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Arunachal DCM joins students for 'Developed India 2047' contest

MEIN URGES YOUTH TO ENVISION INDIA'S FUTURE GROWTH

Itanagar, Sept 28: Arunachal Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Chowna Mein joined students at Chongkham for the "My Dream: Developed India 2047" competition, encouraging youth to envision a progressive and inclusive nation as India approaches its centenary of independence.

The event, organized by local educational institutions in collaboration with district authorities, brought together students from various schools and colleges to present essays, speeches, and creative projects outlining their vision for India in 2047. Themes ranged from technological innovation and sustainable development to social equity and cultural preservation. Addressing the gathering, Mein emphasized that India's future rests on the shoulders of its youth. He urged students to think boldly about solutions to challenges such as climate change, rural development, and digital transformation. "Your ideas today will shape the India of tomorrow. We must dream big and work hard to make those dreams a reality," he said.

The Deputy Chief Minister highlighted the importance of education, skill development, and entrepreneurship in building a self-reliant India. He noted that initiatives like "Aatmanirbhar Bharat" and digital empowerment programs provide a strong foundation for youth to contribute meaningfully to national growth.

Students showcased innovative proposals, including renewable energy projects, smart agriculture models, and strategies for bridging urban-rural divides. Judges praised the creativity and practicality of the submissions, underscoring the potential of young minds to drive transformative change.

Mein also interacted with participants, encouraging them to pursue careers in science, technology, governance, and social service. He stressed that inclusive development must prioritize marginalized communities, ensuring that progress benefits every citizen.

Community leaders present at the event lauded the initiative, noting that such competitions inspire civic responsibility and foster a spirit of nation-building among students. They emphasized that engaging youth in dialogue about India's future strengthens democratic participation and collective vision.

Nagaland govt's waste progress shows mixed picture to NGT

Kohima, Sept 28: The Nagaland government's submission to the National Green Tribunal (NGT) on its waste management initiatives has presented a mixed picture, highlighting progress in certain areas while acknowledging persistent challenges in others.

Officials reported that several urban local bodies have made strides in door-to-door waste collection, segregation at source, and establishment of composting units. Kohima and Dimapur were cited as examples where municipal authorities have introduced pilot projects for scientific disposal and recycling. The government emphasized that awareness campaigns and community participation have helped improve compliance in select wards. However, the report also admitted that many districts continue to struggle with inadequate infrastructure, limited manpower, and lack of proper landfill sites.

Unregulated dumping remains a concern, particularly in semi-urban and rural areas where waste management systems are either absent or poorly enforced. The NGT was informed that financial constraints and logistical hurdles have slowed the pace of implementation.

The state government outlined plans to expand waste processing facilities, strengthen monitoring mechanisms, and encourage private sector participation. Officials said efforts are underway to integrate modern technologies, including waste-to-energy initiatives, though these remain at an early stage. Environmental groups welcomed the government's transparency in acknowledging shortcomings but urged stronger action. They argued that unchecked waste accumulation poses risks to public health, water bodies, and biodiversity. Activists stressed that Nagaland must adopt stricter enforcement measures and prioritize sustainable practices to meet national waste management targets.

CBI charges Acme Realties fraud

Mumbai, Sept 28: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has filed a chargesheet against Acme Realties and several of its officials, accusing them of defrauding homebuyers through misrepresentation and diversion of funds. The case, registered under sections of cheating and criminal conspiracy, marks a significant step in the ongoing probe into real estate malpractices in Maharashtra.

According to the chargesheet, Acme Realties allegedly collected large sums from prospective homebuyers for residential projects in Mumbai and adjoining areas but failed to deliver possession within promised timelines. Investigators claim that funds were diverted to unrelated ventures, leaving hundreds of buyers stranded without homes despite years of waiting.

The CBI stated that company officials deliberately misled buyers with false assurances, brochures, and advertisements, while continuing to collect payments even after projects stalled. Evidence gathered during the investigation includes financial records, buyer agreements, and testimonies pointing to systematic fraud. Homebuyers who filed complaints expressed relief at the chargesheet, noting that legal action offers hope for accountability. Many buyers had invested life savings into the projects, only to face prolonged delays and uncertainty. "We trusted the company, but our dreams turned into nightmares. This chargesheet is a step toward justice," one complainant said.

India, Poland push to operationalise Joint Action Plan 2024-28

New Delhi, Sept 28: India and Poland have reaffirmed their commitment to operationalising the Joint Action Plan 2024-28, focusing on strengthening bilateral cooperation across trade, technology, and strategic sectors.

Officials from both nations met in New Delhi to review progress on the roadmap, which was signed earlier this year to deepen ties in areas ranging from defense collaboration and renewable energy to education and cultural exchange. The plan is designed to provide a structured framework for advancing shared priorities over the next four years. During the discussions, Indian representatives highlighted opportunities for expanding cooperation in micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), digital transformation, and green manufacturing. Poland, in turn, emphasized its expertise in advanced engineering, renewable technologies, and precision manufacturing, noting that these strengths could complement India's scale and innovation capacity. Both sides agreed to accelerate work on joint ventures, knowledge-sharing platforms, and skill development programs. Officials stressed that operationalising the plan requires active participation from industry stakeholders, academic institutions, and government agencies to ensure tangible outcomes. The meeting also touched upon enhancing market access for products, fostering innovation partnerships, and creating mechanisms for regular dialogue.

Arunachal minister chairs Siang roadmap review, urges faster development

Itanagar, Sept 28: Arunachal Pradesh Minister Ojing Tasing chaired a comprehensive review meeting on Siang district's development roadmap, stressing the need for accelerated implementation of projects to ensure balanced growth across the region.

The meeting, held at Chongkham, brought together senior officials, local representatives, and community leaders to assess progress on infrastructure, education, healthcare, and livelihood initiatives. Tasing emphasized that Siang's strategic location and resource potential make it a priority area for the state government's development agenda.

Officials presented updates on ongoing road construction projects, rural electrification, and water supply schemes. While notable progress was reported in expanding connectivity and basic services, challenges such as difficult terrain, funding delays, and logistical hurdles were highlighted. Tasing directed departments to adopt innovative solutions and strengthen coordination to overcome bottlenecks. Education and healthcare emerged as key focus areas. The minister urged authorities to expedite the establishment of new schools and health centers, particularly in remote villages. He stressed that quality education and accessible healthcare are essential for empowering communities and reducing migration pressures. Livelihood generation was another major theme of the review.

AIMIM appoints new General Secretary

Hyderabad, Sept 28: The All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) has appointed a new General Secretary, signaling a fresh phase of organizational restructuring and strategic planning within the party. The announcement was made at the party headquarters, where senior leaders emphasized the importance of strengthening grassroots connections and expanding AIMIM's presence beyond its traditional strongholds.

Party president Asaduddin Owaisi welcomed the new appointee, highlighting the role of the General Secretary in coordinating state units, managing outreach programs, and ensuring effective communication between the central leadership and local cadres. He noted that the appointment reflects AIMIM's commitment to nurturing leadership that can address contemporary challenges while staying rooted in the party's core values.

The new General Secretary, whose name was formally announced during the meeting, is expected to oversee organizational reforms, streamline internal processes, and spearhead initiatives aimed at youth engagement and minority empowerment. Leaders stressed that the role carries significant responsibility in shaping AIMIM's political strategy, particularly as the party seeks to expand its influence in states such as Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, and Bihar.

Pune growth hub strategy eyes $200bn economy, 20 lakh jobs

Pune, Sept 28: Maharashtra has unveiled an ambitious growth hub strategy for Pune, targeting a $200 billion economy and the creation of 20 lakh jobs over the next decade. The plan positions Pune as a central driver of the state's economic transformation, leveraging its strengths in industry, technology, and education.

Officials outlined that the strategy focuses on expanding Pune's role as a hub for advanced manufacturing, IT services, biotechnology, and green energy. The roadmap emphasizes infrastructure upgrades, including metro expansion, logistics corridors, and smart urban planning, to support rapid industrial and commercial growth.

The government highlighted that Pune's strong academic ecosystem, anchored by leading universities and research institutions, will play a pivotal role in nurturing talent and innovation. Skill development programs are being designed to align with emerging sectors, ensuring that the workforce is equipped to meet global standards. Employment generation is a core priority, with the plan aiming to create 20 lakh jobs across formal and informal sectors.

Nagaland Tourism urges stronger rural focus to boost sustainable growth

Kohima, Sept 28: Nagaland's Tourism Department has called for greater emphasis on rural tourism, highlighting its potential to drive inclusive growth, preserve cultural heritage, and create sustainable livelihoods across the state. At a recent review meeting, officials underscored that rural tourism offers unique opportunities to showcase Nagaland's traditional villages, indigenous crafts, and natural landscapes. They noted that while urban centers like Kohima and Dimapur attract visitors during festivals, rural destinations remain underexplored despite their rich cultural and ecological appeal.

The department stressed that rural tourism can empower local communities by generating income through homestays, handicrafts, and eco-tourism ventures. Officials pointed out that strengthening infrastructure such as roads, sanitation, and digital connectivity is essential to make rural destinations more accessible and visitor-friendly.

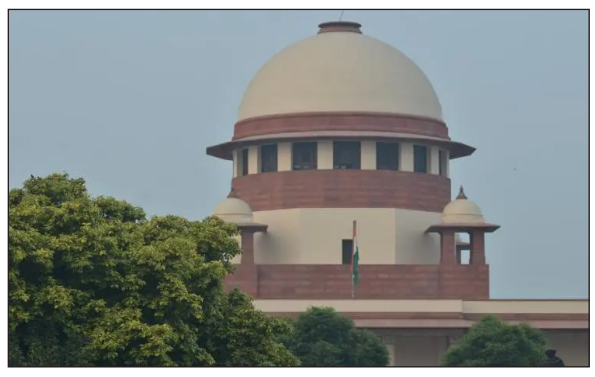
Tourism officers also emphasized the importance of training programs for youth and entrepreneurs to manage hospitality services, promote local cuisine, and develop guided tours. They argued that skill development initiatives would ensure that rural communities benefit directly from tourism growth.

Environmental sustainability was highlighted as a core priority. The department urged that rural tourism projects integrate conservation practices to protect forests, rivers, and biodiversity. Officials noted that eco-friendly tourism models could position Nagaland as a responsible destination in the global travel market. Community leaders welcomed the initiative, stressing that rural tourism must remain rooted in local traditions. They suggested that cultural festivals, folk performances, and village tours be promoted as authentic experiences for visitors.

Observers remarked that the push for rural tourism aligns with Nagaland's broader development goals, including diversification of the economy and promotion of indigenous identity. Analysts believe that rural tourism could help bridge urban-rural divides while strengthening Nagaland's image as a culturally vibrant and environmentally conscious state.

SC Collegium recommends Gujarat, Delhi, Telangana Chief Justices' elevation

New Delhi, Sept 28: The Supreme Court Collegium has recommended the elevation of the Chief Justices of Gujarat, Delhi, and Telangana High Courts to the apex court, marking a significant step in strengthening the judiciary's composition.



According to official sources, the Collegium, headed by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud, finalized the names after extensive deliberations on seniority, merit, and regional representation. The move is expected to fill critical vacancies in the Supreme Court, which has been functioning below its sanctioned strength. The Chief Justices recommended include Justice Sunita Agarwal of Gujarat High Court, Justice Manmohan of Delhi High Court, and Justice Alok Aradhe of Telangana High Court. Their elevation, once approved by the Centre, will bring diverse judicial experience to the apex court, enhancing its ability to address complex constitutional and legal matters.

Legal experts noted that the Collegium's decision reflects a balance between seniority and specialization. Each of the recommended judges has a track record of delivering judgments on key issues ranging from constitutional law to commercial disputes. Observers believe their induction will help reduce case backlogs and strengthen the court's institutional capacity.

The recommendations come at a time when the judiciary faces mounting pressure to expedite hearings and deliver timely justice. With several high-profile cases pending, the expansion of the bench is seen as crucial to maintaining efficiency and public confidence.

