora’s daughter said she had been associated with the election effort from the beginning

and had travelled extensively across the constituency. She said the campaign had given her an opportunity to directly observe the mood of voters and assess the level of support for her mother.“

I have seen immense public support for my mother and witnessed the ground reality myself. A large number of people came forward to support her. I travelled to different parts of the constituency and saw the enthusi-

asm among the people. The response and support for my mother have been very encouraging,” she said.She further said the campaign had allowed her to interact with people in several areas and observe their response to Bora’s candidature.

According to her, the turnout at campaign programmes and the enthusiasm among supporters had strengthened the family’s belief that the Congress candidate was in a strong position in the by-election.Polling for the Nagaon Lok Sabha by-election began at 7 am on Tuesday and is scheduled to continue until 5 pm. Voters across the constituency are exercising their franchise to decide the outcome of the bypoll, with candidates and their supporters hoping for a favourable mandate..

Youth Raise Concerns Over Repeated Use of Ward’s Lake for Literary Festival

Shillong, Oct 06: As the state government prepares to host the sixth Shillong Literary Festival at Ward’s Lake from November 12 to 14, a section of the city’s youth has begun questioning whether the iconic lake should continue to be used for large-scale events.

For decades, Ward’s Lake has been remembered as one of Shillong’s quietest and most serene public spaces, known for its greenery, heritage and tranquillity. Several young people now ask whether repeated large gatherings are compatible with that character.

NEHU History student Evangelist N. Khongwar linked the debate to the Lake’s place in Khasi literature and the city’s history. He referred to Paul Lyngdoh’s Shithiar ki Khana Lyngkot, a collection of short stories written during Lyngdoh’s school years and later included in the higher secondary curriculum. One story recounts a foreigner searching Shillong for genuine peace, with Ward’s Lake emerging as a sanctuary of calm.

Khongwar pointed to what he described as an irony. Lyngdoh, who later served as Tourism Minister, had facilitated the transfer of Ward’s Lake

from the Forest and Environment Department to the Tourism Department to enable government-sponsored events. He questioned whether the repeated use of the lake for such programmes was consistent with the image of peace captured in Lyngdoh’s own writing. As a history student, Khongwar stressed that Ward’s Lake is more than a tourist attraction. It forms part of Shillong’s colonial past and heritage.

Turning a heritage space into a commercial hub, he argued, could undermine its historical significance. While acknowledging the importance of tourism and development, he said these should not come at the cost of the lake’s natural charm.

The government, he suggested, should consider alternative venues, recalling that an earlier edition of the festival had been held at the State Central Library.

NEHU Law student Martin Warjri said Shillong needs more permanent spaces for festivals, concerts and cultural events instead of repeatedly adapting existing green spaces. He suggested New Shillong as a possible alternative once adequate infrastructure and pub-

lic transport are developed, noting that decentralising major events could also ease traffic and parking pressure in the existing city.

Warjri called for greater public consultation, particularly involving young people, before venues for major events are selected. Public spaces, he said, ultimately belong to those who use and live around them, and the younger generation will inherit them.

College student Wanpynshngain Jana also favoured moving the Literary Festival to another venue in future, saying continuous use of Ward’s Lake was beginning to put considerable strain on the space.

He preferred designated venues within Shillong or New Shillong where proper infrastructure could be developed specifically for literary and cultural events.

At the same time, he stressed that the festival itself remains important. It brings nationally and internationally recognised authors to Meghalaya, creates opportunities for local writers and artists, encourages young people to engage with literature, and contributes to tourism, hospitality and small.

KSU Seeks Probe into Alleged Extortion of Truckers by EKH Police

Shillong, Oct 06: The Khasi Students’ Union (KSU) on Monday demanded an independent investigation into allegations of an extortion racket involving Meghalaya Police personnel and truckers in East Khasi Hills district.

The organisation also called for the immediate removal of East Khasi Hills Superintendent of Police Vivek Syiem and Deputy Commissioner Abhilash Baranwalln a representation submitted to Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma, KSU assistant general secretary Pynshai Rani alleged that police personnel were collecting between Rs 200 and Rs 500 from truck drivers at temporary sheds set up along the Mawkhanu-Diengpasoh and Thangshalai stretches.The demand for an inquiry came after the KSU conducted a sting operation on September



30.

The organisation claimed that the operation captured video The union further called for departmental proceedings against the SP and said he should face arrest if an investigation establishes his involvement in the alleged racket.

It also questioned the police action taken after the

KSU sting operation, particularly the dismantling of the temporary sheds where the alleged extortion was reportedly taking place.

The KSU alleged that the removal of tivities taking place the sheds could result in the destruction or loss of important evidence. It therefore urged the state all material and other.

Silchar Civic Poll Results Today as Vote Counting Gets Underway

Dispur, Oct 06: Vote counting for the first-ever Silchar Municipal Corporation election is scheduled to take place on Tuesday, with the process set to begin at 8 am at the Indian Society for Technical Training (ISTT) in Ramnagar, Silchar.

The counting centre has been prepared to facilitate the smooth and systematic counting of votes cast during the civic polls. Officials have made arrangements to ensure that the counting process is conducted in accordance with the prescribed procedures and without disruption.

The district administration, along with the police, has put in place security arrangements at and around the counting venue. Measures have been taken to regulate access to the premises and maintain order throughout the counting process. Security personnel have also been deployed to ensure that the counting proceeds peaceful-

ly. Officials said the arrangements are aimed at ensuring transparency and maintaining a secure environment for election officials, candidates and their representatives during the counting. The administration is expected to closely monitor the process as the votes are counted and the results are declared. The first Silchar Municipal Corporation election is being closely watched as it marks an important milestone in the civic administration of the city.

The results will determine the composition of the newly established municipal corporation and the representatives who will oversee civic affairs in Silchar. With counting scheduled to commence at 8 am, candidates and political parties are areawaiting the outcome of the election. The administration has urged all stakeholders to cooperate with officials and maintain peace during the counting and declaration of results.

Prestone Rejects Cabinet Berths for Former UDP Leaders

Shillong, Oct 06: The National People’s Party (NPP) has rejected speculation that it has reached an understanding with the BJP leadership to accommodate the eight former United Democratic Party (UDP) MLAs who recently joined the BJP in the Meghalaya Cabinet.

The clarification came amid reports that the expanded BJP legislature party is seeking a larger representation in the state government, including three ministerial positions and a Deputy Chief Minister’s postNPP state president and Meghalaya Deputy Chief Minister Prestone Tynsong said there was no agreement between the coalition partners to induct the former UDP legislators into the Council of Ministers. Responding to questions about possible pressure from the BJP, Tynsong maintained that no such understanding had been reached regarding Cabinet berths for the MLAs who switched partiesThe eight legislators joined the BJP on September 23 in New Delhi in the presence of Union Minister Kiren Rijiju and other senior BJP leaders. Their move significantly increased the BJP’s strength in the 60-member Meghalaya Assembly, taking its tally from two to 10 and making it the second-largest party

in the House after the NPP.The def fections, meanwhile, reduced the strength of the UDP from 12 MLAs to four. Despite the political realignment, both the NPP and BJP remain constituents of the NPP-led Meghalaya Democratic Alliance (MDA) government-The entry of the eight former UDP legislators into the BJP has triggered considerable speculation in political circles about a possible reshuffle or expansion of the state Cabinet. nto the BJP has triggered considerable speculation in political circles about a possible reshuffle or expansion of the state Cabinet. There has been growing talk that the BJP’s increased numerical strength could lead to demands for a greater share in the Council of Ministers.Sources familiar with the developments have claimed that former UDP leaders have also been seeking specific portfolios and positions within the government. According to these reports, former UDP leader Rymbui is that former UDP leaders have also been seeking specific portfolios and positions within the government. According to these reports, former UDP leader Rymbui isSeparately, senior BJP leader A.L. Hek has been mentioned as a possible contender for the Speaker’s post.

Ranoj Pegu Dis tributes Appreciation Letters, Cheques in Kamrup

Azara,Oct 06: A district-level ceremony to distribute appreciation letters and cheques to cook-cum-helpers working under the PM POSHAN programme was held on Monday at PM SHRI Fulguri Anchalik School under the Rani Education Block in Kamrup.

Assam Education Minister Dr Ranoj Pegu attended the programme and interacted with the beneficiaries.

A total of 123 cook-cum-helpers from the Rani Education Block were presented with appreciation letters and cheques in recognition of their dedicated service and contribution to the effective implementation of the PM POSHAN programme across Kamrup district.

Nagaon Bypoll BJP’s Debashish Sharma Casts Vote, Urges Voters to Turn Out

Dispur, Oct 06: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) candidate Debashish Sharma cast his vote at the Mayong Higher Secondary School polling station on Tuesday, October 6, as polling got underway for the Nagaon Lok Sabha by-election in Assam. After exercising his franchise, Sharma became emotional and urged voters to participate in the electoral process, saying that voting was important for strengthening democracy.

Sharma also extended his best wishes to all the candidates contesting the by-election against him and appealed to voters to exercise their democratic rightPolling for the Nagaon Lok Sabha constituency began at 7 am on Tues-

day and is scheduled to continue until 5 pm. Voting is taking place across 2,112 polling stations, including five auxiliary booths, five model polling stations and 335 booths managed by women.

A total of 19,02,009 voters are eligible to cast their votes in the by-election. The electorate includes 9,58,595 male voters, 9,43,364 female voters and 50 voters belonging to the third-gender category. Fifteen candidates are contesting the election.

The Nagaon by-election has emerged as a closely watched contest, with the BJP and Congress engaged in a direct electoral battle for the seat. The BJP is seeking to wrest the constituency from

the Congress, which had previously represented the seat through senior leader Pradyut Bordoloi.The by-election was necessitated after Bordoloi, who had represented Nagaon for the Congress, subsequently aligned with the BJP, resulting in the vacancy.

The BJP has now fielded Sharma in an effort to retain the seat within its political fold.Sharma, a former Nagaon district commissioner, took voluntary retireprocess. In addition, 69 flying squad With voting underway across the constituency, candidates and political parties are hoping for strong voter participation. The final outcome will have parties in Assam.

Adelbert seeks CBI probe into raid in Jaiaw

Shillong, Oct 06: North Shillong MLA Adelbert Nongrum has sought a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) inquiry into the police raid conducted at Jaiaw on August 19, alleging excessive use of force, the presence of masked personnel and violations of established procedures during the mid-night operation.In a memorandum submitted to Meghalaya Deputy Chief Minister and Home Minister Prestone

Tynsong on Monday, Nongrum alleged that around 15 tear-gas shells were fired during the operation in the densely populated Jaiaw locality near H. Gordon Roberts Hospital. He claimed that the use of tear gas created panic among residents and posed a risk to patients and others inside the nearby hospital.The MLA further alleged that several personnel involved in the operation were wearing masks and

were not displaying nameplates, making it difficult to identify them.

He also accused some members of the police team of using abusive language and making obscene gestures towards members of Seng Samla Jaiaw Pyllun during the operation.Nongrum claimed that established practices of coordinating with local authorities and community representatives before carrying out such op-

erations were not followed in this case. He argued that the alleged procedural lapses and conduct of the personnel warranted an investigation by an agency independent of the state police.According tready directed senior police officials to ensure better insisted on an independent investigation, the state government has maintained that the matter can be dealt with through the existing police mechanism.

India and Bangladesh strive to break the ice through trade and visa talks



New Delhi, Oct 06: India and Bangladesh are attempting to schedule a meeting of institutional processes in areas such as commerce and consular affairs as part of attempts to normalize relations, despite ongoing uncertainty surrounding Bangladesh Prime Minister Tarique Rahman’s visit to New Delhi, according to persons familiar with the situation.

A Bangladeshi delegation is scheduled to fly to New Delhi on Wednesday for a meeting of the joint working group on trade from October 8 to 9, according to people who spoke on the condition of anonymity. The two sides are also negotiating dates for a meeting of the joint working group on consular concerns, which will be held in Dhaka, according to sources.

These efforts aim to restore a semblance of normalcy to bilateral re-

lations, even as the two countries continue to address more serious irritants, the people said. Bilateral ties hit an all-time low after student-led protests ousted the Sheikh Hasina government in August 2024 and replaced it with an interim administration led by Muhammad Yunus. India moved rapidly to repair ties after the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) swept the general election in February and extended two invitations to Rahman for a bilateral visit and to attend the Brics Summit in his capacity as chairman of the Bimstec grouping.

The Bangladesh government, however, decided to skip the Brics Summit last month and the two sides have struggled to arrange dates for Rahman’s bilateral visit. Bangladesh was originally expected to send its team for the joint working group meeting

on trade on Tuesday, with the meeting scheduled for October 7-8. However, the team could not travel on Tuesday for logistical reasons, and the meeting was rescheduled, the people said.

Dhaka was also keen that the meeting of the joint working group on trade be followed by a meeting of the commerce secretaries of the two countries but the Indian side has conveyed to Dhaka that this can happen only after the meeting of other institutional mechanisms that deal with matters such as transit and border trade, the people said.

The meeting of the joint working group on consular matters has gained significance as both sides are looking to address several visa-related issues, the people said.

A hectic diplomatic calendar on the Indian side has a significant impact on the scheduling of Rahman’s potential visit to India. In October, the Indian side will be busy with inbound visits from Swiss President Guy Parmelin and Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk, while Prime Minister Narendra Modi will fly to the Philippines to attend the Asean Summit from November 16 to 18. Modi also has a full agenda in December, with trips to the United States, Canada, and Belgium. Meanwhile, Rahman is set to visit Japan in October, then Turkey and Saudi Arabia in November, according to sources.

CBI raids Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann’s camp office and his OSD’s residence in Chandigarh

New Delhi, Oct 06: On Tuesday, the CBI conducted searches at Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann’s camp office and the residence of his Officer on Special Duty (OSD), Rajbir Singh Ghuman, in Chandigarh. The decision comes a day after the Punjab and Haryana High Court ordered the agency to open a case and investigate allegations of corruption involving the Chief Minister’s Office. Bhagwant Mann reacted to the CBI action in an X post. “The

BJP has started preparing for the Punjab elections. A CBI raid was conducted at my camp office. Now, the ED and CBI will be misused in Punjab to defame the Punjab government and me. The BJP is rattled by the love and support I am receiving from the people,” he said. The case pertains to the Enforcement Directorate (ED)’s allegations of high-level corruption in the Punjab government. During a hearing on Monday, the Punjab and Haryana had ordered the CBI



to probe the claims. It had specifically objected to Rajbir Singh Ghuman’s absence from the Punjab Police’s preliminary investigation, despite being one of the major individuals listed in the ED data. The High Court, acting on a

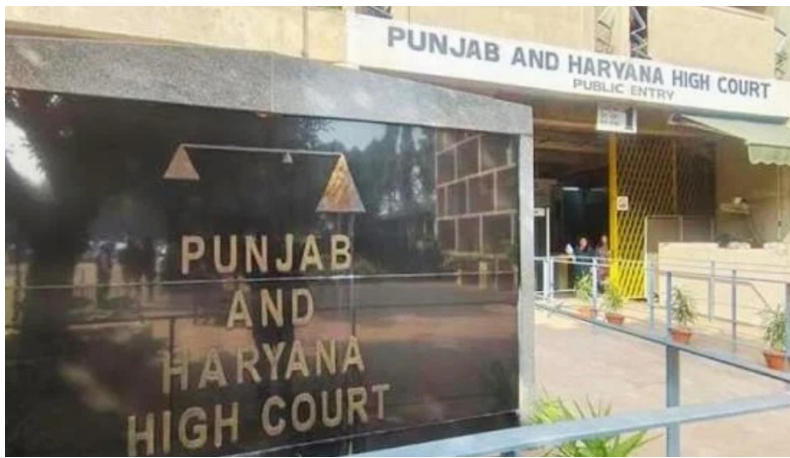
PIL filed by counsel Nikhil Saraf, determined that the evidence presented to it revealed cognizable offenses and ordered an investigation, asking the Punjab government and state police to help the central agency.

The Punjab administration has appealed to the Supreme Court against the order. The ED’s claims are still under investigation and do not constitute a finding of guilt. The matter is scheduled for later in the week.