Sikkim CM urges youth to embrace entrepreneurship, opportunity

Gangtok, Sept 28: Sikkim Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang has urged the state's youth to embrace entrepreneurship and innovation, calling on them to transform Sikkim into a "state of opportunity creators." His remarks came during an interaction with students and young professionals, where he emphasized the importance of self-reliance and job creation in shaping the state's future.

Tamang highlighted that traditional reliance on government employment is no longer sufficient to meet the aspirations of the younger generation. He stressed that entrepreneurship, start-ups, and skill-based ventures can unlock new avenues of growth, particularly in sectors such as tourism, organic farming, information technology, and eco-friendly industries. "We must move from being job seekers to job creators. The youth of Sikkim have the talent and energy to lead this transformation," he said. The Chief Minister pointed to government initiatives designed to support budding entrepreneurs, including financial assistance schemes, incubation centers, and training programs. He assured that the state would continue to provide mentorship and infrastructure support to help young innovators turn ideas into sustainable businesses. Students and youth representatives welcomed Tamang's vision, noting that entrepreneurship offers opportunities to harness local resources and showcase Sikkim's unique strengths. Several participants shared their aspirations to launch ventures in organic produce, digital services, and eco-tourism, underscoring the growing interest in self-employment.

Himanta Biswa Sarma honors Lata Mangeshkar's Assamese musical legacy

Dispur , Sep 28: On the birth anniversary of legendary playback singer Lata Mangeshkar on September 28, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma paid glowing tributes to the icon, highlighting her profound and enduring musical connection with Assam. In a heartfelt message shared on social media, the Chief Minister recalled Mangeshkar's rich artistic contributions to Assamese music, emphasizing her legendary collaboration with Assam's cultural icon and Bharat Ratna awardee, Dr. Bhupen Hazarika. The tribute served not only to honor Mangeshkar's incomparable voice, but also to celebrate the lasting cultural bridge her music built between the states of Assam and Maharashtra. Central to Sarma's tribute was the historic Assamese song "Jonakore Rati, Asomire Maati" (A Moonlit Night, the Soil of Assam), which marked Lata Mangeshkar's debut in Assamese cinema and music.

Composed by Dr. Bhupen Hazarika for the critically acclaimed 1956 Assamese film Era Bator Xur (Song of the Abandoned Road), the composition holds a cherished place in the state's cultural heritage. The song captured the raw emotional beauty, pastoral charm, and soulful essence of Assam, introduced through the pristine vocal timbre of India's "Nightingale." Sarma noted that the song rapidly transcended its original cinematic context to become an indelible part of Assam's collective musical memory, passing down through generations as a timeless masterpiece.

The successful collaboration on Era Bator Xur laid the groundwork for a creative partnership between Lata Mangeshkar and Dr. Bhupen Hazarika that spanned several decades. Together, the duo brought Assamese musical traditions to the national stage, blending regional folk roots with sophisticated orchestral arrangements. Their combined artistic synergy produced multiple iconic renditions that enriched the region's cultural landscape. By bringing her unparalleled technical mastery and emotive depth to Assamese lyrics, Mangeshkar demonstrated a rare artistic sensitivity that endeared her deeply to the people of the Northeast, establishing a legacy that remains vibrant today.Beyond the music itself, Chief Minister Sarma reflected on a poignant observation once made by Lata Mangeshkar regarding the intimate linguistic and emotional connection between Assamese and her native Marathi.

Mangeshkar had thoughtfully highlighted that the word "Aai," which signifies "mother" in Marathi, carries the exact same fundamental meaning in Assamese. Sarma described this shared linguistic expression as a powerful, symbolic thread connecting the cultures of Assam and Maharashtra.

As Assam simultaneously marks the centenary celebrations of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika ,the Chief Minister emphasized that the voices of these two cultural giants created a timeless bridge of unity, art, and mutual respect across Indian states.

To allow the public to re-experience this legacy, Sarma concluded his tribute by sharing a direct link to Mangeshkar's classic recording of "Jonakore Rati, Asomire Maati."

Assam farmer Dhaniram Chetia survives violent wildlife attack in Digboi

Guwahati, Sep 28: In a violent incident that has sent shockwaves through the local agricultural community, renowned progressive farmer Dhaniram Chetia was allegedly targeted and brutally attacked by miscreants on Sunday night in the Pengeri area of Assam's Tinsukia district. Chetia, widely respected across the state for his pioneering work in organic farming and his outspoken advocacy against anti-social activities, sustained serious injuries during the assault and is currently receiving emergency medical treatment at St.

Luke's Hospital in Chabua. The unprovoked attack on a prominent rural leader has triggered deep concern and outrage among local residents, prompting urgent calls for swift law enforcement intervention and stringent legal action against the perpetrators. According to initial reports, the violent encounter unfolded in the Brahmajan region of Pengeri after Chetia noticed alleged illegal and unlawful activities taking place near the JN Barua tea garden.

Driven by his sense of civic responsibility, Chetia approached the location to confront the individuals involved and attempt to put a stop to their illicit operations. During the confrontation, an unidentified assailant ambushed Chetia from behind, attacking him with a sharp weapon and inflicting severe wounds. Following the assault, the miscreants fled the scene, leaving the injured farmer in urgent need of medical assistance.

Local residents quickly intervened to arrange his immediate transport to St. Luke's Hospital in nearby Chabua, where medical staff are currently managing his recovery. Dhaniram Chetia has long been recognized as a symbol of self-reliance, peace, and agricultural innovation in Upper Assam. Hailing from Tekeri Gaon in Pengeri, Chetia overcame severe childhood financial hardships to establish a successful organic farming enterprise along the Burhi Dihing River, inspiring countless local youth to choose agriculture over social unrest or extremist violence.

Beyond his agricultural achievements, Chetia has consistently used his public platform to raise social awareness, condemn community vices, and stand up against criminal elements in the district. His willingness to actively intervene against unlawful acts near local tea estates underscores his standing as an unyielding civic activist. The attack has sparked widespread condemnation across Tinsukia district, with community further updates regarding Chetia's medical condition and the police's progress in apprehending the attackers.

Prestone Tynsong denies claims of leading a BJP government

Shillong,Sep 28: Meghalaya Deputy Chief Minister Prestone Tynsong has firmly dismissed viral social media reports alleging that he plans to defect to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) alongside 22 National People's Party (NPP) legislators to assume the Chief Minister's office with approval from Union Home Minister Amit Shah. Addressing a public election rally in Wahlyngkhat—organized to support NPP candidate D.R.L. Nonglait for the Shillong Lok Sabha by-election—Tynsong categorized the claims as dangerous misinformation.

He cautioned voters against believing unverified rumors circulated during election cycles and appealed to the public to verify factual details before sharing misleading content online, noting that the false reports had caused unnecessary anxiety among party supporters. The rumors surfaced following a significant realignment within the ruling Meghalaya Democratic Alliance (MDA) coalition. Eight United Democratic Party (UDP) legislators recently defected to the BJP, boosting the national party's representation in the 60-seat state assembly from two to 10 seats. This shift positioned the BJP as the second-largest party in the Assembly and fueled widespread political speculation regarding potential further shifts in power. Clarifying his recent official itinerary, Tynsong explained that his travel to New Delhi on September 22 was strictly for state administrative business. He noted that Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma and Deputy Chief Minister Sniawbhalang Dhar subsequently arrived in the capital on September 24 for scheduled official meetings, emphasizing that their presence in Delhi was unrelated to political defections. Reiterating Tynsong's stance, Deputy Chief Minister Sniawbhalang Dhar forcefully refuted allegations that 22 NPP legislators were conducting merger discussions with BJP leadership.

Dhar confirmed that all 33 NPP Assembly members remain fully united and committed to the current administration under Conrad Sangma's leadership. While declining to comment directly on the UDP legislators' decision to join the BJP, Dhar described it as an internal matter between those two coalition partners while reassuring the public that the MDA government remains structurally sound and stable. Highlighting the NPP's steady organizational growth since 2018—when its assembly strength stood at 19—Dhar emphasized that the party's current tally of 33 seats reflects strong public endorsement and coalition stability across Meghalaya.

Manipur Police arrest KYKL cadre and seize 3.5 kg ganja

Imphal, Sep 28: In a series of coordinated operations across Manipur, state police units have apprehended an active cadre of a proscribed insurgent outfit and interdicted a interstate drug trafficking attempt in the valley districts of Imphal East and Imphal West. The successful law enforcement actions highlight ongoing efforts by regional security forces to counter insurgent activities while simultaneously clamping down on the illegal movement of contraband narcotics across state borders. In the first major development, personnel from the Imphal East Commando (CDO) unit conducted a targeted search operation in the Khurai Laishram Leikai neighborhood under the jurisdiction of the Porompat Police Station. Acting on specific tactical intelligence regarding the presence

of underground operatives, security forces cordoned off the area and apprehended an active insurgent identified as 22-year-old Kangabam Roshan Singh, also known by his alias "Korou".

Official police records confirmed that Singh, a local resident of Khurai Laishram Leikai, is an active cadre member of the Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup (KYKL)—a banned Meitei insurgent group active in the region. Following his apprehension, Singh was handed over to the local police station for formal booking and interrogation regarding his operational role, potential links to extortion networks, and recent activities within the district. In a separate operation conducted in Imphal West, specialized personnel from the Narcotics and Affairs of Border (NAB) police station successfully intercepted an interstate drug transport attempt. Acting on verified intelligence inputs, NAB officers established a surveillance checkpoint in the North AOC commercial hub of Imphal West.

During the operation, security forces apprehended 49-year-old Omprakash Anand Survana, a resident of Thane district in Maharashtra.

A thorough search of the suspect's belongings led to the discovery and seizure of approximately 3.5 kilograms of high-grade cannabis (ganja). Investigators are working to trace the origin and destination of the seized contraband to determine whether Survana operated as part of a larger organized interstate drug syndicate transporting narcotics between the Northeast and Western India.

Shillong fire guts four shops on GS Road

Shillong, Sep 28: Four shops were gutted on Sunday when a fire broke out in an Assam-type wooden structure near Ajmera on GS Road and spread to adjoining establishments. Quick response from State firefighters averted what could have been a major loss of property along the busy commercial stretch.The blaze, which originated in a restaurant, gutted four shops in all but was brought under control within about 45 minutes, preventing the flames from developing into a major fire and spreading further. No loss of life or injuries were reported. Officer-in-Charge of the Fire Station at Bara Bazar, Dinesh Rai, said the fire control room received a call about the incident in the congested commercial area.The cause of the fire was not immediately known. An assessment of the extent of property damage is expected to be carried out following the incident.

Chakma Council to adopt NEP and weekly Mizo Speaking Day

Aizawl , Sep 28: In a major educational reform initiative, the Chakma Autonomous District Council (CADC) in Mizoram's Lawngtlai district announced that it will formally adopt the National Education Policy (NEP) starting from the 2027-28 academic session.

Alongside the overarching policy adoption, the autonomous council is introducing key administrative and pedagogical programs across all primary and middle schools under its jurisdiction, including a weekly "Mizo Speaking Day," a structured literacy drive, updated teacher transfer frameworks, and mindfulness sessions for students. The landmark decisions were finalized during a high-level educational administration meeting convened on Sunday at the CADC headquarters in Kamalanagar. Chaired by Executive Member in-charge of Education Doymoy Daveng Chakma, the conference brought together department heads and educational administrators to outline a multi-year road map aimed at enhancing academic standards, regional language proficiency, and institutional governance within the council area. A central feature of the new educational strategy is the designation of every Wednesday as "Mizo Speaking Day" in all primary and middle schools throughout the CADC region.

Designed to help young learners gain fluency and confidence in the state's primary language, the initiative provides students with regular, structured environments to practice conversational Mizo. To ensure smooth rollout across schools, a dedicated committee chaired by Primary Education Department Office Superintendent Satish Chakma has been tasked with drafting comprehensive operational guidelines and activity modalities. In alignment with the Mizoram state government's overarching policy frameworks, the CADC confirmed its commitment to fully implement the National Education Policy (NEP) beginning in the 2027-28 academic year. To prepare local schools for the transition to the NEP structure, the District School Education Board (DSEB) alongside associated CADC education departments will initiate preliminary measures, teacher training protocols, and detailed curriculum implementation guidelines.

To streamline administrative efficiency and school staffing, the meeting granted approval in principle to the draft Chakma Autonomous District Council (Transfer and Posting of Elementary School Teachers) Rules, 2026. A specialized review committee, headed by Education Officer Punya Jagat Talukdar, has been directed to evaluate the draft regulations, incorporate administrative feedback, and finalize the text by October 10 before submitting it to the CADC Executive Committee for final ratification. Beyond core academics and teacher management, the council approved a systematic adult and community literacy campaign across the CADC jurisdiction, contingent on funding availability and executive sanction. Additionally, aiming to foster student well-being and mental focus, the official confirmed that CADC schools will incorporate a 10-minute session of 'Anapana' meditation every Friday morning into the regular schedule for primary and middle school students.

Golaghat college student stabbed during campaigning

Dispur , Sep 28: A student was seriously injured after he was allegedly attacked with a sharp weapon during election campaigning ahead of the student union election at Golaghat Commerce College, according to a report.

The injured student has been identified as Sandeep Bhuyan, a member of the All Assam Students' Union (AASU), according to Mintu Gogoi, Golaghat district president of AASU.

Gogoi said Bhuyan and two other students were campaigning on Sunday night ahead of the student union election scheduled to be held on Monday. The three students were reportedly near College Tiniali in Golaghat when they were allegedly attacked with a sharp weapon. Bhuyan sustained serious injuries in the incident, while the other two students also suffered injuries.

Congress chief warns BJP will target allies with ED, CBI

Shillong, Sep 28: Meghalaya Pradesh Congress Committee (MPCC) president Vincent H. Pala has launched a sharp political attack against the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), predicting that the ruling national party will soon deploy central investigative agencies—specifically the Enforcement Directorate (ED) and the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)—against its own regional coalition partners in the state. Pala's warning follows a major political shift in Meghalaya, where eight legislators from the United Democratic Party (UDP) defected to the BJP.

The influx expanded the BJP's strength in the 60-member Meghalaya Legislative Assembly from two to 10 seats, establishing it as the second-largest political party in the House by numerical strength. Speaking on the rapid realignment within the ruling Meghalaya Democratic Alliance (MDA), Pala asserted that the National People's Party (NPP)—the dominant coalition partner led by Chief Minister Conrad K.

Sangma—will be the BJP's next target. Pala claimed that the BJP systematically utilizes federal government institutions to pressure political allies and keep them in line, drawing comparisons to political dynamics previously seen in states like Odisha, Maharashtra, and Bihar. Pointing to recent visits by several NPP leaders and MLAs to the Congress chief suggested that internal divisions are already surfacing within the NPP despite initial denials from party leadership.

Drawing a parallel to the UDP's initial rejections of defection rumors before eight of its members officially joined the BJP, Pala remarked that "where there is smoke, there is fire" and bluntly warned that the NPP would become the "next victim" of the BJP's expansionist strategy. Pala further suggested that the changing numerical balance within the ruling alliance will inevitably lead to a major cabinet reshuffle and a re-allocation of administrative portfolios.

Describing the current dynamic among the MDA coalition partners, he colorfully noted that the BJP, UDP, and NPP are effectively "sleeping in the same house on different beds" and are now shifting positions as power dynamics evolve. He questioned what share of governance authority the strengthened BJP will now demand within the MDA cabinet and whether smaller regional parties like the Hill State People's Democratic Party (HSPDP) will maintain their existing arrangements.

Meghalaya Congress chief Vincent Pala alleges politician-drug nexus

Shillong, Sep 28: Meghalaya Congress president Vincent H. Pala has revived his allegation of a high-level nexus between politics and the drug trade in Meghalaya, questioning the frequent transfers of senior police officers handling drug-related cases and linking the issue directly to the state's deteriorating law-and-order situation.Pala said the frequent transfer of police officers responsible for tackling drugs raised questions about whether they were being allowed to function independently."Why should they transfer the SP every six-seven months? You check in the record, not only once," Pala said when asked whether he still stood by his earlier allegation of a politician-drug mafia nexus in Meghalaya.

He argued that officers with specialised capabilities were previously posted according to their experience and suitability, but alleged that transfers and postings were now increasingly influenced by political connections."Today the transfer and postings will be based on whom you know. It's not what you know," he said.Pala specifically questioned the officers or provide evidence establishing that their transfers were ordered because of maintaining that the pattern of repeated transfers would itself raise questions about the state's approach to tackling the drug trad

State government releases Rs 16 crore, owes KHADC Rs 70 crore

Shillong, Sep 28: KHADC Chief Executive Member (CEM) Winston Tony Lyngdoh said the state government has released Rs 16 crore to the Council towards its share of royalty and motor vehicle taxes, but nearly Rs 70 crore in statutory dues remains unpaid.

Lyngdoh said the latest release from the District Council Affairs Department (DCA) was only a partial payment, with the bulk of the outstanding amount comprising the Council's share of royalty from major and minor minerals as well as motor vehicle taxes.

The dues include amounts pending from the previous financial year as well as the current fiscal year, he said. "We received around Rs 16 crore out of the amount that was promised to us," he told reporters recently.While the release has provided some relief, the CEM said the continued delay in releasing the Council's statutory dues was putting pressure on its finances, stressing that timely payment was crucial for the smooth functioning of the KHADC administration. Lyngdoh also disclosed that the KHADC rejected a state government proposal to assist in paying the salaries of its employees, as the offer came with conditions including a salary cap and financial and administrative reforms. The proposal envisaged strengthening the strengthened by releasing revenue.

Three law students at Delhi University are suspended for harassing college students

New Delhi, Sep 28: After the Delhi Police filed a formal complaint over the alleged harassment and surveillance of two female students in Mukherjee Nagar, the University of Delhi suspended three LLB students. Additionally, Naman, Abhinav Kumar, and Abhimanyu Kumar have been prohibited from accessing the university's grounds.

On the evening of September 23, 2026, at Mukherjee Nagar, the three students are accused of harassing two students from Hindu College and attempting to get them into a car. Official notices issued by the Office of the Proctor on 28 September 2026 state that the action has been taken in accordance with Clause 3(e) of Ordinance XV-B of the Delhi University Act, 1922. The clause defines "any practice -- whether verbal or otherwise --derogatory of women" as an act of gross indiscipline. Each notice certifies that the University of Delhi's Competent Authority authorized the suspensions and campus restrictions.

The three students are enrolled in Law Center-II, Umang Bhawan's LLB program. The suspensions are effective immediately, and students are not allowed to attend any University of Delhi property until further notice, according to university officials. On Wednesday, a woman and her friend were allegedly followed by a couple of men travelling in a car, who abused them and tried to drag them into the vehicle.

One of the women -- a first-year Master's student from the Hindu College -- had posted a video on Instagram narrating the incident. The woman said the incident took place around 9:30 pm, when she and her friend were walking near Mukherjee Nagar after visiting the Vijaynagar Haqiqat Park. They were approached by a gang of males in a white Tata Safari who made remarks about the two women.

When Naman, the driver of the SUV, informed the woman that her T-shirt "looks great," the harassing started. "Urban Mindset" was written on a red T-shirt she was sporting.She added that the males in the car pursued them and attempted to drag them inside. "When we told them not to misbehave and to leave, they began abusing us," she said.

Only until the woman's buddy pulled out her phone to record the event did the males drive off.

Bhagwant Mann is targeted by the Akali Dal, BJP, and Congress for violence at Punjab's LPU

New Delhi, Sep 28: The violence at Lovely Professional University in Phagwara has swiftly spread outside the campus, becoming a significant political dispute in Punjab. Opposition parties have questioned how the Bhagwant Mann government handled the student agitation and accused it of failing to uphold law and order. Allegations of a female student being sexually assaulted spread among students, sparking the disturbance. However, the university has rejected them. Later, the demonstration descended into violence, resulting in casualties, arson incidents, damage to university property, and a protracted closure of the Jalandhar-Phagwara National Highway. Police have registered an FIR against an unidentified person and formed an SIT to investigate the allegations.

Punjab Director General of Police (DGP) Gaurav Yadav said police initially tried to resolve the issue through dialogue and used minimum force. He said the police were also responding to stones thrown at them and damage to police vehicles. "FIR has been registered and action will be taken as per law," Yadav stated. He continued by saying that police were technically analyzing the property damage occurrences and would look into "all angles" of any potential conspiracy related to the incidents at Chitkara University and LPU. The chief officer promised that all of these perspectives are being investigated about the discovery of a walkie-talkie. Bhagwant Mann, the chief minister, has instructed the police to prosecute anybody found guilty. Additionally, the Chief Minister requested that DGP Gaurav Yadav visit the area and evaluate the circumstances. But the police and government response has come under sharp political attack.

Shiromani Akali Dal president Sukhbir Singh Badal questioned how people allegedly carrying walkie-talkies and weapons could be present inside the university and claimed that some of those arrested were outsiders. He asked where the FIR had been registered following their arrest and alleged that the episode pointed towards a larger conspiracy.

Badal also linked the controversy to other political issues involving the AAP government, alleging that the LPU episode was being used to divert attention from the ED raids, alleged financial irregularities and the controversy over government accommodation in Chandigarh. SAD leader Bikram Singh Majithia also targeted the Mann government, accusing it of failing in its primary responsibility of maintaining peace and security. He alleged that outsiders had been brought into the university to provoke students and questioned the police response to people allegedly carrying walkie-talkies, bats and weapons. Majithia further called for a central investigation, claiming that there may have been political motivations behind the LPU rebellion. These are still political accusations that investigators haven't proven. Ravneet Singh Bittu, a former Union minister, also claimed that the LPU scandal was being exploited to deflect attention from other political issues. He claimed that the state administration was worried about the BJP's increasing popular mobilization and connected the events to the party's ongoing anti-drug campaign and the impending Amit Shah rally in Jalandhar. Bittu alleged a connection between the LPU incident and political tensions following Ashok Mittal's exit from AAP, stating that the Central Government is monitoring the situation; however, these claims lack independent verification. Harsimrat Kaur Badal criticized police actions against student protestors, describing them as excessive and detrimental to Punjab's image. The Congress, represented by Punjab Youth Congress president Shuvam Sharma, emphasized the need to acknowledge genuine student grievances while urging a transparent investigation. The government asserts that police actions followed failed dialogue attempts. The controversy raises three key questions about the unrest's triggers, the potential involvement of outsiders, and any organized conspiracies. The police's immediate objective is to investigate sexual assault allegations and uncover responsible parties. The incident's political implications have led to scrutiny of the Mann government's law-and-order record, with the ongoing investigation crucial to clarify the events.

The Delhi govt plans to start reducing pollution in November

New Delhi, Sep 28: On Monday, the Delhi government unveiled a number of initiatives to reduce air pollution, which usually becomes worse starting in November. Higher parking fees, staggered office hours, and a 50% decrease in the number of employees working in government and private workplaces are some of the measures.

To deter the usage of private vehicles, parking fees at authorized parking locations will be increased as of November 1. According to news agency ANI, the measure would be in force till February 28, 2027, with the exception of parking facilities that are owned and operated by the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC). The Government of the National Capital Territory of Delhi (GNCTD) will run its offices from 10:00 am to 6:30 pm, while the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) will run its operations from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm. The updated schedule will take effect on November 1 and run through February 28.

Additionally, the government has mandated a 50% reduction in the number of employees working in government and private workplaces during this time. From November 1 to February 28, half of the employees will work from home, and the other half will be in the office. Additionally, the government declared that development and demolition will be completely prohibited from December 10, 2026, until January 20, 2027.

Additionally, from November 1, 2026, until January 31, 2027, outdoor civil construction and demolition activities that produce dust will be prohibited.