A Bihar man believed to have been slain four years ago was discovered alive in Delhi

New Delhi, Oct 06: A nonspeaking man believed to have been slain nearly four years ago in Lalpur, Bihar’s Samastipur, was discovered alive in Delhi, raising concerns about the police inquiry that resulted in the arrest and imprisonment of four persons for murder without the recovery or identification of the body. Ravishankar Kumar, a man in his late twenties, was found working at a fruit shop in Delhi, according to authorities. Madan Yadav filed a complaint in 2022, stating that his nonspeaking son was kidnapped and murdered, and that his body was concealed. The case was registered by police, and four people were named as accused. In his complaint, Yadav said Kumar had been working with Mukesh Pandit, Sahdev Pandit and Dinesh Pandit. His father alleged that the three murdered him and disposed of his body. Chhotu Mahto, who was associated with the accused, was also named in the case. Police arrested four accused and sent them to jail. Mahto said he was in jail for three months and 18 days and is currently out on bail. On October 2, Akash Kumar, who is also from Lalpur and works in Noida, spotted Ravishankar Kumar at the fruit shop. He informed people in Lalpur, following which a group from the village visited Delhi, brought him back to Samastipur, and handed him over to the police on Monday.

The Punjab government’s top officer is summoned by the high court. Pending Arrears



New Delhi, Oct 06: The Punjab and Haryana High Court slammed the Punjab government on Tuesday for failing to comply with instructions regarding the payment of long-pending Dearness Allowance (DA) arrears to state government employees and retirees.

The Chief Secretary, who appeared in court, was questioned about the government’s failure to deliver the compliance report by the August 31 deadline. The government claimed that it filed a Special Leave Peti-

tion (SLP) with the Supreme Court to seek relief. However, during the hearing, the High Court noted that the SLP filed before the Supreme Court was defective, raising serious questions over whether it was merely an attempt to delay compliance with the court’s orders.

During scrutiny of the affidavit filed by the Chief Secretary a day earlier, the court found that the vakalatnama in the Supreme Court petition had not even been signed, apart from other defects in the SLP. Taking a stern

view of the matter, the High Court issued a show-cause notice to the Chief Secretary, asking why criminal contempt proceedings should not be initiated against him for alleged non-compliance with the court’s directions.

The matter has now been listed for further hearing on October 9. Taking a swipe at the Bhagwant Mann government, Shiromani Akali Dal leader Bikram Singh Majithia said the “veil of falsehood was lifted”. “The Bhagwant Mann government has stooped to such questionable tactics to avoid paying DA to its employees!” Bikram Singh Majithia said. Employees sought action against authorities for allegedly failing to comply with the court’s August 3 instructions, prompting the case’s return to the High Court.

The employees’ lawyer claimed that the government had not remitted the pending DA arrears within the timeframe specified, nor had it produced the requisite compliance report. The newest development renews judicial scrutiny of the Punjab government’s long-overdue financial obligations to its employees and pensioners.

School dropout rate ends in Jharkhand, but posts of over 99,000 teachers still vacant

Ranchi, Oct 06: In Jharkhand, the problem of children dropping out of school at the primary level has improved significantly. According to the NITI Aayog report released in May 2026, the dropout rate at the primary level in the state has come down from 6.41% in 2014-15 to zero in 2024-25. At the upper primary level too, the rate has come down from 7.42 per cent to 1.7 per cent. Jharkhand has also improved significantly at the secondary level.

The dropout rate has come down from 23.2 per cent to 3.5 per cent. Despite this, more than 99,000 posts of teachers are still vacant in the state.

The NITI Aayog report ‘School Education System in India: Time-Based Analysis and Policy Roadmap for Quality Improvement’ has brought out the changes that have taken place in Jharkhand’s school education in the last decade. According to the report, the dropout rate at the primary level has almost been

eliminated. At the upper primary and secondary level too, there has been a major improvement in the status of children staying in school. In 2014-15, the dropout rate at the secondary level in Jharkhand was 23.2 per cent. In 2024-25, it came down to 3.5 per cent. That’s a decline of about 20 percent. With this improvement, Jharkhand has joined the ranks of better performing states in the country.

However, the availability of teachers still remains a big challenge amid the

YouTubeer Anurag Dobhal and three others arrested for attacking brother-in-law in Dehradun: Police

New Delhi, Oct 06: Anurag Dobhal, a YouTubeer, and three others were detained in Uttarakhand’s Dehradun on Monday nite after assaulting his brother-in-law following an argument along Haridwar Bypass Road, police said. Around 10 p.m., the Nehru Colony police station received information from the control room regarding some youngsters fighting outside the Nexa showroom on Haridwar Bypass Road, according to police officers. “Our men arrived at the scene and discovered Dobhal and his companions attacking a man named Raj Singh Chauhan, his wife’s cousin brother.” The police



took both sides to the Bypass police outpost to keep the situation from escalating,” Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Pramendra Dobhal stated. “During discussions at the outpost,

Dobhal, Abhishek, Abhay Chaudhary and Kurbaan again attempted to assault Chauhan, despite being asked by police personnel to maintain peace. The four allegedly became aggressive

and tried to engage in another fight, following which a crowd gathered at the spot. Additional police personnel were called to the outpost and the four were arrested under Section 170 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) to maintain law and order...,” Dobhal added. Chauhan, who was injured during the alleged assault, was taken to Doon Hospital for medical attention. “A case was also filed against Dobhal and three others at the Nehru Colony police station in response to a complaint made by Chauhan. “Our investigation into the matter is ongoing,” he stated.

Bouncer agencies in Hyderabad allege religious discrimination at Dandiya events



New Delhi, Oct 06: Bouncer supply agencies in Hyderabad have urged the Telangana government and police to take action against event organizers who reportedly refuse to hire Muslim staff during Dandiya and Navratri events, claiming that security positions should not be rejected based on religion.

Bouncer Supply Agency representatives MD Feroz (Fazal), Sharda Reddy, Prabhakar, and Salman alleged that certain event organizers had recently ceased engaging Muslim bouncers for Dandiya festivities and other religious events.

The representatives said thousands of Hindu and Muslim bouncers across

Telangana depend on security work for their livelihood. They appealed to organisers to assess security personnel on professional standards rather than religion. “If a bouncer does something wrong, legal action can be taken against them. However, they stated both Hindu and Muslim bouncers should be treated

equally. The group claimed that the practice of excluding Muslim bouncers had become more widespread following the controversy surrounding Dandiya events in 2024. Previously, Telangana Bajrang Dal convenor Siva Ramulu openly advised Dandiya organizers not to hire individuals of other faiths as security officers and bouncers during the Navratri celebrations.

Asaduddin Owaisi, a Hyderabad MP and president of AIMIM, also criticized supposed Muslim worker boycotts. “Muslim bouncers and other workers have reported that event organizers are boycotting them under pressure from extremist organisations,” he said, urging authorities to take strong action. The speaker also urged people from other communities to fight such prejudice, warning that sectarian divides could jeopardize Telangana’s social harmony and progress.

Maharashtra Teacher Kills 17-Year-Old Daughter With Bat Following Argument Over TV

New Delhi, Oct 06: A teacher in Maharashtra’s Satara district killed his 17-year-old daughter by beating her on the head with a cricket bat after an argument about watching TV. The victim was identified as Arya Kadam. According to authorities, Arya argued with her younger brother and sister about watching TV at home on Saturday nite. During this time, Arya struck her younger sister in the eye. When her father, identified as Purushottam, scolded her, Arya became aggressive and ran towards her father with a bat, saying abusive words.

This angered her father, who snatched the same bat and hit Arya hard on the head. Arya died on the spot due to severe injuries. After the murder, Purushottam sat near the body for a long time and later informed his wife ear-

ly in the morning. Blood stains were subsequently removed from the floor to eliminate evidence, and Arya’s T-shirt was washed three times in a washing machine to remove blood.

The bloodied bat was thrown to the roof.

On Sunday morning, the family’s relatives and neighbors reported the event to the police. Initially, the family deceived the police, claiming that the girl had hit herself on the head. However, when questioned by the authorities, the mother acknowledged the truth, and the accused father confessed to his crime.

Police also retrieved a bat from the roof. “My daughter had gone astray; she had bad addictions, and I was forced to take this step after being fed up with her wrongdoing,” Purushottam said during interrogation. However,

neighbours said the girl was extremely friendly, spoke very lovingly and mingled with everyone.

Purushottam and his wife, Sheela, are both teachers. Investigations have revealed that Arya was not in a good mental state, was undergoing treatment from a psychiatrist in Pune and was given medicines every day. She used her phone and TV excessively and frequently became aggressive over little issues. Police investigations also discovered that Arya assaulted her father in May of this year, fracturing his arm. Police stated she grew upset frequently as a result of her extensive usage of mobile phones and had been hospitalized once before for the same mental state and irritability concerns.

Satara city police are looking into the incident further.

at the national level. However, in the last decade, it has increased by about 10 per cent.

There has been a decrease in the GER of the primary level of girls. It decreased from 111.68% to 93.1%. At the upper primary level too, the GER dropped from 89.56% to 85.3%. At the same time, there has been a positive change in the enrollment of girls at the higher secondary level. Here the GER has increased from 36.72% to 50.9%. This indicates that girls

“access to higher classes has improved, though the data at the primary and upper primary levels present a different picture. As per the budget for the financial year 2026-27, Jharkhand has 34,847 primary schools, 1,711 middle schools and 1,157 higher secondary schools. Around 70 lakh students are studying in these schools.

The number of vacant posts of teachers against such a large number of students clearly shows the challenge before the state’s

school education system. The state government has also worked towards connecting children with vocational education from the school level itself.

As per the budget, 1,197 labs have been set up in 803 schools. Arrangements have been made to impart vocational education in different trades through them. According to the government, about 1.58 lakh children are taking advantage of this. The aim is to connect students with traditional studies and employability skills.



Unlocking the Brahmaputra waterway

The flagging of the methanol cargo from Bogibeel Terminal in Dibrugarh for Dhaka by Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal marked a historic milestone in Assam’s waterways, brightening hopes for revival of a strategic international river trade route along the Brahmaputra. Long-term sustainability of this route hinges on bilateral ties between India and Bangladesh, and round-the-year navigability of the river-route via the Indo-Bangladesh Protocol (IBP) Route in the neighbouring country. Apart from being the first cargo shipped from upper Assam to foreign port since India’s independence, the voyage of the barge is set to demonstrate the navigability of the entire stretch of the National Waterway-2, signalling to potential investors the commercial viability of river-based logistics, infrastructure, and cruise-tourism along the Brahmaputra from Dibrugarh to Dhubri. The vessel carrying methanol produced by Assam Petro-Chemicals Limited, Namrup, will travel about 768 km on NW-2 to the India-Bangladesh border, then continue along the IBP route covering a total distance of 1,300 km from Bogibeel to Narayanganj in Dhaka. The establishment of the customs and immigration complexes at Dhubri and Bogibeel ports has already paved the way for positioning Assam as strategic getaway for cross-border commerce with Bhutan and Bangladesh. While Customs and Immigration Complex at Dhubri has been designed to enhance regulatory oversight and boost export-import, and as a strategic gateway for inland water transport and cross-border commerce with Bangladesh and Bhutan, the Customs and Immigration Complex at Bogibeel has been developed as part of a modern tourist-cum-cargo terminal integrating customs, with facilities that include dedicated arrival and departure waiting halls, cargo storage areas. Optimal utilisation of the strengthened logistics and enhanced passenger movement along the Brahmaputra by all northeastern states can unlock the potential of trade and tourism in the entire region. As the entire region sources supplies of essentials from advanced states in India, use of the river route can drastically cut down transportation expense since cost advantage of waterways over road and railway is significantly higher. Earlier, successful sailing of a long-

haul consignment of 1500 MT of cement originating at Pandu port to Patna covering 2,350 km via NW-2 and IBP route and NW-1 in 23 days demonstrated another crucial milestone of the region: the growing importance of Northeast as a supplier of essential goods. The outbound consignments from Bogibeel and Pandu are expected to shape new perception of among investors, traders outside of Assam and other states in the region as important business destination for both consumption and supplies. Such shift in perception directly influences investment choices as it eliminates uncertainty over marketability of good produced in the region and finding external markets. While smooth navigability of inbound cargo from NW-1 to NW-2 via IBP route can strengthen investors’ confidence about cheaper procurement of raw materials for industries by using the waterway, showcasing of the successful voyage of the outbound cargo can dispel long-standing doubts about marketability of goods produced in Assam and neighbouring states. Once investors seeking to establish manufacturing units in the region start noticing these developments, it will inevitably draw the attention of the river-logistics investors to begin looking at the Brahmaputra waterway as commercially viable and dependable, strengthening prospects of big-ticket players in the sector. Nevertheless, maintenance of water depth for smooth navigability of the vessels along the Brahmaputra is a challenging task as high sedimentation and the river’s braided nature make channel marking extremely difficult. Availability and smooth fund flow is essential to ensure uninterrupted dredging work for maintenance of the channel depth.

The central government’s push to prioritise use of waterway for cutting down carbon emission along highways has provided a policy architecture to fund projects aimed at strengthening the Brahmaputra waterway. The methanol consignment from Namrup’s plant to Dhaka has also demonstrated the fact that Bangladesh extending full cooperation to make IBP route available to India for seamless connectivity between NW-1 and NW-2 is also beneficial for the country and very much in its own interest. Gradually, the list of goods supplied to the neighbouring country from Assam and other states in the region can be enlarged.

Safeguarding children in the age of Artificial Intelligence

For teenagers around the world, including in India, artificial intelligence (AI) is becoming a part of everyday lives. They are using it to study for exams, understand difficult concepts, create content, and learn new skills. Global OpenAI data suggests that nine in ten teens already use ChatGPT for learning and skill building in a single week. Users in India are twice as likely to turn to ChatGPT for learning and education queries compared to the global median. The question, then, is how that use will shape the way they learn, think, and navigate the world.

AI has the potential to personalise learning, bridge educational gaps, and make knowledge more accessible through native-language and voice experiences. But greater access also entails greater responsibility. Teens need protection from harmful and age-inappropriate content, and from patterns of use that could weaken

independent thinking or encourage over-reliance. This is why teen safety has to be about more than simply restricting content. AI products should also help teenagers develop the skills and judgement to use them safely, critically, and independently. That requires building on the safeguards already designed into AI systems with additional protections for teens. This means thinking about age-appropriate content and parental controls, but also how the system responds, what defaults it sets, when it slows interactions down, and how it reinforces real-world support. In India, age-appropriate design must also reflect how teens actually access technology. In many Indian households, access happens on shared devices, with some surveys suggesting that such usage for teens may be well over 70%. Personal device ownership is likely even lower among girls than boys. These nuances need to be

accounted for in how protections are designed. On shared devices, an age declared or verified when an account is created may not always reflect the person actually using an AI service. Age-prediction mechanisms can then provide an additional layer of protection by using a range of signals to assess whether a user is under 18 and adapting the experience accordingly. ChatGPT relies on such age estimation, using behavioural and account-level signals to identify under-18 users and activating additional protections automatically.

But AI companies cannot solve for teen safety alone. Parents, educators, and trusted adults have an important role in helping teens build agency. This means knowing AI can be wrong, recognising unhealthy patterns of use, and stepping away when needed. That shared responsibility creates a second challenge of helping the adults around teenagers keep pace with

what constitutes responsible use. Parents and educators are being asked to guide a generation growing up with a technology many are only beginning to understand themselves. That makes teen safety not just a product question, but a societal one. Good design should not force a trade-off between oversight and independence; it should help families navigate with more confidence and less guesswork. That means prioritising learning over speed and convenience. While products for adults may prioritise quick answers and productivity, AI for teens should help them ask better questions and work through problems. The aim should be to make AI a tool that strengthens learning and independence, rather than one that simply makes it easier to avoid the work of learning.

These principles should inform how AI products are designed in practice. For example, parents can

be given tools to shape how their teens use AI, including settings that make new chats default to a learning-oriented mode during designated study hours, guiding teens through problems step by step rather than simply providing answers. New uses of AI will create new risks and our understanding of how teens interact with these systems will continue to evolve. Companies need to keep testing and improving their systems, including by listening to teens, parents, educators, and experts. India now has a chance not just to adopt AI for young people, but to help define the norms for what responsible AI should look like globally for teens. Given its scale, diversity and distinct access patterns, lessons from the Indian experience have relevance well beyond its borders. If AI is going to grow up alongside this generation, we should make sure that this generation can grow with it safely.

Inside China’s growth trap: too much infrastructure, too little demand

This week, China is on holiday as Golden Week coincides with the Mid-Autumn Festival, resulting in a 13-day break. Hotel bookings for stays of a week or longer have more than doubled compared with the previous year. Meanwhile, Beijing has launched a month-long campaign to encourage holidaymakers to spend more. But the underlying statistics tell a more cautious story: during last year’s Golden Week, average spending per trip fell to a three-year low of about 911 yuan. Although the Chinese are travelling, they are not spending as much. And it’s becoming a big problem in the world’s second-largest economy. This expenditure gap is also the focus of the International Monetary Fund’s recent publication, *Toward a New Economic Growth Model for China*, edited by Thomas Helbling, Sonali Jain-Chandra, Siddharth Kothari, and Krishna Srinivasan. The book’s eleven chapters address topics ranging from household savings to bankruptcy law. Together, they examine an economy that has undergone one of history’s most dramatic transformations but is now creaking under three key issues: local governments that keep building despite diminishing returns, the survival of weak firms, and households’ reluctance to spend.

This situation is immediately relevant to India. A China that does not spend enough at home must rely more on exports. How Beijing addresses these three challenges will influence India’s trade, manufacturing sector, and position in Asia for the foreseeable future. China’s economic achievement deserves acknowledgement. In 1978, its per capita income, measured in purchasing power terms,

was approximately \$900, less than 3 per cent of that of the United States. Over four decades, with an average growth rate nearing 9 per cent, the economy expanded nearly sixtyfold, facilitating the migration of more than 750 million people to cities. But the Chinese model is now showing its limits. In 1956, Robert Solow demonstrated that perpetual economic growth cannot be sustained solely through capital accumulation, as each successive addition of machinery or infrastructure yields diminishing returns. Paul Krugman’s 1994 essay, “The Myth of Asia’s Miracle,” also cautioned that growth driven by sheer effort rather than innovation eventually loses momentum. A particularly striking chart from the International Monetary Fund would have intrigued Robert Lucas, who in 1990 questioned why capital does not migrate from affluent nations to poorer ones, where it should theoretically yield higher returns. China’s situation has inverted this conundrum. According to the IMF, the return on an additional unit of capital in China has fallen by more than half since the 1970s and is now lower than in the United States. As a result, a nation with a fraction of America’s income now possesses, at the margin, more capital than it can effectively utilise.

Local governments account for about 85 per cent of general government expenditure, yet receive only about 50 per cent of the corresponding revenue. Economists call this discrepancy a vertical fiscal imbalance. To bridge this gap, Chinese local officials have resorted to land sales and off-budget borrowing. Their career advancement depended on meeting growth targets, incentivising continuous construction. China’s experience with GDP targets validates Charles Goodhart’s 1975 assertion that a statistic loses reliability once it becomes a policy target. As the property market declined, on-budget local revenues, including those from land sales, fell from 17.9 per cent of GDP in the decade preceding the pandemic to 13.6 per cent in 2023-24. Meanwhile, the aggregate debt of local governments and their financing vehicles has risen to over 80 per cent of GDP, up from about 10 per cent before the global financial crisis. In contrast, India addresses this issue through a constitutionally mandated Finance Commission, which redistributes central tax revenue to states every five years, providing a longstanding institutional solution to the fiscal challenges China is currently facing.

In his 1942 work *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, Joseph Schumpeter argued that capitalism progresses through a process of creative destruction, in which innovative firms supplant outdated ones. The IMF has observed a decline in this Schumpeterian process within China. Specifically, among manufacturing firms, those established for less than a decade accounted for approximately 70 per cent of revenue in 2004-05, a figure that diminished to about 30 per cent by 2017-18. State-owned enterprises, on average, exhibit 31 per cent lower productivity than private firms, with capital productivity about half as high. Despite this, these enterprises continue to receive preferential credit because they operate under what János Kornai described in *Economics of Shortage* (1980) as a “soft budget constraint”, allowing them to rely on state inter-

vention for financial rescue. In January 2024, a Hong Kong court ordered the liquidation of Evergrande, the parent company of a property conglomerate comprising approximately one hundred subsidiaries with liabilities of roughly \$330 billion. This decision represented an exception that confirmed the prevailing norm. Further, the IMF notes that the central bank’s credit-based policy tools disproportionately benefit large state-backed firms over smaller private enterprises.

This explains a paradox that confounds numerous analysts. In 2023, China was responsible for approximately 40 per cent of global patent filings, compared with 13 per cent for the United States. However, its total factor productivity growth has diminished by about half since 2007, falling to below 2 per cent. A prior study by Antoine Dechezleprêtre and colleagues found that approximately 72 per cent of Chinese patents did not result in subsequent filings domestically or internationally, compared with 13 per cent of American patents. Nonetheless, the IMF suggests that this quality disparity may be narrowing. Innovation requires an environment in which new firms can grow and unsuccessful ones are permitted to exit the market. As a result, the proposed amendments to China’s 2006 bankruptcy law, released in September 2025, which make it easier for failing firms to exit, represent some of the most significant reforms, despite receiving minimal attention. The services sector provides a more optimistic picture. The IMF reports that China’s market services, including finance and information technology, show both high productivity and strong productivity

growth. Nevertheless, services remain about 20 percentage points smaller as a share of the economy than in advanced economies, indicating growth potential once capital is no longer confined to inefficient firms.

China’s households show a strong reluctance to spend. According to the life-cycle hypothesis proposed by Franco Modigliani and Richard Brumberg in 1954, people save during their working years to fund their retirement. Modigliani, with Larry Cao Shi in 2004, applied this hypothesis to explain China’s savings conundrum. The dismantling of the “iron rice bowl”, which encompassed lifetime employment and enterprise-provided housing, healthcare, and pensions, occurred during the state-enterprise reforms of the late 1990s. This shift transferred risks to families, prompting Chinese households to save more, as predicted by Hayne Leland (1968) and Miles Kimball (1990) for individuals facing uncertainty. Currently, household savings in China surpass one-fifth of GDP, a figure exceeding that of any OECD economy. Public expenditure on healthcare and social security constitutes about 3 per cent of GDP each, compared with OECD averages of 7.2 and 8.2 per cent, respectively. Urban households with rural hukou registrations save approximately 7 percentage points more than their counterparts with urban registration. This is a phenomenon that Keynes identified as “the paradox of thrift”, in which the prudence that safeguards an individual household can harm the broader economy if universally adopted. From mid-2023 through 2025, consumer inflation in China remained below 1 per cent, illustrating how restrained

spending has kept prices from rising much. This heightens the debt deflation risk described by Irving Fisher in 1933—where declining prices worsen debt burdens.

However, the solution is unexpectedly economical. Doubling the benefits of the Residents’ Pension Program, crucial for rural China, would incur an additional cost of 0.6 per cent of GDP by 2050 and potentially increase rural household consumption by approximately 4 per cent. This expenditure is a minor portion of the approximately 4 per cent of GDP that industrial policy consumed annually between 2013 and 2023, predominantly allocated to manufacturing, where capacity has expanded more rapidly than domestic demand. This surplus capacity is where China’s decisions intersect with India’s interests. China’s current account surplus increased to 3.7 per cent of GDP in 2025, necessitating continued vigilance in Indian trade defence. India has been actively developing alternative markets. The Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) between India and the United Kingdom was implemented on 15 July 2026. Additionally, the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between India and the European Union, finalised in January after nearly two decades of negotiations, is expected to be signed by year-end. The broader trend favours India. Its economic growth is already driven by domestic demand and services, the very sectors the IMF is advocating for Beijing. The United Nations projects India’s working-age population to continue expanding through 2054, while China’s is expected to decline from 984 million in 2024 to 745 million by 2050.

The curriculum blindspot: lessons schools ignore

Even though our kids spend years studying for exams, some of the most significant tests they will encounter in life don’t have textbooks, grades or answer keys. Children learn fractions, mathematics, grammatical rules, scientific ideas, and a plethora of other topics from us as educators and parents. Additionally, we celebrate high percentages and

flawless results while preparing students for exams, competitions and entrance exams. However, in the process of finishing the curriculum and getting ready for the next exam, we might be forgetting to ask a straightforward question: Are we educating kids just to do well in school or are we also training them to function with confidence outside of it? Consider a stu-

dent who is adept at calculating percentages but lacks the knowledge necessary to handle a monthly budget.

Someone else can produce a compelling article about environmental responsibility, but they are unable to prepare a simple dinner or handle a small emergency. Teenagers may be familiar with a number of mathematical formulas, but they may not un-

derstand how loans operate, what insurance is or the importance of consistent saving. These are not signs of a lack of intelligence rather, they show a disconnect between what kids learn and what life ultimately demands of them. Naturally, academic knowledge is crucial. Science teaches inquiry, literature broadens perspectives, mathematics fosters reasoning, and histo-

ry aids in our comprehension of society. Replacing these subjects is undoubtedly not the solution. The challenge is whether education can accommodate a different type of information the knowledge needed to get by in daily life. One such area is financial literacy. Instant payments, internet shopping, subscriptions and easy access to credit are all part of the environment

that children are growing up in. They should learn the distinction between requiring and desiring, borrowing and saving and income and expenditure before they start earning. A child may be better prepared for adulthood by a straightforward classroom exercise involving a home budget than through a chapter alone. Emotional education comes next. We frequently

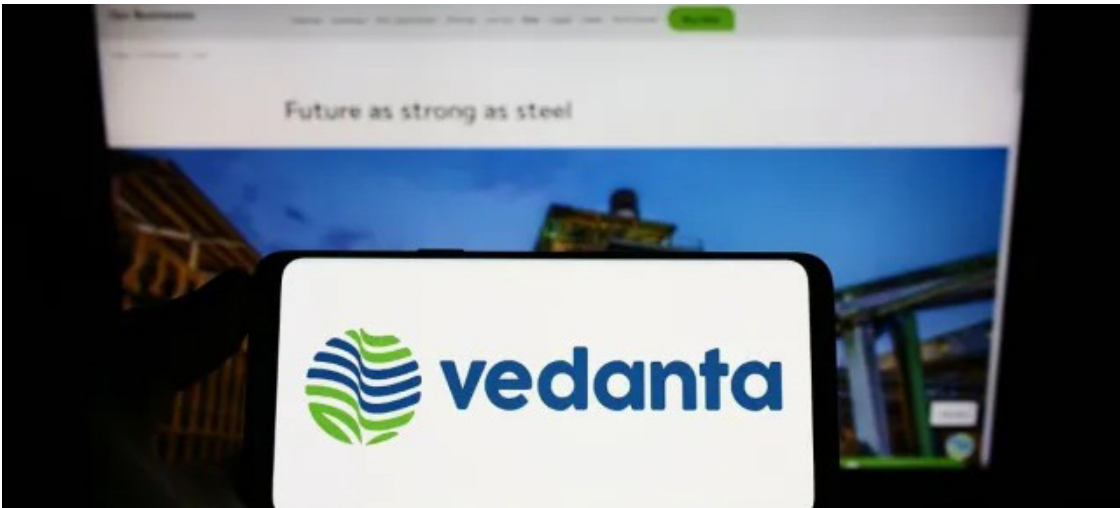
advise kids to be confident, handle stress or control their anger without actually teaching them how. It’s not a soft extra to know how to handle disappointment, express emotions, settle disputes and seek for assistance. Throughout life, these skills influence relationships, the workplace and one’s own well-being. Additionally, schools can teach kids practical skills like

basic cooking, first aid, personal safety, comprehending essential paperwork, basic home repairs and disaster preparedness skills that earlier generations frequently learned organically at home. Being able to take care of oneself is a sign of dignity. At eighteen, independence shouldn’t start all at once. The same consideration should be given to communication.

Dividend Alert: Vedanta to consider first interim dividend on Oct 8

New Delhi: Vedanta’s board of directors will meet on Thursday, October 8, to consider and approve the company’s first interim dividend for FY27

Anil Agarwal-led Vedanta, said in its regulatory filing that the company has fixed Wednesday, October 14, as the record date for determining the eligibility of shareholders for the interim dividend, if declared by the board. This will be first dividend after the demerger of the group companies into four different entities in June this year. Shareholders whose names appear as eligible shareholders as of the record date will be entitled to receive the interim dividend, subject to the board approving the payout at its October 8 meeting. The company has not yet disclosed the amount or per-share dividend. The payout will be determined by the board at the meeting. Vedanta has paid a total dividend of ₹140 per share to shareholders since February 2023, according to data available on the stock exchanges. The company has paid dividends every



year since 2007. Its highest-ever interim dividend was Rs 31.5 per share, declared in May 2022.In FY26, Vedanta declared interim dividends three times — in June 2025, August 2025 and March 2026. The three payouts totalled ₹34 per share during the financial year. The company had also issued bonus shares in a 1:1 ratio in 2008.About Vedanta

Vedanta Ltd is part of Anil Agrawal-led vedanta group com-

panies. It is a leading global producer of metals, critical minerals and technology, with operations across India, Africa, the Middle East and East Asia.

The company is focused on base metals and is a major producer of zinc, silver, copper, nickel and ferroalloys. In June 2026, Vedanta completed the listing of four independent companies as part of its demerger, creating more focused, sector-specific businesses.

Following the demerger, Vedanta continues to focus on its core metals and critical minerals businesses while pursuing expansion in areas linked to the energy transition and advanced technologies.

Vedanta share priceThe share price of Vedanta is up nearly 4% in intraday trading. The stock has declined 6.28% over the past three months. On a year-to-date basis, Vedanta shares have fallen 56.12%.

Glenmark enters \$45.8 million US OTC market

New Delhi: Glenmark Therapeutics, USA, a subsidiary of Glenmark Pharmaceuticals, has launched Adapalene Gel USP, 0.1%, in new pump packs in the American over-the-counter market. The company announced the launch on Tuesday from its US base in Elmwood Park, New Jersey. Glenmark Adapalene gel launch in US

The gel will be sold in 15 g and 45 g pump packs. Both sizes are listed on Amazon and Walmart.com. Glenmark said the product can be compared to the active ingredient of Differin Gel, 0.1%.The company has stated that its product is marketed only for the indications on its approved drug facts label. These may differ from the indications approved for the reference listed drug. Differin is a brand owned by Galderma Holding S.A. and distributed by Galderma Laboratories, L.P. Glenmark said

the product is not made or distributed by Galderma. Galderma does not make or license Glenmark’s product. Citing Nielsen syndicated data for the 52 weeks ending September 5, 2026, Glenmark said the Differin Gel, 0.1% (OTC) market recorded annual sales of about \$45.8 million. The market figure covers the brand and all available therapeutic equivalents.Glenmark on US dermatology expansion

“The introduction of Adapalene Gel USP, 0.1% (OTC) in a new pump pack enhances consumer experience by offering a convenient and easy-to-use dispensing option while further strengthening our growing U.S. dermatology portfolio. This launch reflects our commitment to delivering high-quality and affordable healthcare solutions that meet evolving consumer needs.” Marc Kikuchi, President and Business Head, North America,

said. Glenmark Pharmaceuticals is a research-led pharmaceutical company based in Mumbai. It operates 11 manufacturing facilities across four continents and six research and development centres. Its commercial presence extends to more than 80 countries. The company sells branded, innovative, generic and consumer health products, with a focus on respiratory, dermatology and oncology. Glenmark’s share price has declined 0.08% as of early trade on October 6. The company’s share price has decreased 7.3% in the past month. However, Glenmark’s share price has increased 15.78% in the past year. Glenmark Therapeutics, USA, launches Adapalene Gel USP 0.1% in new pump packs in the US OTC market, available on Amazon and Walmart, offering an affordable alternative to Differin Gel with convenient dispensing.

Juniper Hotels inks MoU to acquire Novotel Imagicaa for Rs 248 crore

New Delhi: Juniper Hotels has entered into a binding Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Imagicaa world Entertainment to acquire the operating Novotel Imagicaa hotel in Khopoli, Maharashtra, for a total consideration of Rs 248 crore.

Juniper Hotels’ board had already approved the binding MoU on September 16, but the MoU was signed on October 5.The company said in a regulatory filing with the stock exchanges that the acquisition does not involve any issuance of shares by Juniper Hotels.

The hotel is located in Khopoli and is strategically positioned close to Mumbai. The property is spread across around 11 acres of land and has a built-up area of approxi-

mately 2.8 lakh sq ft. The hotel has 287 guest rooms and includes restaurants, banquet and meeting facilities, recreational amenities and other associated hotel infrastructure. Juniper Hotels is a luxury hotel development and ownership company that develops, owns and operates luxury.

upper-upscale and upscale hotels and serviced apartments across major business and tourist destinations in India. The company is a strategic partnership between the Saraf Group and Hyatt, with Hyatt-affiliated properties forming a key part of its portfolio.

As per its FY25 annual report filed with the BSE, Juniper’s business is focused entirely on hotel and serviced apartment

operations, with its properties offering accommodation, food and beverage, and other hospitality services. Imagicaa world Entertainment owns and operates entertainment and leisure destinations in India.