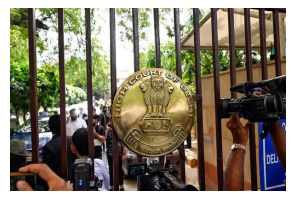
Charges for UPI Transactions Over 2,000 Will Not Be Stayed by the Supreme Court

New Delhi, Sep 28: The Center's decision to impose fees for UPI person-to-merchant transactions beyond Rs 2,000 was denied by the Supreme Court on Monday. The Reserve Bank of India, the Center, and others were ordered to submit their counteraffidavits within four weeks by a bench consisting of Chief Justice Surya Kant, Justices Joymalya Bagchi, and V Mohana.

The Supreme Court has requested an affidavit from the Center outlining the reasoning behind the ruling.Speaking on behalf of the Center, Additional Solicitor General N Venkataraman informed the bench that 96% of users of the gateway were exempt.

Ending nearly six years of fully free UPI payments, the Centre earlier this month introduced a 0.4 per cent fee on transfers worth more than Rs 2,000 made to merchants through the platform from October 15, while ring-fencing person-to-person transactions as well as small payments from any charge. The charge will be borne by merchants, not consumers, and will be capped at Rs 300 for transactions of Rs 75,000 or more, according to the new framework. Person-to-person UPI transfers and merchant transactions of up to Rs 2,000 will remain free. Railroads, telecom, insurance, fuel, and agricultural inputs are examples of essential and thin-margin industries that will pay a fixed MDR of Rs 5 for any transaction over Rs 2,000. 0.02 percent MDR, capped at Rs 300, would be applied to payments made into mutual funds, stocks, and through stockbrokers and dealers. The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), which runs the UPI network and was established in 2016, previously stated that the money would be used to fund investments in customer care, cybersecurity, fraud prevention, infrastructure resilience, and innovation.

Tihar Jail's response to Sharjeel Imam's request for PhD study materials is sought by Delhi High Court



New Delhi, Sep 28: On Monday, the Delhi High Court requested a response from the Tihar Jail authorities regarding a petition submitted by student activist Sharjeel Imam, requesting authorization to access research materials kept on a pen drive on a jail computer in order to finish his PhD. Justice Sanjeev Narula's bench set November 2 as the next hearing date and instructed the authorities to submit a status report. In his petition, argued by advocate Ahmed Ibrahim, Imam said he was in the final year of his PhD when he was arrested. He submitted that his PhD synopsis had been approved by the UGC and Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), and sought access to research material stored on a pen drive on a computer without internet connectivity. Ibrahim informed the court that Imam was requesting access to 2,132 files, which included books, essays, and images of historical documents. The Delhi Police's attorney said that the jail authorities had objected to the request and that the agency had not contested it even before the trial court.

He said that if Imam specified the content he wanted to access, access may be allowed under the watchful eye of jail officials. On January 28, 2020, Imam was taken into custody in relation to the violence that broke out in northeast Delhi after demonstrations against CAA. In addition to other offenses under the Indian Penal Code (IPC), the Arms Act, and the Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act, he has been prosecuted under the strict Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA).In order to allow him to attend his cousin's wedding, a Delhi court last week granted him interim release in the broader conspiracy case related to the 2020 North East Delhi riots from October 4 to October 10.

A Hyderabad man is fined Rs 75,000 for flagging 22-minute advertisements before a movie

New Delhi, Sep 28: After discovering that commercial ads and promotional material caused a movie's start to be delayed by about 22 minutes, a Hyderabad consumer commission ordered a theater to pay Rs 75,000. The case began on June 20, 2025, when a man purchased tickets to the film Kuberaa, starring Dhanush and Nagarjuna. The 33-year-old man told The Indian Express that he and his friend were seated by approximately 10:30 p.m. after purchasing two tickets for the 10:35 p.m. performance. However, the complaint states that trailers and ads ran until roughly 10:52 p.m. The man told the commission that the delay affected his plans and caused him to reach home at 3 am, about an hour later than expected. He alleged the delay amounted to a deficiency in service. The final order from Hyderabad District Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission came more than a year late, on September 11, 2026, in which it agreed with the complainant and held the theatre's conduct as an unfair trade practice.

The commission referred to government guidelines about the screening of public service awareness films, which restrict such approved films to up to two minutes. But the commission's conclusion went beyond just saying that movie theaters aren't allowed to run commercials before movies.It particularly held the theater accountable for the delay brought on by promotional material and commercial ads that it claimed were being screened for profit.The theater firm contended throughout the hearing that public service announcements, trailers, and commercials were all a part of its business operations and that they served a broader public-interest objective. However, given the facts of the case, the commission rejected the defense.

After a two-day weather halt in Uttarakhand, the Char Dham Yatra resumes

New Delhi, Sep 28: Due to unfavorable weather, the Char Dham Yatra was halted for the previous two days. On Monday morning, it restarted. Thousands of pilgrims from India and other countries are expected to arrive in Uttarakhand and start their journey to the Char Dham. Garhwal Commissioner Anand Swaroop revoked the two-day pilgrimage ban after the weather improved and in compliance with instructions from the Char Dham Yatra Control Organization in Rishikesh. Permission to move on to the Char Dham sites has been accorded to the pilgrims. However, the administration has emphasised the need to prioritise pilgrim safety as the rainy weather persists in the region. The departments concerned and Yatra nodal officers have also been instructed to stay vigilant.

The Yatra was suspended from September 26 to 27, over an adverse weather forecast, as several parts of Uttarakhand witnessed light to heavy rainfall, and the Hemkund Sahib in Chamoli witnessed snowfall on Saturday.

The Uttarkashi district administration temporarily prohibited pilgrimages to Gangotri and Yamunotri Dham for two days as the Char Dham Yatra was delayed due to a red alert from the MeT Department. Heena on the Gangotri route and Dobata on the Yamunotri route were the authorized transit locations where the pilgrims were halted.

Speaking to reporters today, Garhwal Commissioner Anand Swaroop stated that the Yatra's suspension order was lifted because the weather has improved and the Meteorological Department has not issued any warnings. Every district government has been invited to assist in facilitating the Yatra by putting the instructions into practice in their respective regions.

According to Anand Swaroop, the District Magistrates in question have the authority to make the required judgments on how the Yatra will be conducted depending on the local circumstances that exist in their particular districts. District Magistrates may temporarily halt the Yatra at their own level in the event of traffic jams, excessive rain, or unfavorable weather," he said.

The organizers of the Char Dham Yatra continue to place a high premium on the safety of the pilgrims. According to the Garhwal Commissioner, the administration keeps a close eye on the travel route and weather.

While traveling, pilgrims are advised to check the weather and follow the instructions provided by the local government.

The Supreme Court orders the CBSE to provide Class 6 students an exemption from the third language restriction

New Delhi, Sep 28: In order to provide pupils in Class 6 with the same "comfort" as those in Classes 7, 8, and 9, the Supreme Court on Monday ordered the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) to give a one-time exemption from its three-language policy.A panel led by Chief Justice of India (CJI) Surya Kant issued the interim order while considering numerous petitions contesting the implementation of the three-language policy, first for children in Class 9 and then for pupils in Class 6. The bench said, "We direct the students of Class 6 may be granted the same exemption as granted to Class 7 students," as it posted the hearing on the main issue concerning the three-language policy and treating English as a foreign language after six weeks.

The CBSE represented by solicitor general Tushar Mehta along with additional solicitor general (ASG) Aishwarya Bhati informed the bench that pursuant to the court's suggestion of exempting the present Class 6 students, the matter was considered and CBSE has decided to implement it for Class 6 students starting this year. Mehta told the court that out of the 28,000 odd CBSE schools in the country, almost 99% have adopted the policy and have the requisite books and teachers. He said that only 1.2% of the schools are facing difficulty implementing the rollout. He further said that Class 6 was intended to be the starting point for the relevant cohort under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCF-SE) 2023. According to him, exempting the present batch would mean that students enter Class 7 and 8 without the learning exposure and continuity contemplated under the revised framework.

The bench, also comprising justices Joymalya Bagchi and V Mohana said, "Let students of Class 6 have the same comfort as Class 7 students. What we are saying is that so many months have passed since the academic session began in April. Have it implemented from April 2027. By then, the books and requisite teachers will also be available." He claims that if the current batch is exempted, pupils would not have the learning exposure and consistency that the updated framework envisions when they attend Classes 7 and 8. "Let students of Class 6 have the same comfort as Class 7 students," the bench, which also included Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V Mohana, de-

clared. In other words, a lot of months have gone by since the start of the academic year in April. Implement it starting in April 2027.

The necessary professors and books will also be available by that time. According to Mehta, just roughly 1.2% of schools are having problems, and there are teachers and books accessible for Class 6. "Please take into consideration that we are not putting any interdict on the CBSE scheme," the court explained.

North East Chronicle

Martin ivens offers insights into British politics

Tony Blair is not just any backseat driver. He is the UK's and the ruling Labour Party's most successful living politician, the winner of three decisive general elections. So when he talks, Andy Burnham needs to listen, even if the prime minister in the driving seat dislikes what he hears. Blair's zeal for the Iraq War lost him the hearts of much of the country yet he still has plenty to offer. His judgment on foreign affairs may be dubious, but his vision today for domestic renewal is a forward-looking challenge to Burnham's nostalgia for life before the era of "neoliberalism." On the eve of Labour's annual conference, the party's elder statesman called on the current PM to restart negotiations on rejoining the European Union within a decade and make it the cornerstone of his 10-year plan for government.

Rejecting the Burnham government's piecemeal approach to talks with Brussels, Blair writes, "Everything should be on the table," with the UK abandoning its red lines on rejoining the customs union and the single market, and its opposition to freedom of movement within Europe. No need for a new referendum, apparently. In the aftermath of Brexit, he called for a second plebiscite to reverse the 2016 defeat. He now doubts the wisdom of voters.Although allies are urging him to rejoin the EU's tariff-free customs union, Burnham (at heart an ardent Europhile) has declared that plans to rejoin the bloc are for "another day." Nigel Farage's Euroskeptic Reform UK may be sinking in the polls, but the PM hesitates about reviving Brexit's chief protagonist by putting his defining passion back on center stage. He will also have read the small print on Blair's intervention with a beady eye."We should use Britain's negotiations as a lever for those within the European Union who also want to see EU reform," according to Blair. Good luck with that. As the Centre for European Reform think tank observes, "Nonsense is pouring forth: about what rejoin would cost; about what things the EU will never give us would provide; about how we can change the EU from the outside." Burnham agrees on the ultimate goal of European reunion but not the Blair strategy. Nor does he see the risks the same way: He needs to get reelected and Blair does not. As I predicted, Burnham has ruled out a snap election. Campaigning on a platform of rejoining Europe and raising taxes to pay for more public spending he has doubled down on his idea for a costly "National Care Service" would have been a gift to Reform and Tories alike.Beyond the agonizing over reversing Brexit, it's the two men's differences over domestic politics that matter most.Burnham represents Labour's soft-left wing in a decades old internal party fight over the pace and direction of public-service reform. Blair champions private-public partnerships and digital government. The present leader wants control of utilities and to build a strong, interventionist state balanced by an enhanced role for local government.

The soft-left view is that Blair's New Labour project in the late '90s and early 2000s too readily accepted Margaret Thatcher's privatizations, council house sales and Treasury control over municipal affairs. When Blair warned recently against moving to the left on taxes and welfare, the PM accused him of "not understanding what's going on."Burnham talks a good game about the importance of "working across the aisle" but it has not amounted to much so far. Blair's own Tory opponents were so awed by the man they called "The Master" that they adopted his relaxed social liberalism wholesale and picked up the baton of his public-service reforms. Unencumbered by the opposition that Blair met with from his own lawmakers, sometimes his Conservative inheritors went one better.The latest international PISA tables of education outcomes tell one such story. Along with Estonia, England is one of few European countries to have improved in literacy, numeracy and science to near East Asian standards. France, Germany and the Netherlands went backward. Devolved Scotland and Wales, both run by the soft left, are trailing badly. Blair's initiatives to free state schools from the dead hand of local bureaucrats and the teaching unions were the beginning of a benign education revolution expanded and developed by his Tory successors, who restored old-fashioned classroom methods against the wishes of the progressive education establishment. US states such as Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana and Tennessee that have copied English policies using synthetic phonics for reading and subject-based curricula are improving quickly, too. Yet Burnham's government cannot bear to acknowledge this fortunate legacy. Education Secretary Lucy Powell, a "good-vibes" politician like her boss, discourages the opening of free schools and academies and dilutes the rigor of school inspections. Blair understood that public-service reform dies without perpetual prodding from No. 10.Silicon Valley is another bete noire of Labour progressives. Malign social-media algorithms, AI doom-mongering and Elon Musk's support for Europe's extreme right have given Tech Bros a bad name. Ever the modernizer, Blair embraces the digital future, but he is compromised in his party's eyes by Oracle boss Larry Ellison's munificent financial support for the ex-PM's think tank. The software company Palantir Technologies Inc. has controversial contracts with Israel's military and America's ICE, but its £330 million ($437 million) deal with the National Health Service seems to have helped cut surgery waiting lists and discharge times from hospitals. Burnham is being advised to use a break-clause to end the seven-year contract and install an in-house alternative. And yet the last time the NHS went down this road, it squandered £10 billion on one of the worst public-sector contracting fiascos in history.

Balen Shah's UNGA speech demands climate compensation for Nepal

Balendra Shah, popularly known as Balen, Nepal's youngest-elected Prime Minister, delivered perhaps one of the most powerful speeches at the United Nations General Assembly in New York on 24 September. With fewer gestures and procedural acknowledgements, Balen spoke of "death and destruction of a young nation…and about families waiting for loved ones who will never come home", referring to recent flash floods in Nepal. If parallels were to be drawn, the message was as powerful as King Mahendra Bikram Shah's at the UNGA. In 1967, the Nepalese king spoke of challenges faced by landlocked, small, and developing countries, and strongly advocated non-alignment and peaceful coexistence.King Mahendra presented an era of a party-less panchayat system and a strong monarchy in Nepal. At the UNGA, the Himalayan nation sought a neutral space in the aftermath of the 1962 war between its two neighbours India and China.Fifty-nine years later, the democratically elected prime minister took the podium at the same multilateral forum, where he spoke of the "Himalayan tsunami" that resulted in "1,400 deaths and 6,000 missing".

It is unclear how many delegates were present in the hall to hear Balen's UN debut. He was the 17th speaker of the afternoon session and the 106th speaker since the proceedings began on 22 September. From the live telecast, the hall looked relatively sparsely attended.What is clearer, however, is that Balen's speech has drawn attention beyond the hall for both its substance and its wider political resonance. But the larger issue is who answers his questions. Is it the biggest emitters of greenhouse gases, top economies, industrial nations, or multilateral and regional forums, or the global community, forced to switch screens from Nepal to the crisis in Europe and West Asia?Representing Nepal, nestled between the world's number one and third-biggest greenhouse gas emitters, China and India, Balen warned about climate change affecting the "rooftop of the world", while also referring to India and China in the most modest yet impactful ways.Balen made note to acknowledge its neighbours, India and China's continued efforts in Nepal to trace the missing and help the country get back on its feet after the disaster on 26 August. At the same time, emphasising the need to "establish a Himalayan Climate Resilience Mechanism, led by Nepal, India and China" was a diplomatic masterstroke that is rarely seen from Kathmandu at such forums.The proposed mechanism is aimed at sharing "satellite data and expertise… monitoring dangerous glacial lakes…strengthening joint early-warning systems" with an appeal to "coordinate assistance across borders."The follow-up question remains: who funds such initiatives? Especially when countries like India are making a case for themselves as both emerging global powers and developing countries still entitled to substantial climate finance under the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

However, there have been reports alleging that China has not shared data and early warnings, which Beijing has debunked as false. Both media narratives are making headlines.Meanwhile, an endless debate continues over who should take responsibility for greenhouse gas emissions, as all-powerful nations defend themselves. What matters is that Nepal has long wanted to be heard, and PM Balen's address at the UNGA did just that.Nepal contributes less than 0.1 per cent of global greenhouse-gas emissions, and if Balen is to be quoted, "We (Nepal) did not create this crisis. Yet we are paying a colossal price for it."But for a country landlocked between two giant Asian economies and the world's most powerful militaries, being heard could be challenging.

Since the devastating floods earlier, the "pay up" movement, primarily led by Gen Z, has been trending on social media in Nepal. After the 36-year-old world leader's speech, that movement has been given a new face. In a blazing video, one Nepalese youth took a sly dig. While Balen referred to India and China multiple times in his speech: first to appreciate help that has come and is on the way. Second, on common misfortunes related to climate change; and third, when he proposes a Himalayan Climate Resilience Mechanism, led by Nepal, India and China.What Shah has done is an implicit indication without naming a country, suggesting, "Climate Justice cannot just remain a beautiful phrase in a United Nations document."The young leader recognised that what the world needs is an action-oriented approach framework involving "distributive justice" and "procedural justice", where the former questions "who bears the costs" and the latter is about "who has a voice."Additionally, Balen requested grant-based support, the loss and damage fund and the global environment facility without making it a lengthy process and suggested, "When the house is burning, we do not ask the family to complete fifty forms. We act. That is what climate justice must mean."The PM asked the global community to address climate change not on an ad hoc basis but as a shared urgency to create "a culture of preparedness."As extraordinary situations require equally extraordinary efforts, Balen's remains a prominent one.

After inheriting a country in turmoil, Balen has witnessed one of the worst climate disasters the country has ever faced, and he represented it accordingly, raising important questions that must be answered.At a time when multilateral forums are being debated for reform in the current global context, and UNGA has become an annual affair with fewer top leaders and more representatives, countries like Nepal have reintroduced the need for such forums to be effective.

Asian games success highlights India's transformative sports culture

So far, India has had a decent showing at the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games 2026, with 37 medals in total: four gold, 16 silver and 17 bronze. India has once again proved we have it in us to produce athletes of an international calibre. Our athletes have performed and wowed even in less renowned sports, opening up new frontiers for Indian sportspersons. Jay Meena garnered a bronze in men's softball, India's first-ever in this sport. Suchika Tariyal also won a bronze for India in Mixed Martial Arts in the under-50 kg category. Since MMA made its Asian Games debut at Aichi-Nagoya, this is also India's first-ever medal in the sport. Other notable breakthroughs in Japan include Mirabai Chanu's first-ever podium finish at an Asian Games. The 32-year-old weightlifter brought home the silver in the 49kg category. Shooting star Elavenil Valarivan nabbed a silver in the 10 m air rifle category. And of course, the women's cricket gold is a singularly awesome achievement. Quimcy D'Souza's valiant bid at the semifinals in teqball further cemented India's position as a sports powerhouse. Running is a sport that India is picking up. I am often called upon to flag off marathons, and despite my inability to finish one myself, I am quite enthusiastic about it and am often cheering the runners who dash the marathons. And it is, therefore, no surprise that India returned to the podium after 44 years with Sawan Barwal's silver in the marathon. Marathon running is gaining popularity in India. I hope we will soon be seeing a lot more medals for India on the international marathon circuit.As I congratulated these winners for their wonderful achievements, I found myself once again the target of trolls who, from the comforts of their couches, as usual, were happy to downplay any achievements of their hard-working brethren, who toiled relentlessly to first qualify in a sport and then to actually reach the podium. This is by no means a small feat. But a nation that notches up a medal tally must give clear and unconditional support to its athletes.

One of the trolls questioned what the BJP government, of which I am treated as an inherent part, has done to promote a sports culture in the nation, and that prompted me to address the critics: Since 2014, there has been a rather substantial shift in the way sport is treated, not just as an elite competition but also as mass participation. The introduction of Khelo India has probably been the most substantive structural change brought by the Modi government. Launched in its present form in 2017, the program has created a national framework around sports infrastructure and talent identification at the grassroots level. Seventeen and under athletes and players are identified through competitions and promoted via Khelo India centres. As of September 2026, the scheme has entered a massive, revamped third phase, which is aligned with the Khelo Bharat Niti 2025. The Union Cabinet has further approved an unprecedented budget extension for the 2026-27 to 2030-31 cycle, earmarking a combined financial layout of Rs 36,441 crores.The government has also structurally changed how it handles sports facilities by merging public, state and private entities under the new Khelo India training facilities. Under the Khelo India umbrella, these centres focus heavily on modernising sports, science and tech. Almost 349 new sports infrastructure projects have been approved nationwide, carrying a total investment of Rs 3,176 crore. Out of these 349, 274 are fully completed, 58 are actively under progress, and 17 are finalising plans. There are 1067 Khelo India centres that have been made operational across districts to identify youth talent at the entry level. For the five-year modernisation of infrastructure, sports technology and athlete welfare facilities, Rs 10,568 crore has been dedicated.

Decentralisation of sports facilities is another effort that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government has made to promote sports at a grassroots level. Instead of concentrating facilities and coaching institutes only in metros like Delhi, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, etc., the government has been establishing Khelo India centres at district levels, often using existing sports infrastructure and former athletes as coaches.The aim is to identify a talented child in a smaller town and bring the coach, ground and pathway to competition to their doorstep.Recently, a video of 47-year-old Ramabai Ramveer running barefoot in a saree went viral. In a country of 1.3 billion people, there would be hundreds of Ramabai Ramveers who would benefit from training and facilities in order to compete at a competitive level. The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports' flagship Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) is a serious investment in elite athletes. Though in existence prior to 2014, it has been expanded considerably under PM Modi's direction. It provides identified elite athletes, who have a shot at competing at the Olympic level, with financial support, as well as international training, foreign exposure, equipment, specialist coaches, sports science and also covers their competition expenses. Prominent athletes who have benefited from this scheme are the javelin king Neeraj Chopra, shooting star Manu Bhaker, shuttler PV Sindhu, and Mirabai Chanu. This support has resulted in stellar podium finishes at the Olympic Games over the years and also at the ongoing Asian Games. Mansukh Mandaviya has informed the Lok Sabha in July 2026 that 369 elite athletes are being supported under the government's TOPS scheme in preparation for the upcoming LA Summer Olympics.Apart from a wider talent pool, there has also been a wider allocation and increased investment in sports medicine, physiotherapy, rehabilitation, performance analysis and sports psychology. Bringing areas which were often overlooked in sports to the limelight.A recent example is the Integrated Sports Science Centre and Conditioning Hall at NS NIS Patiala, inaugurated in 2026 as part of a Rs 38 crore athlete support investment. I have also observed an increasing trend toward sports-related professions. Sports injury specialists, sports managers and sport psychologists are professions that are quite popular today and also increasingly commercially viable. In my own field, many young lawyers are opting to specialise in sports law, which is a developing multi-disciplinary field.

Sports Authority of India's high performance centres are even beginning to rely on AI and advanced data analytics to track cardio-vascular, endurance and speed and movement mechanics.The National Centre of Sports Sciences and Research is expanding its network of district science centres to provide elite biometric monitoring, recovery protocols, and injury prevention to grassroots and podium-bound athletes. In 2019, the government launched the Fit India Movement, trying to change the conversation from "sport is something that professional athletes do" to "physical activity and fitness is something that ordinary Indians should take up". Fit India became a national movement under the leadership of PM Modi, involving schools, workplaces, fitness campaigns and community activities. As an MP, I sanctioned multiple open-air gyms all over my constituency of New Delhi. My favourite of which is the open-air exercise space in Chanakyapuri's Nehru Park. The Fit India Sports Carnival organised by my team in 2019 involved the entire constituency and included a plethora of different sports. What this government has done differently from previous administrations is that greater formal recognition has been given to sports such as kabaddi, kho kho, yoga, mallakhamb and other indigenous games. We have seen how both the men's and women's kabaddi teams have brought home accolades and medals in the 2026 Asian Games.