The company operates brands including Imagicaa, Wet’n Joy, Sai Teerth and Aqua Imagicaa, offering theme parks, water parks and other family entertainment experiences. Its flagship Imagicaa destination in Khopoli, Maharashtra, includes a theme park, water park, snow park and hotel, and is located off the Mumbai-Pune Expressway.

Juniper Hotels to buy Novotel Imagicaa in Khopoli for Rs 248 crore, adding a 287-room property near Mumbai.

Israel was prepared to shoot down Flydubai plane if it continued towards Tel Aviv

New Delhi: Flydubai attack: Israel was prepared to shoot down the Flydubai passenger plane carrying more than 150 Israelis if it had continued moving towards Tel Aviv after the captain was attacked in the cockpit, as per a report.The flight from Dubai to Tel Aviv was approaching Israel last week when the co-pilot allegedly stabbed the captain and attempted to crash the aircraft, according to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, passengers and the captain. After the plane plunged 14,000 feet, the Israeli Air Force tried to contact the cockpit but received no response. A committee was activated, a command centre was set up, fighter jets were scrambled and Israeli airspace was closed, as mentioned in a report in CBS News.Israel recalled the jets after the aircraft, about 400 miles from Israel, turned towards Saudi Arabia, which then scrambled its



own fighter jets, it said.

The captain managed to fight off the co-pilot long enough to unlock the cockpit door. Israeli passengers and Flydubai staff overpowered the co-pilot, while two off-duty pilots aboard the flight took control and made an emergency landing in Tabuk, Saudi Arabia. According to the report that cited Israeli sources, if Flight

1073 had continued towards Israel and reached a certain distance, Israeli fighter jets would have entered Jordanian airspace to investigate. The pilots would have tried to visually inspect the cockpit and make contact with the pilot before assessing the cabin and passengers. If the aircraft was determined to be hijacked, remained silent on the radio and made no

demands, the committee would have contacted the defence minister and prime minister, it said.

The protocol calls for a rogue flight approaching Israel to be shot down, but only the prime minister could make that decision. The rationale would be to prevent greater loss of life if the aircraft crashed into a high-value target such as the Azrieli buildings or an airport. An Israeli official told CBS News that the co-pilot said during interrogation in the UAE that he had planned the attack before joining Flydubai and intended to crash the aircraft at Ben Gurion Airport.

The co-pilot, identified as Omani national Hamam al Hamami, had previously flown to Israel, according to sources.An early Israeli investigation indicates the attempted hijacking was likely a lone-wolf attack, although the investigation is ongoing.

Honasa Consumer shares rise 8% ; Mamaearth growth seen in high

New Delhi: Honasa Consumer Ltd stock jumped 8% in Tuesday’s trade after the company said it expects another robust quarter in Q2 FY27, with net sales value (NSV) growth in the early-thirties on a year-on-year (YoY) basis. The company said the expected growth is supported by broad-based traction across its focus categories and brands. The company said its largest brand, Mamaearth, has sustained its growth momentum over the last few quarters and is expected to report high-teens YoY NSV growth during the quarter. Honasa attributed the expected performance to rising brand affinity and a widening offline

footprint.

Meanwhile, the company’s younger brands are expected to accelerate their YoY NSV growth to around the mid-forties. These brands include The Derma Co., Aqualogica, BBlunt, Dr. Sheth’s, Staze, Lumineve and Reginald Men.Honasa Consumer shares touched a high of Rs 478.20 in Tuesday’s trade, up 8.24% from the previous close of Rs 441.80.

Offline channels continue to be a key growth driver for the company, with both General Trade and Modern Trade expected to post strong growth in Q2 FY27. Honasa said General Trade is benefiting from deeper direct

distribution, while sharper execution at the point of sale is supporting Modern Trade. The company also expects continued growth momentum from its online business. On profitability, Honasa said it continues to focus on improving its EBITDA margin and expects the business to deliver an early double-digit operating margin profile in Q2 FY27, along with strong YoY gains during the quarter.

The company clarified that the update is provisional and subject to limited review by its statutory auditors. It also said the disclosure is voluntary and does not constitute financial results or earnings guidance.

Cross Rs 1,000 mark, hit record high; here are fresh price targets Sterlite Technologies shares

New Delhi: Shares of Sterlite Technologies Ltd rose for the fifth session today, surging 21% in two days. The rally in the stock comes amid global investment firm Nomura assigning a Buy call on the stock with a target price of Rs 1,350. The stock has been gaining for five days. Strong industry tailwinds are expected to drive robust growth, Nomura said adding that it expects revenue/EBITDA CAGR of 50%/89% over FY26–29.The brokerage is of the view that rapid data centre additions and constrained supply are driving an optical fibre cable demand supercycle. The company is well-positioned to benefit from strong optical fibre cable demand due to its integrated capacity.The stock is overbought on charts with a RSI of 75.3. An RSI above 70 indicates a stock has more buyers than sellers in a trading session.

Sterlite Technologies shares rose 5% to a fresh record of Rs 1046.90 against the previous close of Rs 999.60. Market cap of the firm rose to Rs 53,667 crore.

Sterlite Technologies share price has risen 454% during the last six months and gained 920% in 2026.

The stock trades above its 5 day, 10 day, 20-day, 30 day, 50-day, 100-day and 200-day moving averages, which signals a strong uptrend. The stock has a beta of 1.28, indicating high volatility in a year. Domestic brokerage firm Nirmal Bang institutional Equities has initiated coverage on Sterlite Technologies Ltd (STL) with a 40 per cent upside in the counter from its previous close.Nirmal Bang expects Sterlite Technologies to benefit from a combination of improving demand,



a recovery in earnings and a gradual shift towards higher-margin connectivity products. The brokerage views the company as an integrated optical connectivity player, with its optical networking business accounting for around 95% of overall revenue.

The brokerage estimates Sterlite Tech’s revenue could more than double in FY27, rising 103% year-on-year to Rs 9,625.6 crore, before increasing further to Rs 16,828.8 crore by FY29. The growth is expected to be supported by a sharp increase in optical fibre cable (OFC) volumes, which Nirmal Bang projects will rise from 32 million fibre-km in FY26 to 68 million fibre-km by FY29. Profitability is also expected to improve significantly. Nirmal Bang sees EBITDA margin expanding to 23% in FY27 from 12.3% in FY26, while gross margin could improve to 52% from 49.7%. The brokerage also expects stronger realisations in the OFC business, with average realisation

projected to increase from Rs 1,219 per fibre-km in FY26 to Rs 1,942 per fibre-km by FY29.Brokerage Nuvama has a price target of Rs 1310 and an outperform call on the stock.

“We are raising FY27E EBITDA by 8% to factor in stronger visibility (we are currently 21% below FY29 EBITDA guidance). Reiterate ‘BUY’ with a Sep-27 TP of Rs 1,310 (earlier Rs 1,100), based on 20x Sep-28 EV/EBITDA (implies 35x FY28E EPS). At CMP, the stock trades at 15.9x FY28E EV/EBITDA (on a fully diluted basis),” said Nuvama.

Sterlite Technologies is engaged in designing, building and managing smarter digital networks. Its digital networks focused business products, services and software includes optical communication products, network and system integration services and operations support systems (OSS)/business support system (BSS) software solutions. It operates in six continents and more than 100 countries.

Apple may have two launch windows in October

New Delhi: Apple’s October plans could be bigger than they first appeared. The company is expected to unveil new smart home products in the middle of the month, but that may not be the only launch window Apple has lined up. According to MacRumors, Apple is also preparing another set of product announcements for the final week of October, with new Macs among the possible launches. The company is also expected to bring a new iPad mini this month, although it is still unclear exactly when Apple will announce it. That means if you have been waiting for a new Mac, iPad or Apple smart home device, there could be several launches to watch before October ends.

Apple’s first expected product push is around October 13. The company could introduce a new smart home hub, an updated HomePod mini and a new Apple TV 4K, based on information previously reported by Bloomberg’s Mark Gurman. Apple has not officially confirmed this lineup yet. The bigger question is what comes next. MacRumors says it has learned about another Apple launch planned for the last week of October. The exact products have not been confirmed, but Macs are currently among the strongest possibilities.New Macs and OLED iPad mini could be



nextApple could use the second window to introduce the long-awaited MacBook Ultra models, which are expected to feature OLED displays and a thinner, lighter design. A 14-inch MacBook Pro with an M6 chip and an M6-powered iMac are also possibilities.Apple has separately confirmed a high-end Mac Studio with the M5 Ultra chip and 512GB RAM for late October. Then there is the new iPad mini, which is expected to get an OLED display, A20 Pro chip, landscape-oriented front camera and redesigned speaker system. Apple could announce it with the smart home products, alongside the Macs, or later this month.And this is all happening just before the iPhone Duo goes on sale on October 23, making the next few weeks particularly busy for Apple fans

Jeffrey Archer, former Conservative politician and novelist, dies aged 86

London: Jeffrey Archer, the bestselling author and former MP whose political career ended in disgrace when he was imprisoned for perjury, has died at the age of 86.

Archer, who was a Conservative MP for five years before serving as the party's deputy chair, died "suddenly and peacefully" at his home "between writing sessions" on Monday, his publisher HarperCollins said.

He had a successful career as an author and was made a life peer in 1992.

During a run to become mayor of London for the Conservatives in 1999, his political career was in effect ended when it emerged he had lied in court over a decade earlier when a newspaper accused him of paying money to a sex worker. He was convicted of perjury and perverting the course of justice and imprisoned for four years.

An Old Bailey jury found that he had lied in a libel action he had brought against the Star newspaper in 1987 in which he had been awarded £500,000 in damages.

He was released early in 2003 and returned to the House of Lords until he retired in 2024.

Kate Elton, HarperCollins UK's chief executive and Archer's editor, said: "It has been

one of the great privileges of my publishing life to have been Jeffrey Archer's editor.

"He was the master storyteller and an editor's dream – phenomenally hard-working, utterly committed to completing draft after draft to get every word as perfect as possible, and a true champion of the team nature of great publishing."

Archer's death came just one day before the publication of his new novel, Adam and Eve, on Tuesday 6 October.

His first novel, Not a Penny More, Not a Penny Less, was published in 1976, two years after bankruptcy marked the end of his time as a sitting MP. This marked the beginning of an enviable writing career. Archer spent a total of 14 years and five months on the Sunday Times bestseller lists and over five years on the New York Times bestseller lists, selling 300 million books in 119 countries in 49 languages. His 1979 novel Kane and Abel remains among the best-selling books in the world, having sold more than 30 million copies to date.

His death came less than 24 hours after Archer had met and signed books for hundreds of fans at a sold-out event with broadcaster Gyles Brandreth at the Leicester Square Theatre in central London on Sunday,



HarperCollins said. Writing on X, Brandreth said: "Just yesterday I did a show with Jeffrey Archer to celebrate his new novel – he said it was to be his last.

"He was in the most wonderful, ebullient form and had such a great reception from a packed house. He was funny, engaging and self-deprecating – a great storyteller to the last."

Archer was first elected an MP in a 1969 byelection for the constituency of Louth in Lincolnshire when he was 29 years old, having already worked as a Conservative councillor for Havering in north-east London, a period during which he also ran a Mayfair art gallery.

Archer cast himself as a centrist in parliament, frequently rebelling against the right wing

of the Conservative party, but his political career stalled when he became the victim of a fraudulent investment scheme, which left him almost half a million pounds in debt. He said he would therefore not stand in the 1974 election "due to financial difficulties".

His first novel was a direct effort to regain financial control – a move that paid off, and

Not a Penny More, Not a Penny Less was adapted for radio, and later, for TV. By the mid-1980s Archer had written several successful novels as well as short stories, plays and children's books.

As his literary career bore fruit, Archer returned to politics, becoming a popular speaker at grassroots events, leading Margaret Thatcher to appoint him deputy chairman of the Conservative party in 1985.

But in October 1986 he became embroiled in scandal when the News of the World claimed he'd spent £2,000 to pay off a "vice girl", a story immediately followed by a more detailed story in the Star alleging Archer had paid a woman named Monica Coghlan for sex. Archer sued the Star, and the case came to court the following year, winning £500,000 in damages but sowing the seeds for his downfall over a decade later.

When the allegations broke, the leader of the Conservative party at the time, William Hague, expelled Archer from the party saying: "This is the end of politics for Jeffrey Archer. I will not tolerate such behaviour in my party."

At the time he was charged in 2000, he was also making headlines by starring in his own

West End play The Accused, which ran at the Theatre Royal Haymarket in London, and in which Archer's character played an alleged murderer on trial and in which the audience voted on whether they believed Archer's character was guilty or innocent at the end of each performance.

Archer's perjury trial began on 30 May 2001, a month after Monica Coghlan was killed in a road traffic accident.

Following sentencing he was imprisoned at Belmarsh, a category A prison in London but later moved to four other prisons before his release in 2003, having served half of his sentence.

Despite retaining his seat in the House of Lords, Archer did not take an active role in the upper chamber of parliament and gave up his seat in 2024.

The former Tory minister, Nadhim Zahawi, paid tribute to Archer, writing on X: "Jeffrey Archer was a dear friend and an extraordinary human being. His gift for storytelling was matched by his wit, warmth and boundless energy. Life was never dull in Jeffrey's company."

Archer had been due to be at the Cheltenham festival later in the month to discuss his forthcoming novel. Archer is survived by his wife, Mary, and their sons, William and James.

Ukraine war briefing: Kyiv claims half of Russia's oil refining capacity destroyed

Ukraine: Long-range Ukrainian strikes have taken out more than half of Russia's oil refining capacity, hampering Moscow's ability to supply its forces during the war, the defence ministry in Kyiv has claimed. Ukrainian forces have repeatedly attacked refineries from Moscow to Siberia, sparking a widespread fuel crisis in Russia earlier this year that forced authorities to restrict petrol sales. "Fifty-one per cent of struck refining capacity is a significant blow to the enemy's economy, to its ability to carry out aggression and supply its troop groupings," Ukrainian defence minister Yevhenii Khmara said. "Our deep strikes continue to bring the war to Russian territory."

Russian officials have not released figures on damage to the country's oil infrastructure. But in a rare acknowledgment of the strikes' economic impact, Vladimir Putin said they had cost Russia roughly 1% of its gross domestic product. "They started attacking oil refineries and openly declared the goal of damaging our economy. Did they achieve their goal? Partially," the Russian president told a meeting of the Valdai Club forum of international foreign policy experts last Thursday.

Donald Trump has blamed Ukrainian attacks on Russian oil refineries for high petrol prices, saying the Iran war was no longer responsible. "What's driving up Gasoline is no longer the strait of Hormuz, because Record Numbers of Barrels are coming out now on an almost daily basis, but the word, 'Refineries,' where Russia's are being blown up by Ukraine," the US president posted on his Truth Social platform.

Six people were killed and nearly 60 injured when Russian bombs struck a residential area of Ukraine's north-eastern city of Kharkiv on



Monday, officials said. Rescue workers led stunned residents out of badly damaged buildings and flats, guiding them carefully around piles of rubble. Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city, lies close to the Russian border and has come under regular shelling and drone attacks since Moscow invaded in February 2022. French president Emmanuel Macron condemned Russia's decision to scale up strikes on civilian infrastructure, saying Moscow "has made the irresponsible choice to intensify its strikes on civilian infrastructure and targets".

Russian drones struck a grain ship in the Black Sea on Monday, Volodymyr Zelenskyy said, after Romania reported a ship had caught fire and sunk near its coast with two crew members killed. "A horrific strike by two Russian drones on a civilian vessel in neutral waters carrying corn," the Ukrainian president said on X, adding that the ship was Turkish-owned and that Azerbaijani

and Indian nationals were onboard. Romanian authorities said two crew members had died and 11 were rescued after the 139-metre-long (455 foot) Royad Mammadov caught fire in the Black Sea, an increasing battlefield for drone attacks in the war. War-related objects found in the Black Sea had more than doubled in six months, maritime risk expert Ambrey said last month in a report. At least a third of them carried live payloads. The objects include unexploded ordnance, drones and other unmanned vehicles found washed ashore or floating at sea, it said.

Ukrainian drones attacked two facilities at the Russian-held Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant in south-eastern Ukraine overnight on Monday, but there was no threat to nuclear safety, the head of Russia's state nuclear corporation said. Alexei Likhachev, director general of Rosatom, said a driver delivering food for plant employees was killed in the drone attack.