Depriving students of science education threatens the future

It is a very sad story that as many as 27 provincialised colleges across Assam have failed to introduce science streams, despite government approval and sanction more than eight years ago. As prominently reported on the front page of the Sunday edition of this newspaper, it was in 2018 that the Government of Assam originally granted financial and administrative approvals to launch science streams across 50 specific colleges to improve students' access to STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics). However, progress has remained deeply uneven: while 23 colleges have successfully implemented the programmes, the remaining 27 have miserably failed to either enrol science students or set up active departments due to persistent infrastructure and bureaucratic bottlenecks. The colleges that have defaulted are located throughout the state, including DK Girls' College near Guwahati, HBP Girls' College in Golaghat, Sarbodaya College in Jorhat, Barkhetri College in Nalbari, South Salmara College in South Salmara, Khairabari College in Udalguri, Bikali College in Goalpara, Chabua College in Dibrugarh, and North Bank College in Lakhimpur. This situation, however, does not just reflect the alleged inefficiency of the respective college principals and their governing bodies. The state education department, particularly the bureaucrats responsible for ensuring that the government's good intentions are fulfilled in both letter and spirit, must also share the blame, especially given its solemn objective to provide the best options to every student in the state, regardless of whether they live in a metropolitan city or a remote district town. Every student is talented, and the authorities are not supposed to deprive them.

Nomura says on free international roaming, peer Bharti Airtel Vodafone Idea shares:

New Delhi: Vodafone Idea Ltd (Vi) is targeting subscriber growth and premiumisation, Nomura said on Monday as the telecom operator introduced free international roaming with its postpaid plans starting at Rs 501, annual prepaid unlimited data plans, and corporate plans starting at Rs 451 for enterprise customers. This is the first time free international roaming has been offered on mass-market prepaid, postpaid and enterprise plans as a standard inclusion, rather than as a paid add-on pack. For now, the foreign brokerage has maintained 'Neutral' rating on Vodafone Idea, given significant valuation premium against Bharti Airtel Ltd, saying the cash flow situation remained stretched. On Monday, the stock was down 2.83 per cent at Rs 13.88 apiece amid a broader stock market fall. Nomura expects a slightly higher 15 per cent Ebitda CAGR for Vi on a lower base amid improving operating metrics. Bharti Airtel Ltd remained its top pick among the telecom stocks.

"We think that the latest differentiated offering from Vi is unlike what the telecom operators currently offer via bundling such as OTT, software, cloud, and Al model subscriptions. In international markets such as the US, Singapore, and the EU (by law), inclusive international roaming has been a mainstream plan feature for years," Nomura noted. The domestic brokerage said the strategy could be aimed at attracting premium customers from Bharti Airtel Lt and Jio.

"For prepaid customers, since the free IR is only applicable to annual plans, it may also help Vi to nudge its existing premium customers to move toannual recharge plans, thereby helping reduce churn and also help improve working capital (much needed, given Vi's tight cash flow situation)," Nomura said.The brokerage said it is a smart move by Vi aimed more at subscriber retention and growth by sacrificing a bit on average revenue per user (ARPU), though overall revenue may be positively impacted due to improved traction on subscriber growth.The foreign brokerage noted that Vi has also not responded to Airtel's plan restructuring announced in mid August, implying that the focus currently is subscriber growth, rather than ARPU expansion. At present, absolute revenue from international is in low single digits. Airtel is most exposed to the shakeup. International roaming revenue across Indian telcos generally contributes a small fraction, say 1-3 per cent globally, though none of the Indian telcos give the breakdown of total carrier revenue.Bharti Airtel's 8 per cent postpaid subscriber as a percentage of total against 6 per cent for Vi (ex-M2M), implying Bharti is more exposed to IR related revenue loss if bundling becomes an industry norm in the future, Nomura said."In the near term, there may be minor revenue losses for telcos, but we think that with industry subscriber growth largely saturated, all three telcos would want to earn more from existing users, and premiumization is a way to achieve that. Vi's aggressive IR bundling may be a minor irritant for Bharti, which we think may wait to see the response and launch a similar bundled plan later," Nomura said.

2030 expansion blueprint HSBC India's growing

New Delhi: HSBC Holdings Plc is doubling down on the world's fastest-growing major economy, setting its sights on India's private-sector heavyweights. The London-based lender is betting that a rapidly swelling pool of affluent customers and globally connected citizens can fuel its next phase of expansion as it pushes deeper into smaller cities, according to a Bloomberg report. The strategy focuses on three core pillars: wealth management, transaction banking, and what Hitendra Dave, HSBC's India chief executive officer, describes as "globality" — leveraging the bank's international network to serve clients whose wealth and commercial interests span international borders.

"Our ambition is to become one of the top four or five private banks in India by 2030," said the Mumbai-based executive in an interview, referencing the wealth management business.This aggressive growth drive puts HSBC in direct competition with dominant domestic rivals such as ICICI Bank Ltd. and Kotak Mahindra Ltd. However, navigating the market remains complex. Local institutions are rapidly scaling up, and new boutiques established by veteran bankers are aggressively competing for client portfolios and talent, driving relationship manager compensation to record highs. Despite these hurdles, HSBC, Standard Chartered Plc, and Barclays Plc represent a select cohort of foreign institutions expanding their Indian wealth units while other global peers retreat. Citigroup Inc. recently sold its Indian consumer banking division to Axis Bank Ltd., while Kotak agreed earlier this year to acquire Deutsche Bank AG's retail and wealth operations in the country.Furthermore, strict regulatory limits on foreign branch expansion continue to pose structural challenges to building nationwide footprints.The UK lender's push aligns with recent statements from Group Chief Executive Officer eorges Elhedery, who confirmed plans to increase investment in India with an intensified focus on affluent segments.To execute this strategy, HSBC plans to expand its network from 34 branches to 46 across 34 cities over the next two years, establishing footprints in smaller urban centers including Bhubaneswar, Rajkot, Jalandhar, and Mysuru. Standard Chartered currently operates the largest foreign network in India with 80 branches.

Gold, Silver Prices Slip in Early Bullion Trade

New Delhi: The domestic bullion market witnessed a marginal downward trend during early trading on Monday. Following the latest movement in prices, 24-carat gold was trading at Rs. 1,52,670 to Rs. 1,52,820 per 10 grams across most major bullion markets in the country. Similarly, 22-carat gold was being sold in the range of Rs. 1,39,940 to Rs. 1,40,090 per 10 grams. Silver also edged down marginally, with the precious metal trading at Rs. 2,44,900 per kilogram in the Delhi bullion market today.

In Delhi, 24-carat gold was trading at Rs. 1,52,820 per 10 grams, while the price of 22-carat gold stood at Rs. 1,40,090 per 10 grams. In the country's financial capital, Mumbai, 24-carat gold was being sold at Rs. 1,52,670 per 10 grams and 22-carat gold at Rs. 1,39,940 per 10 grams. Similarly, the retail price of 24-carat gold in Ahmedabad stood at Rs. 1,52,720 per 10 grams, while 22-carat gold was priced at Rs. 1,39,990 per 10 grams.

Apart from these major cities, 24-carat gold was being sold in Chennai at Rs. 1,52,720 per 10 grams, while 22-carat gold was priced at Rs. 1,39,990 per 10 grams. Similarly, in Kolkata, 24-carat gold was trading at Rs. 1,52,670 per 10 grams and 22-carat gold at Rs. 1,39,940 per 10 grams. In Bhopal, the price of 24-carat gold stood at Rs. 1,52,720 per 10 grams, while 22-carat gold was being sold at Rs. 1,39,990 per 10 grams.

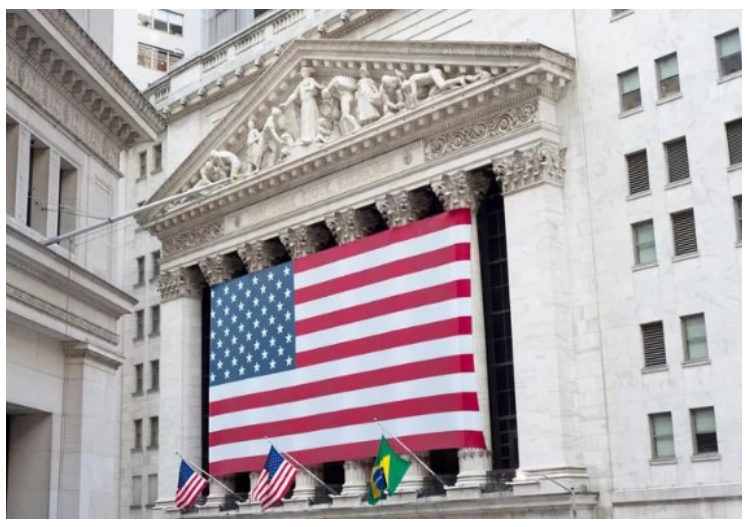
In Jaipur, 24-carat gold was being sold at Rs. 1,52,820 per 10 grams and 22-carat gold at Rs. 1,40,090 per 10 grams. In Patna, the price of 24-carat gold stood at Rs. 1,52,720 per 10 grams, while 22-carat gold was priced at Rs. 1,39,990 per 10 grams. In the Lucknow bullion market, 24-carat gold was trading at Rs. 1,52,820 per 10 grams, while 22-carat gold was being sold at Rs. 1,40,090 per 10 grams.

In addition, bullion markets in Karnataka, Telangana and Odisha also witnessed a marginal decline in gold prices today. In the capitals of these three states — Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Bhubaneswar — 24-carat gold was trading at Rs. 1,52,670 per 10 grams. Similarly, 22-carat gold was being sold at Rs. 1,39,940 per 10 grams in the bullion markets of all three cities.

Global Markets Signal Weakness; Asian Equities Under Selling Pressure

New Delhi: Global markets are showing signs of weakness. US markets had managed to close on a firm note in the previous session. However, Dow Jones futures were trading lower on Monday. European markets also ended the previous session on a mixed note, while Asian markets are broadly witnessing selling pressure today.

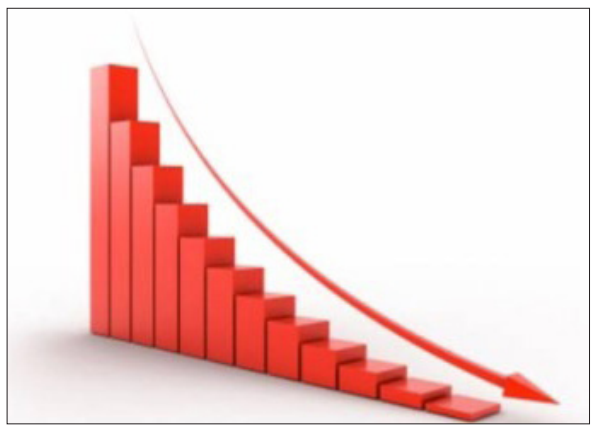
Sentiment across most global equity markets came under pressure today after US President Donald Trump rejected an Iranian proposal to reopen the Strait of Hormuz. US markets had managed to post gains in the previous session. The S&P 500 Index closed 0.51 percent higher at 7,743.41 points. Similarly, the Nasdaq ended the previous session 129.34 points, or 0.48 percent, higher at 27,068.72 points. However, Dow Jones futures were currently trading 180.38 points, or 0.35 percent, lower at 51,648.24 points.European markets ended the previous session on a mixed note. The FTSE Index remained unchanged as the London Stock Exchange was closed for a holiday. Meanwhile, the CAC Index ended marginally lower by 0.04 percent at 8,077.80 points. In contrast, the DAX Index gained 142.11 points, or 0.56 percent, to close at 25,408.64 points.Asian markets, meanwhile, were broadly under pressure today. Of the nine Asian markets, six benchmark indices were trading in the red, while two were holding in positive territory. The Taiwan Weighted Index remained unchanged as the Taiwan Stock Exchange was closed for a holiday. In the Asian market, the Hang Seng Index was trading 148.91 points, or 0.61 percent, higher at 24,659 points. Similarly, the Straits Times Index climbed 0.64 percent to 5,747.40 points.On the other hand, GIFT Nifty declined 0.22 percent to trade at 23,138.50 points. Similarly, the Nikkei Index slipped 129.20 points, or 0.19 percent, to 66,235 points. The KOSPI Index witnessed a sharp decline today. The index was currently down 168.45 points, or 2.38 percent, at 6,912.47 points.The Shanghai Composite Index also plunged sharply today. The index fell 69.26 points, or 1.78 percent, to 3,819.11 points. In addition, the Jakarta Composite Index declined 0.88 percent to 6,187.06 points. Meanwhile, the SET Composite Index was trading 0.22 percent lower at 1,604.02 points.



Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Arrives in Doha to Attend AIIB Annual Meeting

New Delhi: Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs Nirmala Sitharaman arrived in Doha on Monday. Ambassador of India to Qatar Srikar K. Reddy welcomed Sitharaman at Hamad International Airport. During her two-day engagement in Doha, the Union Finance Minister will participate in the 11th Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and the AIIB Investors' Dialogue 2026. The Ministry of Finance said in a post on the social media platform X that during her visit, Sitharaman will attend the 11th Annual Meeting of the AIIB Board of Governors being held in Doha from September 28. She will also hold important bilateral meetings with the President of AIIB and her counterparts from Jordan, Switzerland, Algeria, Saudi Arabia and Nepal.The ministry said that at the annual meeting, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will participate in her capacity as India's Governor on the Board of Governors of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. India is the bank's second-largest shareholder. As part of her official visit, the Finance Minister is also expected to meet the leadership of the Qatari government and interact with Qatari business leaders and investors. It may be recalled that Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is on a three-day visit to Doha, accompanied by a delegation of officials from the Ministry of Finance, to participate in the 11th Annual Meeting of the AIIB and the AIIB Investors' Dialogue 2026.

Stock Market Under Pressure in Early Trade; Sensex and Nifty Decline



New Delhi: The domestic equity market remained under pressure during early trading on Monday. The market opened lower today, and selling pressure intensified soon after the opening, causing both the Sensex and Nifty to weaken further. At around 10 a.m., the Sensex was down 1.15 percent, while the Nifty was trading 1.17 percent lower.The BSE Sensex opened at 73,734.83 points, declining 160.91 points, or 0.22 percent, from its previous close. Selling began immediately after the market opened, causing the index to extend its losses. Amid sustained selling pressure, the index fell below the 73,000-point mark shortly before 10 a.m., touching an intraday low of 72,981.11 points. Thereafter, buying emerged at lower levels, leading to a marginal recovery. Amid continued buying and selling activity, the Sensex was trading at 73,049.09 points at around 10 a.m., down 846.65 points, or 1.15 percent.

Like the Sensex, the NSE Nifty also opened lower, declining 75.60 points, or 0.33 percent, to 23,064.90 points. Broad-based selling emerged shortly after the market opened, weakening the index further. Due to sustained selling pressure, the Nifty fell to 22,855.45 points within the first half-hour of trading. Buyers subsequently attempted to step in, resulting in a marginal recovery. Amid continued buying and selling activity, the Nifty was trading at 22,869.65 points at around 10 a.m., down 270.85 points, or 1.17 percent.A total of 2,216 stocks were actively traded in the market so far. Of these, 528 stocks were trading in positive territory, while 1,688 stocks were in the red. Among the 30 Sensex constituents, only one stock was trading in positive territory with buying support, while 29 stocks were trading lower under selling pressure. Among the 50 Nifty constituents, 11 stocks were trading in the green and 39 in the red.

By around 10 a.m., shares of major companies including Dr. Reddy's Laboratories, Infosys, Coal India and Tata Steel were trading with gains ranging from 0.10 percent to 1.55 percent. On the other hand, shares of Max Healthcare Institute, Tata Consumer Products, HDFC Bank, Bajaj Finance and Hindalco Industries were trading lower, with declines ranging from 1.58 percent to 1.99 percent.

Earlier, on Friday, the last trading session of the previous week, the Sensex had closed 315.20 points, or 0.43 percent, higher at 73,895.74 points. The Nifty, meanwhile, ended Friday's trading session 77.40 points, or 0.34 percent, higher at 23,140.50 points.

HDFC Bank shares: Valuation gap with ICICI Bank widens 3 triggers for rerating, target

New Delhi: The valuation gap of HDFC Bank Ltd with peers including ICICI Bank Ltd, Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd, Axis Bank Ltd and State Bank of India (SBI) has been disrupted. But Jefferies believe that clarity on CEO succession, team reorganisation and improved execution could aid a rerating.

It maintained 'Buy' call on HDFC Bank with target of Rs 880 based on 1.6 times estimated September 2028 book value. Its bear case target at Rs 690 implied 6 per cent potential downside while its bull case target of Rs 937 suggested 27 per cent upside from the prevailing levels. Jefferies said HDFC Bank is now valued at 26 per cent discount to ICICI Bank on a price-to-book value basis against 11 per cent discount on March 18. It said when a new CEO takes charge, they tend to reorganise the top team and business structures to better achieve growth, profitability, and governance objectives. It hopes that the new HDFC Bank CEO is able to complete any reorganisation promptly, allowing the team to focus on execution in terms of gaps to be covered. Jefferies said HDFC Bank has lagged peers on LCR retail deposit growth, 12 per cent against 15 per cent for ICICI Bank and 14 per cent for SBI, despite offering competitive rates. "It had a slower start on FCNR-B deposits, but made a strong comeback, mobilising $11-12 bullion within two months (c.8-9 per cent market share; these are 3 per cent of total deposits and 8 per cent of LCR non-retail deposits). This should help the bank to refinance high-cost deposits/borrowings at slightly lower rates," Jefferies said. Jefferies said HDFC Bank has seen higher growth in corporate & secured lending segments and share of loans to PSUs in total credit has risen

over the past year. These, along with repricing of loan rates downwards has been a drag on NIM.

"Like most large banks, HDFC Bank could benefit from any rate hikes as c.70 per cent of loans are linked to EBLR/floating, but a reclaribration of the risk profile towards higher risk-adjusted segments like SME/ Business banking loans, gold loans, unsecured personal could support ROA expansion," Jefferies said

Northeast Chronicle
TUESDAY 29 SEPTEMBER 2026

Protesters disperse after blocking route for loyalist march in Portadown

Northern Ireland : Hundreds of protesters spent the day blocking the route of a hugely contentious parade in Northern Ireland after a court gave late-night clearance for the Orange Order to march on a historically significant road for the first time in nearly 30 years.

The loyalist Drumcree parade along the mainly nationalist Garvaghy Road in Portadown was given the go-ahead by the Parades Commission for the first time since 1998, a decision denounced by Sinn Féin as "madness".

It led to a weekend of intense legal wrangling which concluded at 2.15am on Sunday when the court of appeal said it could not interfere with the commission's decision. In driving rain on a cold Sunday morning, hundreds of nationalist protesters gathered to block the route. Many linked arms and sang songs as announcements were made over loudspeaker that they were liable to arrest and prosecution.

The Orangemen spent the day ensconced a mile away in a church, the proposed start of the march, and said they would wait until police told them the road was clear. The standoff lasted throughout Sunday, with protesters largely dispersing in the early hours of Monday, when Breandán Mac Cionnaith, from the Garvaghy Road Residents' Coalition, said he had received "commitments" that the parade would not be proceeding down the road overnight.

Mac Cionnaith told protesters he would meet the Northern Ireland secretary, Chris Bryant, and Police Service of Northern Ireland chief constable Jon Boutcher on Monday morning for talks.

Michelle O'Neill, the Sinn Féin vice-president and Northern Ireland first minister, told reporters shortly after midnight that the Garvaghy Road community had won a "victory".

Among the protesters earlier in the day was the Sinn Féin president, Mary Lou McDonald, who said the decision to allow the parade was "madness" and "primitive treatment of any community in the year 2026. It is intolerable, and it will not be tolerated."

She added: "The mood here has been peaceful. It has been united and orderly. This is a dignified and united community and they are absolutely determined that they and we will not be drawn back into the past."

O'Neill was also there and said reigniting the dispute brought

"into question how this whole peace process works". She told reporters: "We're meeting families who feel collectively traumatised, who feel individually traumatised. Does anybody think that this is a good idea?

"No right-minded person would make this decision. I still do not know the answer to this question – why, after 28 years of a determination to block a march down this road, the Parades Commission thought that this was the right idea today to bring this mess back on to this community."

The local Democratic Unionist party (DUP) MP, Carla Lockhart, accused O'Neill of "whipping up hysteria" at an "unlawful" protest. "It is unreal that we have a first minister behaving the way she is behaving," she said. "If I did it, or if any of my colleagues did it, I would be in the back of a Land Rover."

Gavin Robinson, the DUP leader, said: "We now have lawmakers acting as law breakers," and he accused O'Neill of "giving two fingers to the courts, the police, the rule of law". Bryant cut short his attendance at the Labour party conference in Liverpool to travel to Belfast, but said he did not have the powers to call the march off unless police formally requested him to do so. He said the nationalist protest was unlawful and called on politicians to "calm things down". Bryant said: "It is incumbent on everybody in political office to take this moment very, very seriously and to take the temperature down, to think twice before … inflating any argument and to think about what somebody else who doesn't share your opinion might think about the way you've put your case."

Earlier in the day the tense standoff drew in the prime minister, Andy Burnham, who appealed for "calm on all sides".

The Irish taoiseach, Mícheál Martin, echoed that but described the Parades Commission decision as "incomprehensible and wrong". He called for the situation to be mediated sensibly in a way "that protects the gains that have been made and the peace and harmony that has prevailed for so long".

The Drumcree parade on the Garvaghy Road – a Catholic enclave in a largely Protestant town – sparked some of the most serious and violent disorder in Northern Ireland's history.

On Friday, the Parades Commission granted permission subject to restrictions, including a limit of 35 participants, an 8am start time instead of 1pm, and that it should be held in silence.

The decision was challenged and blocked on Saturday by a judge, Justice Patricia Smyth, who said the "long-running dispute has the potential to escalate" across Northern Ireland.

That decision was then challenged by the Orange Order, leading to two further hearings on Saturday night and Sunday morning.

The final, time-limited sitting, which began at 20 minutes past midnight on Sunday, was heard before Mr Justice Humphreys, who acknowledged the "unusual if not unprecedented circumstances … with a parade scheduled to begin in just over six hours' time".

Outlining his decision, Humphreys cited case law that as a public body the courts must respect the commission's judgment and "their decisions will not be lightly interfered with".

UN ambassador Waltz says Iran was not negotiating 'in good faith' to end war

America: The Trump administration's ambassador to the United Nations said the US rejected Iran's proposal to end the ongoing war there because Iranian negotiators "were asking for everything up front".

Echoing comments by Donald Trump on Saturday, the president's UN ambassador Mike Waltz told CNN's State of the Union on Sunday that Iran had asked for relief "from billions and billions of sanctions that are going into place" as part of an economic blockade on Iran. The blockade is aimed at putting pressure on Iran to stop its attacks on vessels in the strait of Hormuz.

"They were asking for everything up front with a promise that they would then talk," Waltz said on State of the Union. "The president is just not confident that the Iranians are coming in good faith and that we will truly negotiate the end of their nuclear program."

Trump said on Saturday that he had rejected Iran's peace plan, proposed at the recent UN general assembly in New York, arguing that desperation was driving the Iranians' push for an agreement on the key waterway. "They want to make a deal to open the Hormuz strait immediately because they're losing so badly," Trump said.

Trump said the US was "winning tremendously" and had "total control of the Hormuz strait".

In comments to Axios on Sunday, Trump said he expected more talks with Iran during the upcoming week.

"They want to make a deal, but it is not the deal that I want to make," the outlet quoted the president as saying. "It is what we would have maybe agreed to a year ago. They overplayed their hand."

Earlier, Waltz pointed to the failed US-Iran memorandum of understanding (MOU) signed in Pakistan in June that laid out a 14-point framework agreement for a negotiated peace.

Iran, he said, "immediately violated it by attacking international shipping, in violation of international law, and 146 nations have joined us in condemning Iran for those attacks".

Iran on Sunday insisted that only diplomacy can solve its conflict with the US and Israel.

"Our conditions are clear, and any move toward reopening the strait of Hormuz is contingent on these conditions being met," the Iranian foreign minister, Abbas Araghchi, posted on social media. "Only a negotiated solution can get them out of this deadlock."

On CNN, Waltz also addressed recent reports that China had assisted Iran in missile targeting of shipping in the strait of Hormuz and on US military bases in the region.

Waltz did not confirm the leaked intelligence assessments but said Trump had raised the issue with China premier Xi Jinping during the latter's recent state visit to the US capital Washington DC. Trump had also done so "multiple times" previously, including during his visit to China in May, according to Waltz.