According to Likhachev, a laboratory building and a radioactive waste processing plant were the targets. Ukraine has not commented on the incident.

Ukraine has begun using artificial intelligence-enabled robot guns to take down Russia's new and fast-moving jet-powered drones. For months, Kyiv has been seeking a way to intercept the new Russian drones pounding the Ukrainian capital, even as it faces a dire lack of suitable ammunition to take them out. Presidential adviser Serhii "Flash" Beskrestnov said on social media that 12 automated turrets had been installed in Kyiv to counter jet-powered Shahed drones, with more planned.

Ukraine's air force later said it had used the robotic turrets to successfully shoot down Russian jet-powered drones, including the Geran-5, for the first time. "It's machine vision that is used for the shoot-downs," air force spokesperson Yurii Ihnat said on Ukrainian television. "Artificial intelligence makes it possible to engage even jet-powered drones."

Germany's foreign intelligence chief has warned that the country risks being drawn into a conflict with Russia as hybrid attacks ordered by Moscow increase.

Martin Jaeger, head of Germany's BND spy service, told lawmakers on Monday that Russia's undeclared "shadow war" against Germany and its allies was escalating further and has "taken on a new, more dangerous character". Berlin has invested record sums into rebuilding its military to deter Russia, and is among the largest supporters of Ukraine in the war with Moscow. In Brussels, EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas said Russia was putting lives at risk across Europe with hybrid attacks.

Brazil's presidential race goes to second round as Flávio Bolsonaro leads incumbent Lula

Brazil: Brazil's presidential race will go to a second round after the far-right candidate, Flávio Bolsonaro, beat the incumbent left-wing president, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, but failed to secure the outright majority he needed to avoid a runoff. With 99.9% of votes counted, the 45-year-old son of the disgraced former president, Jair Bolsonaro, had won 47%, meaning he will now face a 25 October showdown with his 80-year-old rival. Lula received 45.1%. Bolsonaro received 56.1m votes to Lula's 53.8m.

Bolsonaro will go into the second round as strong favourite and is likely to be boosted by the migration of votes from the election's other rightwing candidates, who included Ronaldo Caiado, who secured 2.1%, and Renan Santos, who won 2.2%.

Brazil's far-right put in an even stronger than expected showing, with a succession of Bolsonarista politicians winning congressional or gubernatorial races. They included Jair Bolsonaro's second son, Carlos Bolsonaro, and his wife, Michelle Bolsonaro, who both won seats in the senate. Bolsonaro's youngest son, Jair Renan, was elected to the lower house of congress. Bolsonaro's former infrastructure minister, Tarcísio de Freitas, was reelected as governor of São Paulo, Brazil's most populous and economically important state.

Of the 54 senators elected, 34 were from the right or far right.

Flávio Bolsonaro told supporters in the capital, Brasília, that the result signalled "the end of an era" for Lula's Workers' party. "Lula has fought seven presidential elections. He's worried about power. I am worried about the future of Brazil," he said.

Speaking in São Paulo, Lula put a brave face on a difficult night for the left.

"We have just had a lesson in Brazilian democracy," he said. "The result is often unexpected. We can never get everything we wanted. I confess to you that I was convinced I was going to win the election in the first round ... But we have a second round."

Lula said Bolsonaro's "dark past" would become clearer to voters in the lead-up to that vote. "From tomorrow we will launch a new campaign: [and in] a campaign with only two candidates we will be able to show the difference between our proposals for Brazil."

Earlier, as he cast this vote, Lula said Latin America's largest democracy faced a stark choice, highlighting his adversary's well-documented links to members of Rio's underworld, including once employing close relatives of a notorious contract killer.

Lula, who became Brazil's first elected working-class president in 2002 and was returned to office in 2006 and 2022, is hoping to secure a historic fourth non-consecutive term in this year's election.

Allies of the veteran left-winger called the election a crucial battle in the fight against a far-right movement that less than four years ago brought chaos to the capital, Brasília, during an unsuccessful attempt to overturn the result of the 2022 election, when Lula beat the incumbent president, Jair Bolsonaro.

Bolsonaro hopes winning the presidency will allow him to free his father, who is serving a 27-year sentence for plotting a failed coup after refusing to accept he had lost the last election to Lula. Ahead of the election he also called for tactical voting from conservatives who are not supporters of Bolsonarismo, but want to vote Lula out of power.

As well as the president, Brazil's nearly 159 million voters were choosing state

parliamentarians, 27 state governors, 513 members of the lower house and 54 members of the 81-seat senate. Bolsonaro supporters made the senate race a priority because senators are the only lawmakers who can impeach supreme court justices – a demand among Bolsonaristas since the court jailed the former president for attempting a coup.

Hundreds of leftwingers had gathered at the heart of Laranjeiras, one of Rio's most leftwing neighbourhoods, hoping to celebrate a Lula win to the sound of samba. But the mood soured and tears were shed as the hours passed and Bolsonaro's lead over Lula held.

"It's so sad that the Brazilian people ... have opted for so much retrogression," said Marcelo Mac, one of the owners of Miolo, a left-wing bar in Laranjeiras, as the scale of the rightwing advance was confirmed on Sunday night. Mac, 46, voiced perplexity that the son of the man who tried to stage a coup only four years ago was now in pole position to become Brazil's next leader. "He's such an abominable guy that he manages to be even worse than his father," Mac said of Bolsonaro.

Beside the bar a yellow flag stamped with Lula's face carried the slogan: "Turn left". But Brazil had voted for a turn to the far right. Bolsonaro seemed to have the wind in his sails in the final days before Sunday's vote, amid public frustration at a cost of living crisis and urban violence.

But opinion polls failed to predict the scale of the rightwing triumph. Shop assistant Italo Andrade dos Santos, a 31-year-old Bolsonaro voter, had to keep his celebrations restrained behind the counter of the pharmacy where he was working a Sunday night shift. "I was a little disappointed because I expected Flávio to win in the first round.

Skull fractures suggest servants of Egypt's ancient kings were sacrificed

Egypt: Court officials and craftspeople serving early Egyptian kings may have been sacrificed when their ruler died, according to research that found fractures in several ancient skulls.

The royal cemetery of Umm el-Qa'ab near Abydos features the tombs and enclosures of the First Dynasty rulers of Egypt, and dates as far back as 3,000BC. Not only royalty were buried at the site: surrounding these structures are graves thought to belong to people associated with the royal households – including ladies, seal-bearers, inspectors and artisans. Writing in the journal Frontiers in Environmental Archaeology, Dr Roselyn Campbell, author of the study from Purdue University in the US, notes: "While Aha, the first ruler of the First Dynasty, seems to have only had a few subsidiary burials, his

successors included hundreds of subsidiary graves around their tombs and enclosures."

The graves of the retainers were excavated in the 1920s by the English Egyptologist Flinders Petrie, who believed them to be an example of human sacrifice – a view some later experts agreed with.

But there was a snag: Petrie did not find any evidence of trauma on the remains. While he suggested the individuals

may have been buried alive, others suggested the retainers died naturally and were later reburied at Abydos when their ruler died. Campbell re-examined the skulls of 46 retainers excavated from graves surrounding the funerary enclosures of three different royals – King Djer, King Djet, and Queen Merneith – from the Duckworth Collections at the University of Cambridge. "This question

of whether or not retainer sacrifice was practised in Egypt has been debated for over a century, but this is the first study to examine the human remains from the tombs themselves," Campbell told the Guardian.

Campbell reports that 18 of the skulls showed signs of potentially lethal trauma such as fractures and – in one case – a chopping injury to the eye.

Ten beaches in California for your next getaway to the Pacific coast



California possesses an abundance of breathtaking beaches, yet the true appeal lies in their remarkable diversity, as each coastal destination provides a distinct, unforgettable experience along the magnificent Pacific shoreline. Certain rugged, wave-swept beaches cater specifically to adventurous surfing and kayaking enthusiasts seeking a thrilling challenge against the tide, while others are wonderfully serene and ideally suited for extended barefoot strolls across sun-warmed sand while listening to the rhythmic crashing of the waves. Additional coastal locations serve as excellent evening venues for crackling beach bonfires under a blanket of stars, fascinating wildlife observation where curious seals and soaring pelicans make frequent appearances, or simply leisurely, unhurried moments spent beside the water without any pressing obligations weighing on the mind. Whether you are searching for dramatic seaside cliffs, vibrant boardwalks bustling with energetic local culture, or quiet, secluded coves hidden away from the rest of the world, the Golden State’s coastline effortlessly offers a personalized sanctuary for every single kind of traveler, encouraging everyone to slow down, reconnect with nature, and discover their own unique piece of coastal paradise. If you are planning a California trip, these 10 beaches are worth adding to your list.

1. La Jolla Shores, San Diego

If you prefer your beach days charged with vibrant energy and endless activity, La Jolla Shores serves as an exceptional starting point along the Southern California coast, offering a sprawling mile-long expanse of soft,

golden sand that acts as a premier playground for water sports enthusiasts and nature lovers alike. This dynamic destination is immensely popular for a diverse array of aquatic pursuits, ranging from launching kayaks into the protected ecological reserve to riding gentle waves on a surfboard, snorkeling through crystal-clear kelp forests, and gliding smoothly across the surface on a stand-up paddleboard. Beneath the sparkling waves, the marine ecosystem thrives with fascinating sea life, presenting wonderful opportunities to spot curious California spiny lobsters scuttling along the sea floor, hefty sheep crabs foraging in the shallows, and magnificent, harmless leopard sharks gracefully cruising through the coastal waters, particularly during the warmer summer months. Beyond the sun-drenched daytime adventures, visitors can linger as the sun dips below the horizon, transforming the sky into a canvas of brilliant oranges and purples, and settle around a cozy twilight beach bonfire to roast marshmallows, share stories, and bask in the lingering warmth of a perfect day by the Pacific.

2. Crystal Cove State Park, Laguna Beach

Movie fans and nostalgic travelers may immediately recognize the picturesque landscapes of Crystal Cove State Park from the classic Bette Midler tearjerker film Beaches, as its stunning three miles of pristine sandy coastline offer a breathtaking blend of cinematic history and natural coastal beauty. This vibrant stretch of shoreline is uniquely adorned with charming, historically preserved 1940s vin-

tage cottages that transport visitors back in time, while the surrounding environment provides fantastic surf breaks for wave riders and plenty of peaceful, wide-open space for a leisurely, reflective walk along the water’s edge. As the day winds down and the sun begins to set in a blaze of brilliant colors, you can stop by the iconic Beachcomber Café right on the sand to warm up with a steaming bowl of rich, comforting clam chowder. Afterward, cap off your evening by settling comfortably around a crackling beach firepit to roast marshmallows and assemble classic s’mores under the emerging stars, creating a quintessential California coastal experience that feels both timeless and deeply magical.

3. Butterfly Beach, Santa Barbara

Nestled gracefully along the sun-drenched coastline of Santa Barbara, Butterfly Beach emerges as an enchanting, tranquil sanctuary that is widely celebrated as one of the most idyllic locations to catch a breathtaking, canvas-like Pacific sunset painting the evening sky in brilliant hues of amber, rose, and violet. This scenic destination is also immensely popular among local dog walkers and outdoor enthusiasts, serving as an energetic community hub and a wonderful, inspiring starting point for a much longer, invigorating coastal walk that stretches either westward toward the lively atmosphere of East Beach or eastward toward the secluded, wave-lapped shores of Hammonds Beach. Beyond its natural coastal charms, a visit to this region offers an irresistible invitation to immerse oneself fully in Santa Barbara’s rich cultural tapestry,

prompting travelers to carve out ample time to explore the city’s world-class museums, discover unique treasures in downtown boutiques, indulge in exquisite culinary creations at renowned local restaurants, and admire the timeless, historic architecture of the iconic Old Mission Santa Barbara, thereby seamlessly blending serene seaside relaxation with vibrant cultural enrichment.

4. Carmel City Beach, Carmel

With its ethereal beauty and enchanting coastal atmosphere, Carmel City Beach feels almost straight out of a storybook, featuring pristine, powdery white sand that sits gracefully beneath a hillside of charming, storybook cottages and meticulously manicured gardens that exude timeless elegance. The tranquil and protected waters of Carmel Bay create an exceptionally calm environment, making it a beloved favorite for families, couples, and travelers seeking leisurely, unhurried beach days spent listening to the gentle lapping of the tide. Nature lovers will find endless delight in scanning the shoreline and coastal bluffs, keeping a sharp eye out for long-billed curlews gracefully probing the wet sand for food and majestic brown pelicans flying in tight, synchronized formations low over the crashing waves. Furthermore, if you are fortunate enough to visit during the town’s famous and highly anticipated annual sandcastle contest, you can expect to witness breathtaking, monumental artistic creations that go far beyond the usual bucket and spade effort, showcasing intricate architectural sculptures built by enthusiastic teams that completely transform the beach into a temporary gallery of ephemeral masterpieces.

5. College Cove, Trinidad

For travelers seeking a much quieter, contemplative, and deeply secluded coastal experience away from the bustling crowds of the south, heading north to the rugged and mystical beauty of College Cove offers an utterly transcendent retreat into the raw power of nature. The journey to this hidden gem begins with an immersive, one-mile interpretive trail that meanders enchantingly through a towering, cathedral-like canopy of ancient conifers and lush coastal ferns, filling the crisp air with the earthy, invigorating scent of pine and damp forest floor. As you hike along this winding path, breathtaking vistas periodically open up through the trees, providing stunning, postcard-worthy views of the dramatic offshore rock formations and Pewetole Island rising proudly from the churning, foam-flecked Pacific waters. Upon descending to the secluded cove itself, you are greeted

by a sheltered paradise flanked by imposing sea cliffs and fascinating tide pools that beckon exploration during low tide. Packing a hearty picnic basket filled with local artisanal treats allows you to settle onto the driftwood-strewn sand and truly make a full day of absorbing the profound silence and elemental majesty of the northern shoreline. Moreover, the nearby historic fishing village of Trinidad serves as an ideal, charming basecamp for exploring the wider wonders of California’s legendary North Coast, offering dramatic headlands, vibrant marine reserves, and a gateway to the misty, awe-inspiring redwood forests that define this uniquely captivating region.

6. Manchester State Park Beach, Mendocino County

Manchester State Park Beach is exquisitely made for slow, contemplative walks where time seems to slow down and allow the soul to unwind, boasting a sweeping, windswept five-mile shoreline backed by rolling, fragile coastal dunes that shelter the delicate native flora of the region. As you meander along the vast expanse of sand, a fascinating assortment of weather-beaten driftwood, weathered sea glass, and other washed-up natural treasures are scattered in abundance, providing endless curiosity and plenty of captivating details to look at along the way. For those who wish to extend their peaceful immersion in this wild, untamed landscape, excellent camping facilities are conveniently available within the state park, allowing you to pitch your tent beneath the open sky, stay overnight, and gently fall asleep to the rhythmic, hypnotic sound of the Pacific Ocean crashing against the distant shore.

7. Sunset State Beach, Santa Cruz

Located just a short distance south of the bustling energy of Santa Cruz, Sunset State Beach offers a wonderfully quieter, more contemplative stretch of pristine coastline that is framed by towering, fragile sand dunes and blessed with consistently great conditions for both invigorating surfing sessions and peaceful, uninterrupted beach walks. As you gaze out toward the horizon across the sparkling, expansive waters of Monterey Bay, it pays to keep a sharp and steady eye out for majestic marine life, as passing gray whales, playful pods of dolphins, and bobbing sea otters frequently make breathtaking appearances just beyond the breaking waves. As the afternoon transitions into dusk, the atmosphere becomes remarkably serene, setting the stage for a classic beach bonfire that warms the chilly evening air and makes the picturesque setting feel infinitely

more inviting and magical. Furthermore, with exceptionally well-maintained campsites nestled just a short walk from the water’s edge, visitors have the wonderful opportunity to pitch their tents close to the shore, spending the night immersed in nature and waking up to the soothing, rhythmic lull of the Pacific Ocean right outside their door.

8. Stinson Beach, Marin County

Stinson Beach serves as an immensely popular and vibrant summer escape for city dwellers and outdoor enthusiasts seeking a refreshing getaway from the bustling streets of nearby San Francisco, transforming its broad, sun-drenched shores into a lively hub of coastal recreation on warm weekends. Families arrive in droves equipped with colorful buckets, shovels, and various beach games to build elaborate sandcastles near the shoreline, while dedicated surfers eagerly plunge into the brisk, rolling waters to take on the challenging and invigorating Pacific waves. The expansive stretch of sand provides endless opportunities for classic beach activities, allowing you to catch the ocean breeze by flying a soaring kite, engage in a fast-paced game of paddle ball, toss a Frisbee back and forth with friends, or simply unwind and spend a few peaceful hours getting lost in a good book while listening to the soothing rhythm of the sea. Beyond its sandy pleasures, Stinson Beach also acts as a premier starting point for one of the region’s most popular and scenic hiking trails, inviting visitors to transition effortlessly from the salty ocean air into the cool, shaded canopy of the nearby coastal mountains for a truly well-rounded outdoor adventure.

9. Cayucos State Beach, Cayucos

Cayucos keeps things wonderfully relaxed. The six-mile beach north of Morro Bay is perfect for kayaking, sunbathing and barefoot walks. For a classic California evening, stroll along Cayucos Pier as the sun goes down.

10. San Buenaventura State Beach, Ventura

With two miles of curving sand, San Buenaventura State Beach has something for almost every kind of traveller. Play volleyball, cycle along the coastal bikeway or walk along the historic wooden pier. Ventura is also the gateway to Channel Islands National Park, making it a useful stop if you want to add an island trip to your California holiday. From lively beach days to quiet coastal walks, California’s shoreline offers plenty of ways to spend time beside the Pacific. The hardest part may simply be deciding which beach gets your first morning.

Step into a land where ancient monuments meet modern life

Egypt is a truly mesmerizing destination that feels simultaneously eternal and electric, where ancient antiquity hums quietly beneath the vibrant chaos of modern daily life, and every bustling street corner seems to carry a rich, fascinating story older than recorded time itself. One moment you might find yourself standing in awe before monumental architectural wonders that have outlived fallen empires and weathered millennia, while the next you are navigating a sensory symphony of honking Cairo traffic, fragrant spice-laden food stalls, and animated conversations conducted at full volume by welcoming locals. It is an experience that is equally thrilling, delightfully overwhelming, deeply culturally rewarding, and yet absolutely not a place you want to arrive in completely unprepared if you wish to maximize your enjoyment. Because navigation and entry requirements can sometimes catch newcomers off guard, it is vital to know that most international travelers will need a tourist visa to legally enter the country; and while short-term visas are technically available upon arrival at the airport for certain nationalities, applying for your official visa in advance through official digital channels is undeniably the smarter, less stressful move to ensure a seamless transition from the arrivals gate into the heart of this ancient land.

Securing an e-visa beforehand drastically streamlines your arrival experience, saving precious time at the airport terminal and successfully bypassing any frustrating last-minute paperwork or

long queues after an exhausting, multi-hour international flight. Standard tourist visas are typically issued to permit a maximum stay of up to thirty days, with flexible provisions for either single-entry or multiple-entry authorizations depending heavily on the complexity of your broader travel itinerary. Before submitting any applications, you must carefully verify that your passport remains valid for at least six uninterrupted months beyond your planned return date to comply with local immigration mandates. While specific regional exceptions and conditional entry regulations may occasionally apply if you are limiting your short stay exclusively to designated Sinai resort areas, acquiring a full, comprehensive visa remains an absolute necessity for anyone intending to explore the wider expanse of the country.

Egypt may look manageable on a map, but distances, traffic and logistics can stretch even the simplest plans. Organising your itinerary by region rather than attraction helps minimise travel fatigue, especially in cities like Cairo where traffic can turn short hops into long hauls. Beyond the pyramids, Egypt offers temple towns along the Nile, Red Sea beach escapes, desert oases and cultural hubs that deserve time and patience. Whether you’re cruising between Luxor and Aswan or splitting time between cities and the coast, building a realistic, well-paced route is key to enjoying the journey. Egypt may look manageable on a map, but distances, traffic and logis-



tics can stretch even the simplest plans. Organising your itinerary by region rather than attraction helps minimise travel fatigue, especially in cities like Cairo where traffic can turn short hops into long hauls. Beyond the pyramids, Egypt offers temple towns along the Nile, Red Sea beach escapes, desert oases and cultural hubs that deserve time and patience. Whether you’re cruising between Luxor and Aswan or splitting time between cities and the coast, building a realistic, well-paced route is key to enjoying the journey. Egypt is modern but culturally conservative, and dressing with awareness makes a noticeable difference. Lightweight, breathable fabrics such as cotton and linen are ideal for the climate, while loose silhou-

ettes help with both comfort and cultural sensitivity. Shoulders and knees should generally be covered in cities, markets and religious sites, though beach destinations are far more relaxed. Resorts and coastal towns allow swimsuits, shorts and sundresses, but carrying a light scarf or layer helps transition comfortably between different settings. Egypt’s climate swings between extremes. Summers can be brutally hot, particularly between June and August, while winters bring cooler nights that feel colder indoors due to poor insulation. The most comfortable months for sightseeing are between October and March, when daytime temperatures are pleasant and evenings remain manageable. Even then, sun protection is es-

sential year-round. Packing layers alongside sunscreen, hats and sunglasses is non-negotiable, regardless of the season. Tap water in Egypt isn’t safe for drinking, brushing teeth or washing produce, so bottled or filtered water should be your default. The same caution applies to food choices, Egyptian cuisine is rich and rewarding, but it’s best enjoyed at busy local restaurants or established eateries where turnover is high. Raw salads and unpeeled fruits are best avoided. Carrying basic medication for stomach upsets, dehydration and sun exposure can save you a lot of discomfort. Cash is king in Egypt, even as card payments are accepted at major attractions, hotels, and upscale restaurants. The currency is the Egyptian Pound (EGP), and

carrying small denominations is important due to the country’s tipping culture. Known locally as bakshesh, tipping is customary across the service sector—from hotel staff and drivers to guides and restroom attendants. While amounts vary depending on the service, small, frequent tips are part of daily interactions and help keep things running smoothly. Public behavior and social customs in Egypt inherently lean toward a more conservative and traditional outlook, meaning that outward displays of affection should be kept to an absolute minimum, especially when venturing outside of major tourist-heavy zones or international resort areas where locals appreciate adherence to cultural norms. When visiting sacred religious spaces such as magnificent mosques or ancient historical

sites, demonstrating respectful behavior and polite mindfulness matters just as much as wearing appropriate, modest clothing that covers your shoulders and knees. While photography is generally permitted at most major landmarks and archaeological wonders to help you capture your memories, you should never photograph local individuals without first obtaining their explicit consent, and any clearly marked restricted zones or military checkpoints must be strictly respected without exception. Ultimately, paying close attention to your surroundings and quietly observing how respectful locals behave in various social and public settings is often the absolute best and most reliable guide for ensuring a harmonious, culturally sensitive, and deeply enriching journey.



ENTERTAINMENT

Alia Bhatt's
spain vacay
with BFFs



Mumbai : Bollywood actress Alia Bhatt is currently enjoying a vacation in Mallorca, Spain with her bestie Akansha Rangan Kapoor and their girl gang. Akansha recently shared a series of photos on her Instagram account, giving fans a sneak-peek into their getaway. From soaking up the Spanish sun in chic bikini looks to dressing up for glamorous evenings, Alia's vacation photos are sure to give you major holiday goals.

Alia and Akansha are making the most of their sun-soaked getaway in Spain with their friends. In one of the pictures, Alia can be seen seated on a balcony with her friends, soaking in the breathtaking views of the sparkling blue waters and beautiful hills in the backdrop. Another photo captures the 'Alpha' actress enjoying a fun-filled motorboat ride with Akansha and another friend. The vacation album also features the friends unwinding at a café, enjoying yacht rides and soaking up the scenic beauty of Mallorca. In one picture, the entire squad is seen posing together at a stunning rocky cove. Alia served major vacation style in a red bikini paired with a white bandanna, while other pictures see her turning up the glam in a white bikini layered with a delicate white lace cover-up. The friends also dressed up for a beautiful evening against the backdrop of a picturesque hill-top town, with Alia looking stunning in a beautiful red gown. "This and nothing else," wrote Akansha, while sharing the photos.

On the work front, Alia was last seen in the action thriller 'Alpha' where she starred alongside Sharvari Wagh as part of the YRF Spy Universe. She will next be seen in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's upcoming epic film Love & War, co-starring Ranbir Kapoor and Vicky Kaushal. It is scheduled for theatrical release in January 2027. Reports also suggest that Alia and Sanjay Leela Bhansali have been in discussions about potentially reviving their shelved project Inshallah after completing Love & War. However, there has been no official confirmation regarding the project, and the development remains speculative.

Parvathy Thiruvothu's thriller Pradhama Drishtya Kuttakkar heads to OTT

Kochi : After opening to positive responses in theatres, Pradhama Drishtya Kuttakkar is now set for its digital premiere on Netflix on October 9. The film will stream in Malayalam, along with dubbed versions in Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Hindi.

Directed by Shahad, the Malayalam thriller revolves around four low-ranking police officers who find themselves in a dangerous situation following an unexpected encounter. What begins as a

moment of panic soon turns into an attempt to conceal what happened, while a seasoned investigator starts piecing together the truth. The premise gives the film an interesting spin on the familiar police thriller. Instead of following cops as they investigate a crime committed by someone else, Pradhama Drishtya Kuttakkar puts its central characters on the other side of the investigation. As the officers attempt to stay ahead of the truth, the film unfolds as a battle of wits be-

tween cops themselves.

Parvathy Thiruvothu plays Aleena Abraham, marking her first police role in Malayalam cinema. Aleena joins the police force through compassionate appointment following the death of her husband. Though she is initially offered a clerical position, she opts for station duty, a decision that eventually puts her at the centre of an increasingly complicated situation. The cast also features Vijayaraghavan, Mathew Thomas, Sidharth Bharathan,



Unnimaya Prasad, Azees Nudumangad and Vinay Forrt. The film's central conflict

stems from the fact that its protagonists are officers who understand the workings of

the system they are trying to navigate. They know how investigations unfold, how evidence can be interpreted and how suspicion can close in on those attempting to hide the truth. That familiarity creates the film's central tension. As the investigation progresses, the four officers are forced to make increasingly difficult choices to protect themselves, while the seasoned investigator continues to move closer to the truth.

For Aleena, the situation also marks a significant turn

in her journey within the police force. Having deliberately chosen station duty over a clerical role, she finds herself confronted with circumstances that test both her professional instincts and her understanding of the people around her. Released on September 11, Pradhama Drishtya Kuttakkar also enjoyed a notable run at the box office. According to the makers, the film crossed the Rs 50 crore mark worldwide on its 17th day, adding to its theatrical success.

Raju Kher Reveals brother Anupam Kher didn't help during his toughest financial times



Mumbai : Raju Kher has opened up about one of the toughest financial phases of his life and how it affected his relationship with his brother, Anupam Kher. The actor-director recalled a time when a television project went wrong, leaving him without his savings, regular work and even a stable home.

Speaking to Siddharth Kannan, Raju looked back at how he ended up losing money after investing in a television show. He had sold his house at the time and believed the new project would give him a fresh start. Raju recalled that a new television channel was about to launch and several people, including him, were working on shows for it. He was making a programme called Life

Ke Liye Kuch Bhi Karega and had invested the money he got from selling his flat into it.

But things changed suddenly when the channel disappeared. "There was a time when I was going through a bad phase. I had sold my house because a new channel was coming, so I had bought a flat elsewhere. A new channel was going to launch and many people were making pilots, agreements were already signed. I also made a programme Life Ke Liye Kuch Bhi Karega. Suddenly, I got to know that the channel has disappeared. I had invested the money that I got from selling the flat in that programme. I thought that I had a first-class life, a 4-BHK house, everything set for the family. And then, the channel

disappeared and no one knew what happened.. there was just a lock on their door," Raju said. With the project gone, Raju was left with no clear way to recover the money. He also wasn't getting enough work and had to worry about paying rent.

At that point, Raju naturally turned to his elder brother. Anupam was already a successful actor, and Raju thought he would be able to help him get through the difficult period. But Anupam was going through his own professional struggle. He had stopped taking up projects because he did not want to do films he felt were not substantial enough. Raju Kher has worked in both films and television as an actor and director. He started acting in the 1990s and has appeared in films including Ghulam, Jungle, Om Jai Jagadish, Shootout at Wadala, Krish 3, Main Tera Hero, Uunchai and Patma Shukla. He also directed television shows, including the 1999 serial Sanskaar, as well as Manzile, Abhilasha and Ret Ka Dariya.

Swanand Kirkire teams up with Akshay Kumar again for Vipul Shah's film



Mumbai : Swanand Kirkire is reportedly set to join the cast of Samuk, reuniting with Akshay Kumar after their last collaboration on Pad Man. According to sources, Kirkire's role carries real weight in the story, though the makers are keeping character details firmly under wraps for now. The reported ensemble

also includes Rukmini Maitra, Vineet Kumar Singh and Rajat Kapoor.

Produced by Vipul Amrutlal Shah under Sunshine Pictures, co-produced by Aashin A. Shah, and directed by Kanishk Varma, Samuk marks the reunion of Akshay and Shah after a long gap, their last collaboration being

Action Replay in 2010. The two go back two decades, having worked together on Aankhen, Waqt: The Race Against Time, Namastey London and Singh Is Kinning along the way. This time, they're heading somewhere entirely new. Billed as India's first large-scale alien survival action thriller, Samuk blends military realism, survival horror and alien mythology into one ambitious package. Speaking about the reunion when the film went on floors, Shah said, "After a gap of 13 years, starting a new journey with Akshay Kumar today is a very, very joyful, happy and proud moment for all of us." He added, "The ambition to create something better and bigger every single time with Akshay Sir has been the hallmark of our journey. We

have challenged each other in many ways to keep pushing ourselves and do better, and this time, the challenge is bigger than ever."

Akshay himself has spoken about the scale of the project, noting it's a genre nobody in Indian cinema has attempted at this level before, and that the team has brought in an international crew to match that ambition. Kirkire's addition only adds to the intrigue. Known equally as a lyricist, writer and actor, his presence hints at a character with real narrative significance, even if the details stay locked away for now. With shooting already underway and a theatrical release eyed for 2027, Samuk looks set to be one of the more unpredictable entries in Akshay's long filmography.

The Batman part II filming halted after director matt reeves steps away

Mumbai : Production on The Batman Part II has reportedly been put on hold after director Matt Reeves stepped away from the project to focus on a family matter. The sequel, which is being backed by Warner Bros and DC Studios, was already in production in London when the unexpected pause was announced.

According to Deadline, Reeves is temporarily stepping away for personal reasons. The studio has expressed its support for the filmmaker and confirmed that work on the highly anticipated sequel will resume. In a statement, the studio said, "Production on The Batman Part II has been temporarily paused while Matt Reeves focuses on a family

matter. Matt has the full support of DC Studios, and we look forward to continuing the journey soon."

The development comes as The Batman Part II remains scheduled for a February 18, 2028 theatrical release. With filming now temporarily halted, it remains unclear whether the production break will have any impact on the film's existing release date. Robert Pattinson is set to return as Bruce Wayne/Batman in the sequel. Andy Serkis and Colin Farrell will also reprise their respective roles as Alfred Pennyworth and Oswald Cobblepot, also known as the Penguin.

The sequel has also expanded its ensemble cast with several new additions, including Scarlett Johans-



son, Sebastian Stan, Jayme Lawson, Charles Dance, Gil Perez-Abraham and Sebastian Koch. Reeves, who directed and co-wrote the first instalment, has previously hinted that the sequel will take the franchise in a different direction. Pattinson had described the upcoming film as a "real left turn" from the

2022 release, while suggesting that it would still retain some of the atmosphere and elements that defined the first movie.

For now, fans will have to wait for further updates on when production will resume and whether the temporary pause affects the film's much-anticipated release.

Rashmika Mandanna reveals the real reason she joined Ranabaali

Hyderabad : Rashmika Mandanna has consistently trusted the vision of her directors. In recent years, both Rahul Ravindran and Rahul Sankrityan have won her over through their exceptional writing and sheer conviction. That trust has resulted in strong, compelling roles for her, first in The Girlfriend last year and now in the upcoming Ranabaali.

In promotional interviews ahead of the theatrical release of Ranabaali, Rashmika explained why she chose the period drama. When asked if she said yes mainly because of co-star Vijay Deverakonda or after seeing the Jayamma role, she clarified that it was not primarily about Vijay. She explained that the opportunity to work with Rahul came unexpectedly after she had wanted to collaborate with him for a long time, particularly after the success of Shyam Singha Roy, and she did not want to miss it. She also loved the well-written Jayamma character, which has strong emotional depth and the potential to

connect with audiences, as well as the film's overall story. She added that learning Vijay was the lead made her give an immediate green signal. It also felt special because it had been many years since they last shared the screen, having previously worked together in Geetha Govindam and Dear Comrade. Working with him again on a story like Ranabaali felt right.

In an interview with YouTuber Sudhir Srinivasan, Rashmika spoke about being particular about not being typecast or stereotyped. "I don't want to carry baggage from one film to another. Neither the success nor failure of a film should drive my performance or level of commitment to another film. I have done various types of films, from a film like The Girlfriend to Mysaa. I would do them all. At the end of the day, I am an actor," the Animal and Pushpa actress added. As Jayamma in Ranabaali, Rashmika is expected to deliver a charged-up performance in crucial ep-



isodes. The film will hit the cinemas on October 16 for Dasara.

“Rockstar” Tukaram Mundhe appears on the New York Times front page His Response



New Delhi, Oct 06: In addition to becoming well-known in India, Maharashtra Food and Drug Administration Commissioner Tukaram Mundhe—often referred to as “Singham” or “Nayak”—has also drawn notice from international media. The New York Times labeled Mundhe a “rockstar” in a front-page article on his vigorous campaign against food safety breaches at eateries and retail stores in Maharashtra. With the headline, “Diners revere him, and owners fear him,” the New York Times said that “no business appears to escape Mundhe’s attention.” Mundhe was also referred to as a “food safety celebrity” by the NYT, which emphasized how his campaign gave regular food safety enforcement an exceptionally high level of attention. The international coverage is less about Mundhe personally becoming famous and more about what his popularity says about governance in India. Earlier, BBC had reported that Mundhe’s popularity reflected something larger - when ordinary government functions such as in-

spections and enforcement are carried out visibly and consistently, they can appear extraordinary to citizens accustomed to bureaucratic delays or weak enforcement. Reuters, too, had profiled Mundhe with a headline: “Indian food safety officer shakes up Mumbai, one viral raid at a time”. Tukaram Mundhe’s reactionMundhe shared the New York Times article on his X profile, saying, “Good governance is not about making headlines, but about making a difference”. “Food safety is ultimately about protecting people, upholding standards and building public trust. When enforcement is fair, fearless and consistent, institutions earn credibility and citizens begin to believe that the system works. The New York Times captures one such story from Maharashtra,” he wrote. Tukaram Mundhe, one of the most well-known IAS officials in Maharashtra, has established a reputation for being fiercely independent and unyielding. Mundhe’s family is a tiny agricultural family. His mother overcame the household’s challenging financial situation while his father was a marginal farmer. Mundhe attended a Zilla Parishad school and worked on the family farm. After graduating from Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University and doing postgraduate studies in Political Science, he achieved an All India Rank of 20 on the UPSC Civil Services Examination in 2004. A 2005-batch Maharashtra cadre IAS officer, Mundhe

served in several key positions across Nanded, Washim, Jalna, Solapur, Navi Mumbai, Nashik, Nagpur and Pune. Over the years, he served as Assistant Collector, District Collector, Municipal Commissioner, Chairman and Managing Director of PMPML, and held several senior administrative posts. As Solapur Collector, he was recognised for reforms in water management and transparent governance, earning the Maharashtra government’s Best District Collector Award for 2015-16. He was also honoured as the “Waterman of Maharashtra.” Over his career, Mundhe has been known for frequent transfers due to his administrative style. In nearly two decades of service, he has been transferred more than 24 times. Since taking charge as the Maharashtra FDA Commissioner, Mundhe launched one of the most aggressive enforcement drives in recent years. As part of a countrywide operation over the holiday season, he suspended food licenses and confiscated 50,601.78 kg of food stock valued at Rs 1.19 crore between September 23 and 27 alone. Thirteen businesses in Mumbai, six in the Konkan division, eight in the Pune division, and three in the Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar division had their licenses or registration certificates stopped, according to the FDA. Among them were well-known Mumbai businesses like Kyani & Co., Colaba Sweet Mart, Arun Vilas Farsan, and Subway.

Why, in the race to LA28, Aichi-Nagoya could be a better match for India than Hangzhou

Aichi-Nagoya: In retrospect, how should we see these Games? A mixed bag, a failure, or a success? From LA28’s perspective, it could have been a better outing for India than Hangzhou, despite the fact that most people would describe it as a mixed bag. India won twelve gold medals in Olympic sports and events that were a part of the Paris 2024 schedule in Hangzhou. That figure has increased to 17 in Nagoya. In comparison, India took home more gold medals in Hangzhou’s shooting competition. Nevertheless, a few of those participated in team competitions outside of the Olympic Games. An analogous scenario is seen in athletics. Only Neeraj Chopra had a genuine chance of winning a medal in Paris, despite India winning several gold medals in Hangzhou. The others weren’t serious candidates for an Olympic medal. In Nagoya, such is no longer the case. With the exception of the women’s 4x400m relay team, nearly



every Indian gold medalist has a reasonable possibility of winning a medal in LA28 provided they reach their full potential and keep getting better. Every medal brings real optimism, whether it is for Sajeet and Aman in wrestling, Kumkum and the recurve team who beat Korea, or Chikitha and the compound team that won gold. In boxing, all three gold medalists defeated world or Asian champions on their way to the title. Lovlina beat the reigning world champion in the semifinal and the reigning Asian champion in the final. Parveen overcame a more fancied opponent in the

semifinal, while Ankush, after trailing in the opening round of his semifinal, staged a remarkable comeback to win a very difficult contest. In shooting, Suruchi and Kamaljeet came close to equalling China’s world record and broke the Asian record in the process. Suruchi’s score of 245 was, in fact, better than the effective world-record benchmark of 244 (50 per cent of 488). Esha, who battled fever and fatigue during her marathon sequence of five shoot-offs, demonstrated why she is the world No. 1 in her category. Neeru, too, was exceptional and has raised genuine hopes for the LA cycle. I an-

ticipate that Indian shooters will have a big influence at the World Championships in Doha next month, where Olympic quota spots will be available. Lastly, India appears to be the team to beat right now in women’s hockey. Few teams can regularly get past India’s defense, with the possible exception of Argentina and the Netherlands. Head coach Sjoerd Marijne has plenty of time to refine the assault now that qualification has been guaranteed.

It wouldn’t be shocking to see the Indian women’s team atop the podium in Los Angeles if all goes according to plan. There is no reason why LA28 cannot be a better Games for Indian sport than Paris 2024 provided India swiftly turns its attention to the Olympic cycle through sports science, high-performance programs, and mental conditioning. Every indication is present. In terms of the Olympics, India could have done better in Nagoya than in Hangzhou.

“I’m overjoyed” Golfer Diksha Dagar on Winning the Asian Games Silver Medal

Aichi-Nagoya: Diksha Dagar, an Indian golfer, expressed joy after winning the silver medal in the women’s team golf event at the 2026 Asian Games, while her father, Narender Dagar, stated the success was a source of great pride for the family and country. India won silver in the women’s team golf event, with Diksha Dagar, Parana-vi Urs, and Aditi Ashok representing the country. India finished with a team total of 14-under 546, with the best two scores from the three players contributing toward the final total. China won the gold medal with a score of 22 under 538.

In the final round, Aditi Ashok carded a 67, while Diksha Dagar returned a 77 as India finished second behind China. Diksha Dagar told ANI that she was pleased with the silver medal and thanked her parents and coach for their support during her trip. She described representing India in team uniform for the first



time and producing a solid performance on the first day as memorable experiences. It feels incredible; I am pleased.

I am here primarily because of my parents and coach. It was my first appearance on the international stage. Putting on the Indian team suit for the first time was fantastic, and I performed really well on the first day... We were able to provide a solid performance,” she stated. Her father, Narender Dagar, de-

scribed the silver medal as a source of great pleasure and the culmination of years of hard work and commitment, calling it a joyous occasion for the family, Hajar, the state, and the whole country. “For every parent, there is no higher honor or source of pride than this. It is the consequence of hard labor and the achievement gained from that battle. As you mentioned—ranging from 2018 to 2026—this signifies years of effort and hard work by the youngsters;

Six by-elections are scheduled, including TVK in Tamil Nadu and a test for the BJP in Bengal

New Delhi, Oct 06: There are six carefully watched by-elections taking place in three states and a Union Territory, which may serve as a referendum on the new administrations that were elected earlier this year. Bengal, which voted for the BJP, and Tamil Nadu, where actor-politician Vijay’s new party Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam gained a historic win, will be the focus of particular attention. West Bengal’s Nandigram and Rejinagar, as well as Tamil Nadu’s Madurantakam and Dharapuram, are holding elections. Elections are also scheduled for the Nagaon Lok Sabha seat in Assam and Thattanchavady in Puducherry. The seats fell vacant after MLAs who won on two seats had to surrender one. The votes will be counted on October 9. Nandigram, which was won by Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari who opted to retain Kolkata’s Bhabanipur, the seat of his predecessor Mamata Banerjee, will be Bengal’s major fight. Hasirani Rath,



the mother of Chandranath Rath, a former assistant to Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari, is the BJP’s candidate for the seat. Shortly after winning the Assembly election, Chandranath Rath was assassinated. Following the withdrawal of its nominee, the Mamata Banerjee-led Trinamool faction has chosen to back Congress candidate Milan Pradhan. When Mohammad Eteshamul Haque was fielded by Ritabrata Banerjee’s Trinamool party, the race became triangular. The CPI is involved as well. However, the BJP’s performance in Rejinagar, which

was won by Humayun Kabir, the dissident leader of the Trinamool who eventually founded his own party, will be keenly monitored. The BJP, the Congress, the CPM, the two Trinamool groups, and the Aam Janata Unnayan Party will all compete in this multi-cornered campaign. Golan Nabi Azad, the son of Kabir, who resigned after winning Nowda, is the AJUP’s candidate. In order to guarantee calm voting in an area that is prone to violence, the Election Commission has implemented strict security measures. To protect the 315 voting places, 819 state

police officers and 34 companies of central troops have been stationed here. TVK Exam in Tamil Nadu Vijay’s TVK, which had to form a coalition with the Congress after failing to secure a majority in the April election, will be put to the test in the two by-elections in the southern state. In Madurantakam and Dharapuram, K Maragatham Kumaravel and P Sathyabama had switched to the TVK after winning on AIADMK tickets. Vijay has campaigned extensively in both constituencies, bringing jabs from the Opposition which claimed that it shows a complete lack of confidence. The contests will be four-cornered, with the DMK and CPI candidates in fray besides the TVK and the AIADMK. The by-poll scenario is further complicated by the elections in Puducherry’s Thattanchavady and Assam’s Nagaon, which test the strength of the ruling coalitions and their capacity to translate wider electoral wins into victory at the local level.

Karnataka Will Reevaluate Cash Prizes for State Medalists in the Asian Games

Aichi-Nagoya: G. Parameshwara, the Deputy Chief Minister of Karnataka and Minister for Youth Empowerment and Sports, stated on Monday that the state government is reevaluating the monetary prizes for athletes by contrasting them with the incentives provided by other governments. Speaking to reporters outside Vidhana Soudha’s West Gate, Parameshwara stated that he had previously spoken with Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar about the issue and that the updated reward amounts will be revealed on Tuesday. “By comparing it to other states, we are reevaluating the prize money awarded to athletes in the state. I’ve previously spoken with the Chief Minister about this. We will announce tomorrow how much prize money should be given to sportspersons,” he said. Parameshwara said he had personally spoken to several successful athletes, including Poovamma, regarding the incentives being provided by the government. “We tried to contact and congratulate Poovamma when she was in Japan, but we could not reach her at that time. Within an hour or two of her return to India, I contacted her and spoke to her. I have spoken not only to Poovamma but also to several other athletes,” he said. He said the government had collected information about the cash awards being offered by other states and was examining the details. “Sportspersons have told us that higher amounts are being given in other states. We have obtained that information and examined it. I have already discussed with the Chief Minister the need to reconsider the prize money in Karnataka,” Parameshwara said. The Deputy Chief Minister said the Chief Minister and he would jointly announce the revised prize money to be offered to sportspersons on Tuesday. “We will announce tomorrow how much the prize money should be increased,” he said. It should be noted that M.R. Poovamma, a member of the Indian women’s 4x400-meter relay team that won the gold medal at the Asian Games, voiced her displeasure with Karnataka’s Rs 35 lakh cash reward for a gold medal and urged the state government to increase the cash rewards for medal-winning athletes in order to provide more financial support.

SIR Telangana Election Chief Orders Action Against Bulk Form 7 For Voter Deletes



Hyderabad, Oct 06: Telangana Chief Electoral Officer C Sudharsan Reddy has urged election authorities to take action against individuals who deliberately submit fraudulent statements on electoral rolls, after claims of mass, non-genuine Form 7 applications during the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR). Form 7 is used to object to the inclusion of a name or to request the removal of an existing name from the electoral roll. The governing Congress and the AIMIM, led by Asaduddin Owaisi, have accused the BJP of filing bulk Form 7 applications, which the latter has rejected. Reddy di-

rected Collectors, District Election Officers, and Electoral Registration Officers to undertake a thorough investigation before taking action under Section 31 of the Representation of the People Act, 1950, read with Rule 20 of the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960.

Telangana has so far received 28,753 Form 7 applications, including around 5,000 from Hyderabad. Reddy said applications submitted in bulk, including those by political parties, must be carefully verified before any deletion is ordered. The CEO has also provided comprehensive guidelines for dealing with SIR notifications. Booth

Level Officers have been instructed to visit voters at home, gather supporting papers, and submit them to the ECI system for review by the ERO/AERO. Physical hearings should only be undertaken in extraordinary circumstances, and an adult family member may represent the elector if authorized. The directive follows allegations of pre-printed Form 7 applications being used to seek deletion of eligible voters in parts of Hyderabad. The Congress has alleged an organized misuse and demanded an investigation into how voter data was accessed and used to prepare the forms. Telangana Congress spokesperson Syed Nizamuddin alleged that pre-printed forms were prepared using electoral-roll data and demanded that the Election Commission seize such applications, examine download logs and identify those behind their preparation and distribution. “Who downloaded the rolls, who selected the families, who printed the forms and who distributed them?” he asked, calling for a probe into the alleged misuse of voter data. AIMIM chief

Asaduddin Owaisi, who is also MP from Hyderabad, has said, “If false Form 7 are being filed, we appeal to the Election Commission to take action against those responsible. If this drama does not stop, protests bigger than those at Delhi’s Jantar Mantar will take place on the roads and streets of Hyderabad.” As of October 3, out of 92,88,181 notices required to be generated, 92,88,180 had been generated and 90,26,993 delivered, leaving 2,61,191 pending delivery. 59,35,479 electors had been found eligible for final publication. Meanwhile, a reported backlog of voter applications has raised worries about the revision process, particularly in metropolitan regions.

Officials have been asked to improve helpdesks and host special camps for vulnerable groups such as laborers, the homeless, and night shelter occupants. With the claims and objections process reaching its conclusion, the Election Commission has emphasized that no voter should be removed solely based on an unsubstantiated Form 7 objection.

India's LA 2028 blueprint is revealed by head coach Craig Fulton following historic gold at the Asian Games



Aichi-Nagoya: Two days ago in Aichi-Nagoya, the Indian men’s hockey team defeated Malaysia 5-1 in the final to successfully defend their Asian Games title for the first time in the sport’s history. The squad lead by Harmanpreet Singh also earned automatic qualifying for the 2028 Olympic Games in Los Angeles with this triumph. Craig Fulton, the head coach of the Indian men’s national team, stated that LA 2028 is not far off and that he will need to start anew after the Hockey India League (HIL). This will include infusing more young faces into the squad in order to strike a fine balance between youth and experience, according to a press release by the Sports Authority of India (SAI). “LA 2028 is within two years. It seems a long way off, but it obviously comes around pretty quick. I think at the moment

we’re just trying to get the right schedule, the right planning in place, the big blocks of what the preparation looks like two years out, one year out and six months out, and plan accordingly. Yeah, I think every team has its phases and flows with experience and youth. We have a good group of experienced players with us now,” Craig Fulton said. “We have some youth, but we have a lot of youth in the Indian A team and a strong Under-21 team as well, which is great. So in the next two-three months, post the Hockey India League, we’ll have a look at all the talent that we have, choose a new squad and start afresh from there,” the 51-year-old added. This was the fifth gold medal overall for the Indian men’s hockey team in the continental sports extravaganza after the 1966 Bangkok, 1998 Bangkok, 2014 Incheon and 2022

Hangzhou editions. Fulton, who represented South Africa at the 1996 and 2004 Summer Olympic Games, said defending back-to-back gold medals was always special. “Personally, this Asian Games was very unique. It was very different from the last Asian Games as we were isolated out here in the sense that we were away from the other events and athletes. There was no so-called Games Village. But at the same time, we had our own routine. We went to the field, we played, we came back, and everything was the same. Hangzhou, being the first gold medal, was very special. But to come back and defend it with back-to-back golds is always special,” he said. India edged past arch-rivals Pakistan 4-3 by scoring in the dying minutes of the match at the Gifu Prefectural Green Stadium after squandering a 3-0 lead. Captain Harmanpreet Singh (5’, 13”) and Sukhjeet Singh (23”) gave India a 3-0 lead, but Abu Mahmood (30”), Hannan Shahid (45”) and Waheed Rana (49”) brought Pakistan back on level terms. It was Abhishek who scored in the final minute of the match to take India into the men’s final.

Bhaichung Bhutia Slams AIFF Over ‘Illogical’ India vs Brazil Friendly



New Delhi: Indian football great Bhaichung Bhutia called the historic friendly between India and Brazil as a circus. He also critised the All India Football Federation (AIFF) for ignoring some of the long-standing issues within the game in the country and giving preference to the tie that took place on Saturday, October 3. The match against Brazil was part of a three-match series that also included ties against Panama and Uruguay, teams who played at the FIFA World Cup 2026. Bhutia admitted that from a fan and former player perspective, a tie against Brazil is a cause for excitement. However, he felt that AIFF should be looking to develop the game with a long-term vision. “From a player’s or fan’s point of view, yes, everybody would love it. As a player, I would’ve loved to play Brazil,” Bhutia told The Indian Express before the match. “But is the federation’s job to give the players an opportunity to play against Brazil or is it their job to develop football for the longer run?” Bhutia, who is part of the AIFF executive committee, also questioned the logic behind playing Brazil after paying a large amount of money, especially when Indian football and ISL clubs are struggling to stay afloat at the moment. “For a federation to pay Brazil to play this match – it’s being said that the amount is Rs 50-60 crore – is completely illogical,” Bhutia said. “I am in the ExCo, there was a deficit of Rs 14 to 16 crore in the last budget. You are running pillar to post for getting sponsors. Clubs are shutting down because there are no sponsors. There are clubs in the I-League (Indian Football League) and ISL (Indian Super League) that are struggling to

find sponsors.” India were originally set to play in the inaugural FIFA ASEAN Cup, where they were drawn alongside Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia — teams closer to their FIFA ranking of 138. Brazil, by comparison, were ranked sixth as of Friday. The AIFF initially planned to send separate squads for the ASEAN Cup and the Brazil friendly, but later withdrew from the tournament altogether to prioritise the high-profile clash, a decision Bhutia criticised. “We shouldn’t have missed out on a competitive tournament like the ASEAN Cup. The players would have benefitted playing competitive matches in that tournament, a minimum of three games. And then you chose to play this friendly by paying so much money, it makes no sense as a federation,” said Bhutia. Bhutia said Brazil’s involvement in Indian football could instead have followed Japan’s model. The J-League brought in Brazilian players and coaches during its early years, helping a generation of Japanese footballers learn from Brazil’s creativity while combining it with their own discipline. “What did Japan do with Brazilian football? They collaborated. There were people like Zico who coached the Japanese national team for a long time. They had a lot of expertise from Brazilian football in Japan.” “When you have a clueless president, the entire thing becomes a circus and that is what is happening in Indian football. Look at our FIFA ranking, we went from being inside the top 100 to close to 140. Even in the Asian Cup, India didn’t qualify on merit,” said Bhutia. Indian football legend Bhaichung Bhutia criticized the All India Football Federation

(AIFF) for prioritizing an expensive friendly against Brazil over developmental priorities and competitive tournaments like the FIFA ASEAN Cup. Bhutia highlighted financial struggles faced by Indian clubs and questioned the logic of paying Rs 50-60 crore for the Brazil match, which ended in a 0-4 defeat. Advocating a long-term vision, he urged AIFF to emulate Japan’s collaborative approach with Brazil, emphasizing development over spectacle to improve India’s declining FIFA ranking. India were given a reality check during the international friendly on Saturday as they were beaten 0-4 by Brazil. For weeks, India vs Brazil had been living in Kolkata long before the players did. It was in the arguments over ticket prices, the boycott calls, the Brazilian shirts appearing around the city, the fascination with Vinicius Jr and, above all, the question of whether a football-mad city would actually show up when Brazil finally arrived. On Saturday, even the sky seemed determined to add to the drama. Rain swept across Kolkata for much of the afternoon, making the journey to Salt Lake Stadium harder, while large sections of the ground remained empty as the evening began. There was enough time for the weather to change and, perhaps more importantly, enough time for Kolkata to make up its mind. The seats began filling as kick-off approached and the sound inside the stadium grew with them. When Brazil walked out for their warm-up, Vinicius Jr received the reception everyone had expected. He acknowledged the supporters and was immediately surrounded by the noise that had followed his name around Kolkata for days. On the other side, Anwar Ali and Ryan Williams were among the India players drawing some of the loudest cheers from the home support. It was an important distinction on a night built around Brazil. The visitors had the global stars, the famous yellow shirts and the attention of the football world, but the home crowd had come with its own loyalties. They wanted to see Vinicius, but they also wanted India to make this more than a celebration of the opposition. For the opening exchanges, India did exactly that. The defensive line pushed high, the players looked willing to take responsibility on the ball and Brazil were not allowed the easy runs they e defence.

Khalid Jamil Admits Mistakes Cost India Dearly But Sees Lessons In Brazil Defeat



Kolkata: For all the noise that had surrounded Brazil’s visit to Kolkata, Khalid Jamil knew there would eventually come a point when the conversation had to move beyond the occasion and towards what India could actually take from it. The 4-0 defeat was harsh on the scoreboard, but for Jamil, the bigger concern lay in the mistakes, the lapses in concentration and the belief his players showed against a team operating several levels above them. Speaking after the match at the Salt Lake Stadium, Jamil did not try to dress up the result, admitting that individual errors had cost India dearly while also insisting that his players had given everything they had. His assessment was ultimately less about the 4-0 scoreline and more about what India needed to improve, from concentration and defensive strength to the mental belief required to compete against top opposition. “I think two or three were soft goals, individual errors. Many mistakes. We made a lot of substitutions, tried everyone, but they were not up to the mark. Maybe they didn’t believe in themselves.” The admission was telling because India had, for long periods, managed to make Brazil uncomfortable. The

defensive line repeatedly caught Vinicius Jr offside, while Sahal Abdul Samad looked confident in possession and Ryan Williams provided one of India’s clearest attacking outlets. But every small opening against Brazil carried a different weight, and India were punished whenever their concentration slipped. Jamil, though, was keen to separate the result from the effort. He felt the occasion itself had given his players an experience that cannot easily be replicated in training or against more familiar opposition. “We have to play more (such) matches for experience. But from my side, I think the players did not leave any stone unturned in terms of their efforts. I got them to play defensively; they contributed to the build-up and attack.” That distinction mattered. India were not simply sitting deep for 90 minutes and hoping to survive. There were periods when they tried to play through Brazil, and there were moments when their attacking transitions created problems. Williams came particularly close in the second half, only for Mauro Jnior to clear his effort off the line. But the margins were unforgiving. Brazil could absorb India’s better moments and still find another gear, while the

Blue Tigers struggled to recover from mistakes that gifted the visitors goals. Jamil’s biggest takeaway, therefore, was not simply that India had lost to Brazil. It was that matches of this level expose every weakness, and surviving against elite opposition requires concentration to remain intact for the entire game. “The concentration lacked a bit. Concentration, focus and preparation should be good. Good teams try many things (to get a positive result). If you have tried one or two things, it is not enough; you have to improvise from the first to the 90th minute.” That was perhaps the clearest explanation of where Jamil felt India fell short. The defensive organisation that had worked during the opening stages began to crack, and Brazil needed only a handful of opportunities to turn the game decisively in their favour. Gurpreet Singh Sandhu’s first half was central to that story. Two of Brazil’s goals came after errors from the Indian goalkeeper, while another mistake before the break nearly created a third. Jamil replaced him at half-time, but refused to make the goalkeeper the sole explanation for the defeat. “He is one of the best goalkeepers India has, and we cannot judge him in

just two matches, because the next game is coming up. He will be back again. Sometimes it happens.” Jamil’s point was that the mistakes had been collective. Brazil’s quality amplified them, but India had also allowed the situation to develop before the final error. “You cannot blame just one player. If you see many mistakes from defenders, allowing him to take a shot.” That assessment was consistent with the way the match unfolded. Brazil eventually found gaps not because India had abandoned their defensive plan entirely, but because the intensity and concentration required to maintain it began to fade. There was another part of Jamil’s assessment that was harder to soften. With India making 11 changes across the game, the coach wanted every player coming off the bench to treat the opportunity as a chance to change the contest. Instead, he felt too many failed to make the most of it. “If a player comes on, they have to be prepared. Today, there were 11 changes, so we have tried everybody. They have to capitalise on the chance; otherwise, they will not get another chance. The ones who came on tonight weren’t up to the mark. All of them.” For Jamil, that was as much a question of mentality as footballing ability. Playing Brazil can be intimidating, but the coach believes that cannot become an excuse once the whistle goes. “Maybe they did not have the belief that they could start. Mentally, they have to be strong.” It was a pointed message from a coach who has repeatedly spoken about the need for Indian players to embrace difficult situations rather than simply survive them. Against Brazil, that demand became particularly obvious.

Pakistan Thriller Prepared India For Hockey Final



New Delhi: India’s victory over Pakistan in a tense semifinal gave the men’s hockey team the confidence and momentum to produce a commanding performance against Malaysia in the Asian Games final, according to head coach Craig Fulton. The result secured India back-to-back Asian Games gold medals and also sealed their place at the 2028 Olympics. Harmanpreet Singh led from the front with two goals as India brushed aside Malaysia 5-1 in the final, successfully defending their Asian Games title. However, they were given an almighty scare in the semi-final as Pakistan came back from three goals down to level the game 3-3 before Abhishek got his side over the line. “We played a great game. We almost needed that semi-final (win) to get into this mindset,” Fulton said after the final, as quoted by PTI. Fulton said that the team had an honest debrief after the Pakistan game and the aim was to focus on tempo and play without fear. “This game was good because we really debriefed honestly after the semifinal. We just had to focus on ourselves and our basic game plan but do it at tempo and have no fear.

KL Rahul Emulates MS Dhoni And Shatters Yuvraj Singh’s Record Against West Indies

New Delhi: KL Rahul has levelled MS Dhoni in the elite list of No.5 batters to have scored ODI centuries for India. Rahul moved to joint second with four centuries at the position, alongside Dhoni. On Saturday, October 3, Rahul smashed an unbeaten 129 off 87 balls in the third ODI against the West Indies in Mullanpur. His innings featured 10 fours and two sixes. Yuvraj Singh holds the record for the most ODI centuries by an Indian No. 5 batter, with seven. Rahul also broke Yuvraj’s record for the highest score by an Indian No. 5 against the West Indies in ODIs, surpassing his 110 in Colombo in 2005. KL Rahul turned on the style in the closing stages to produce a stunning unbeaten 129 off 87 balls and power India to 351/7. He initially played the role of an anchor after



coming in during the middle overs, rotating the strike and finding boundaries when the West Indies bowlers erred. Rahul brought up his fifty off 41 balls and then shifted gears spectacularly. He attacked the short ball with powerful pulls, while his drives through the off-side showcased his timing and placement. A 78m six off

Matthew Forde and a clean straight drive against Jayden Seales underlined his growing dominance. Rahul also found useful partners in Naman Dhir and Gurnoor Brar as India accelerated towards the end. He continued to pick gaps and punish anything loose, hitting back-to-back fours off Vitel Lawes before launching into the fi-

nal assault. The acceleration was particularly brutal after he entered the 90s. Rahul smashed an 84m six over deep mid-wicket off Alzarri Joseph before reaching his ninth ODI century with another maximum off Seales. He took just 39 balls to move from 50 to 100. Once past three figures, Rahul showed no signs of slowing down. He hammered Seales for another six before taking Keemo Paul apart in the final over, hitting two sixes and a four. His reverse scoop for two added a touch of improvisation to a remarkable finish. KL Rahul equaled MS Dhoni with four ODI centuries as a No.5 batter for India, following his unbeaten 129 off 87 balls against the West Indies on October 3, 2026, in Mullanpur. His innings, featuring multiple boundaries and sixes, helped India reach 351/7.

Asian Games Gold Historic, Next Target LA Olympics: 17-Year-Old Kumkum’s Father

New Delhi: Seventeen-year-old Kumkum Mohod’s historic Asian Games gold turned her neighbourhood in Maharashtra’s Amravati into a scene of celebration on Saturday. Kumkum became the first Indian woman to win an individual recurve archery gold medal at the Asian Games after she struck a perfect 10 in the



decisive shoot-off at the Aichi-Nagoya Games in Japan. For her family in Gosavi Colony, the medal was more than just another

sporting achievement. It was the culmination of years of hard work for a teenager who picked up a bow at the age of eight. Her father, Anil Mohod, said the family had spoken to Kumkum after her historic victory and found her thrilled with the result. “We spoke to Kumkum. She had competed in several national and interna-

tional competitions, but this was her first individual medal, and that too a gold at the Asian Games. She is thrilled that she got what she was aiming for,” he told PTI. Kumkum has trained at a local archery range under coach Prafull Dange since she was eight. Her campaign in Nagoya has already produced three medals.

Smaran’s Fine Hundred Helps Rest Of India Extend Lead Over Jammu Kashmir

New Delhi: Ravichandran Smaran remained unbeaten on a well-measured 126 as the Rest of India reached 306 for eight to lead by 265 runs against Jammu and Kashmir on the third day of their Irani Cup match here on Saturday. Smaran’s knock came off 131 balls with 15 fours and five sixes, while opener Sanat Sangwan made 55 as Rest of India held advantage when stumps were drawn here at the Sher-I-Kashmir Stadium. Sahil Lotra (3/71) and Umar Nazir Mir (3/87) were the pick among bowlers for the hosts but the RoI batters, despite the failures of India batters Rishabh Pant (8) and Sarfaraz Khan (0), gave their side the upper hand. Batting as low as No. 8, Pant had a second consecutive disappointing outing with the bat when Lotra pinned him in front of the wickets for eight off 18 balls. Earlier, No. 5 Sarfaraz’s poor footwork saw him edging one to the slip cordon on the fifth ball that he faced. Starting the day with 17 runs in deficit and one wicket down, RoI batters Sangwan and Sudeep Kumar Gharami (33) produced a tidy start to keep the J&K bowlers at bay. Lone Nasir Muzaffar, who had scored an important half-century on Day Two, provided the first breakthrough when he cleaned up Gharami after a 50-run stand with Sangwan. The left-handed Sangwan found strong support at the other end from Saransh



Jain, as they added 70 runs for the third wicket to take RoI ahead. Having batted really well for his half-century, Sangwan became Umar Nazir’s first victim of the innings when he edged one behind in the 52nd over. Sangwan made 55 off 160 balls with three fours and a six. Nazir then dealt a double blow to RoI, cleaning up Saransh (25) and dismissing Sarfaraz in a space of four deliveries to put J&K in control. But with a measured effort and resolve, Smaran found dependable partners in Manav Suthar (16), with whom he added 52 runs for the sixth wicket, and 109 runs with Mukesh Choudhary (9) for the ongoing ninth wicket stand, to give RoI much needed relief. Mukesh Choudhary was batting on 9 at the other end when stumps were drawn. In a display of composure, counter-attacking brilliance, and tactical maturity,

23-year-old Ravichandran Smaran played the innings of his life to rescue Rest of India (RoI) from the brink of collapse against Ranji Trophy champions Jammu & Kashmir at the Sher-i-Kashmir Stadium. Smaran’s sensational, unbeaten 126 off just 131 balls spearheaded a dramatic turnaround on Day 3, pushing Rest of India to 306/8 at stumps and building a formidable overall lead of 265 runs. Rest of India began Day 3 trailing by 17 runs in their second innings, sitting at 24/1. Opener Sanat Sangwan and Sudip Kumar Gharami provided a solid platform, sharing a watchful 50-run partnership to wipe out the deficit and establish a steady lead. Sangwan brought up a methodical half-century (55 off 160 balls) while Gharami contributed a steady 33 before Lone Nasir Muzaffar provided J&K with their first breakthrough up Gharami.