"I think we have seen movement in a positive direction," Waltz said. "President Trump has made it clear it's unacceptable."

Waltz pointed to readouts of the high-level meeting that said the US and China had "agreed that Iran can never have a nuclear weapon".

"They cannot and should not be tolling, much less attacking, international shipping in an international waterway," Waltz said. "So I think that was incredibly important to hear from President Xi coming out of the summit."

Waltz also rejected reporting in the Wall Street Journal that the US would resume bombing Iran after the federal midterm elections in November. He pointed to Trump's comments that Iran was miscalculating.

"The president is looking to make not just this generation – but the next generation – safer by not allowing what is essentially a terrorist organization in [Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps] that is controlling the levers of government and wants to march towards a nuclear weapon," Waltz said. "We're not going to let the IRGC have a nuclear weapon, much less hold the world hostage with one."

Araghchi also appeared on NBC's Meet the Press on Sunday, saying his country is prepared to resume fighting with the US but has not yet abandoned diplomacy after Trump rejected Iran's peace proposal.

"We are fully prepared for the war to be resumed," Araghchi said. "We stand firm in the face of any new aggression, even if it comes to a doomsday war.

"At the same time, we stand ready for diplomacy. It is up to President Trump to choose."

The Iranian president, Masoud Pezeshkian, in an interview with the CBS show Face the Nation, said his country was ready for talks on its nuclear program and other issues – but would not accept "bullying or coercion".

"Iran is not seeking war, but will defend itself against pressure, threats and attacks," Pezeshkian said, adding that it had already agreed that "we're not supposed to develop nuclear weapons".

Russia could attack a Nato country within months, Danish intelligence says

Poland: Russia could launch a limited military attack against a Nato country in the coming months, Danish intelligence said, in one of the starkest warnings yet by western security services.

In a report published on Thursday, the Danish defence intelligence service warned of a "low but growing risk" that Russia could launch long-range strikes on Nato infrastructure supporting Ukraine, or carry out a limited incursion into a neighbouring country with a small number of troops, potentially operating without insignia. The report came hours after a fire at a Starlink satellite station in central Poland that local authorities described as an "act of sabotage".

Krzysztof Gawkowski, the deputy prime minister of Poland, said the blaze, which broke out overnight in the Masovian voivodeship, had been "deliberately designed to disable the station", disrupting internet access for a number of institutions, including the Ukrainian military. Gawkowski said it had not been established who was responsible for the fire, but that "many signs suggest this aligns with Russia's new doctrine of attack.

"While everything is operational today, we must recognise, as prime minister [Donald] Tusk recently noted, that this is an element of hybrid warfare," he said.

Starlink has become a key part of Ukraine's military communications, and the incident comes amid a spate of suspected Russian sabotage operations across European infrastructure supporting Ukraine. Earlier this month, Germany publicly blamed Russia for an attempted drone attack on Leipzig/Halle airport, while a series of other incidents – including fires at drone factories and sabotage targeting rail infrastructure – have also been investigated for possible links to Moscow. Russia has denied involvement in such attacks.

In recent weeks, several European intelligence chiefs have warned that Russia may be preparing more assertive actions to test Nato countries' commitment to supporting Ukraine, though officials differ over how imminent such a move may be.

Russia is expected to intensify its hybrid attacks against European countries with "greater consequences" for those targeted in the coming months, the Danes warned, including "destructive cyber-attacks that cripple societal functions as well as sabotage attacks that carry a high risk of casualties".

A source familiar with Moscow's thinking agreed that Russia was likely to step up its hybrid attacks.

"Russian military top command is convinced some Nato countries are directly involved in the war against Russia – not just by supplying Ukraine with weapons and intelligence, but by helping to guide missiles and drones," the source said, speaking on condition of anonymity. "They therefore believe Nato is already waging a hybrid war against Russia, and that Russia has the right to respond in kind," the source added. "Hybrid attacks" are broad terms generally used to describe non-military tactics aimed at pressuring or destabilising an adversary, including cyber-attacks, sabotage and disinformation.

The aim of Russia's actions would be to divert European resources away from supporting Ukraine, and deepen divisions within Nato if the alliance failed to agree on a collective response, the report added.

The service believes it remained "highly unlikely" that Russia would launch an outright invasion of a Nato country, but notably said it "cannot be ruled out".

The Danish services said Russia could seek to test Nato's article 5, which commits members to collective defence. They warned there was "a risk that Russia assesses that the Nato countries will not respond collectively", particularly if Moscow believes the US is unable or unwilling to support its European allies in a potential war with Russia.

There have been ongoing jitters among Nato members over whether the alliance's most powerful member, the US, would come to Europe's defence under Donald Trump in the event of a Russian attack.

Questions over unity within Europe are also growing. Last week, Slovakia's prime minister, Robert Fico, who has maintained close ties with the Kremlin, cast doubt on his country's commitment to Nato's collective defence principle, saying he did not want Slovakia drawn into a military conflict "because of some article 5".

Speaking at the UN general assembly on Wednesday, Volodymyr Zelenskyy warned that Russia continued to threaten countries beyond Ukraine, including Moldova, Poland and the Baltic states, while showing "no respect" for the sovereignty of countries in the south Caucasus and central Asia. "The more freedom Putin has to act, the more dangerous the world becomes for everyone else," he said.

US supreme court rejects Republican-drawn midterm map in Missouri for third time

America; This concludes our live coverage of the second Trump administration for today. Here are the latest developments: The White House has blocked CNN from traveling aboard Air Force One on Saturday, impeding its TV press pool duties in the latest escalation of the administration's battle with the news media. The primary White House television pool today resumed filming administration events after a court ruling temporarily overturned a Trump administration ban on CNN. More here. Donald Trump is canceling nearly $1bn in spending approved by Congress, the White House announced, using a rare and contested power to axe funding for immigrant services and diversity-focused initiatives. More here. Dale Caldwell, the lieutenant governor of New Jersey, resigned from his position, after the release of a report accusing him of sexually harassing a female staffer, among other ethics violations. Thomas Calcagni, a lawyer for Caldwell, said in a statement they would "continue to forcefully challenge the report". More here.

The supreme court turned away an attempt to use a new Missouri congressional map backed by Donald Trump, putting an end to a long-running legal dispute as absentee voting is under way in the midterm elections. More here. The White House defended its decision to use taxpayer funds to buy airtime on Fox News for a White House-produced, pro-Trump ad that some Democrats said could be illegal government propaganda aimed at influencing voters in the upcoming midterm elections. More here.

That edited image contrasted sharply with a news photograph taken during the flyover, which showed that, in reality, Trump had actually visibly winced as the a B-1 bomber passed low overhead.

US senators have introduced legislation aimed at cutting down warrantless or specious ICE arrests, and curbing the agency's ability to indefinitely detain immigrants who do not pose any danger to their communities.

Five Simple Face Packs: At-Home Tan Removal

Rooted in generations of time-tested Ayurvedic beauty wisdom, this remarkable DIY tan removal face pack combines the purifying and exfoliating powers of besan (gram flour), the gentle lactic acid of curd, the potent anti-inflammatory properties of turmeric, and the natural humectant magic of honey to create a holistic remedy that effortlessly reverses sun damage while nurturing the skin's natural barrier. Besan acts as a magnificent, non-abrasive physical scrub that meticulously sloughs away dead skin cells, embedded impurities, and stubborn surface pigmentation, while the curd simultaneously works beneath the top layer to dissolve stubborn tan lines and brighten dull complexions through mild chemical exfoliation. Meanwhile, a pinch of turmeric infuses the mixture with powerful antioxidants and brightening agents that calm redness, combat oxidative stress from UV exposure, and impart an instantaneous, healthy golden glow, all while the honey seals in vital moisture to ensure the skin remains supple, hydrated, and deeply nourished rather than stripped or tight. Preparing and applying this golden paste is a deeply therapeutic ritual; as it dries and tightens on the face, it draws out deep-seated toxins and stimulates microcirculation, meaning a gentle massage with lukewarm water upon rinsing reveals visibly clearer, smoother, and radiantly revitalized skin that feels as pampered as it would after an expensive spa treatment.

Crafting an effective natural skincare regimen to combat stubborn sun damage is brilliantly exemplified by this iconic, time-honored homemade face pack, which harnesses the synergistic power of 1.5 tablespoons of besan (gram flour) as a deep-cleansing and clarifying base, 1 teaspoon of curd packed with natural lactic acid to gently exfoliate and fade uneven tanning, a pinch of antioxidant-rich turmeric to heal and soothe UV-stressed skin, and 1 teaspoon of pure honey to lock in essential moisture and prevent any post-wash dryness. The scientific brilliance behind this dynamic blend lies in its multi-action approach: the gram flour acts as a gentle physical exfoliator and oil absorber, the lactic acid in the curd safely breaks down accumulated melanin and brightens the complexion without harsh synthetic bleaching agents, the curcumin in turmeric calms inflammation and fights free radicals, and the humectant properties of honey draw deep hydration into the freshly polished skin layers. To experience its full restorative benefits, simply whisk these precise ingredients together into a smooth, velvety paste, apply an even layer across your face and neck, allow it to work its magic for 15 to 20 minutes as it gently tightens and draws out impurities, and finally rinse thoroughly with lukewarm water while massaging softly to reveal a noticeably brighter, smoother, and deeply rejuvenated glow. Harnessing the potent synergy of nature's finest brightening and soothing agents, this simple yet remarkably effective DIY face pack combines one tablespoon of fresh lemon juice with one tablespoon of pure honey to create an exceptional treatment for fading stubborn tans and restoring a luminous complexion. The natural citric acid packed within fresh lemons acts as a powerful clarifying agent, providing gentle chemical exfoliation that helps break down surface pigmentation and lighten sun-damaged skin, while the raw honey steps in as a rich humectant and anti-inflammatory shield to deeply soothe, moisturize, and counterbalance the potential astringency of the citrus. To incorporate this refreshing remedy into your routine, simply blend the two ingredients together, apply the mixture evenly to your skin, allow it to work its magic for fifteen minutes, and then rinse gently with lukewarm water to reveal a softer, visibly brighter, and thoroughly nourished glow.

Merging the protective and clarifying benefits of garden-fresh produce with traditional dairy remedies, this revitalizing DIY face pack pairs two tablespoons of nutrient-dense tomato pulp with one tablespoon of fresh yogurt to deliver a powerful defense against the harsh effects of sun exposure and environmental stress. Tomatoes are naturally rich in lycopene—a potent antioxidant—alongside natural fruit acids that work synergistically to neutralize free radicals, repair UV-induced cellular damage, and fade stubborn hyperpigmentation, while the lactic acid found abundantly in fresh yogurt provides gentle enzymatic exfoliation to sweep away dull, dead skin cells. To experience the full rejuvenating effects of this soothing blend, simply smooth the mixture evenly across your skin, allow it to sit undisturbed for twenty minutes as it purifies and refreshes the complexion, and finally rinse thoroughly with cool water to reveal a clearer, deeply revitalized, and naturally radiant visage. Potato Juice with Rice Flour Mask: Ingredients: 2 tablespoons raw potato juice, 1 tablespoon rice flour. Why does it work: Potatoes have natural enzymes and vitamin C, which brighten dark spots, while rice flour removes dead skin. How to use: Make a paste, scrub gently as you apply, let for 15 minutes, and then rinse off.

Papaya and Honey Pack: Ingredients: 3 tablespoons mashed ripe papaya, 1 teaspoon honey. Why does it work: Papaya includes papain, an enzyme that stimulates cell renewal and gently exfoliates tanned skin. Mix thoroughly, apply to the face for 20 minutes, then rinse with lukewarm water.

A fashion designer explains why certain clothes appear pricey while others don't

Have you ever contemplated why certain ensembles instantaneously project an air of refinement and opulence, whereas others, notwithstanding their considerable expense, fail to achieve an equivalent impression? According to designer Payal Jain, the solution does not reside in a conspicuous brand mark, an ornate decorative element, or merely the financial investment allocated to a piece of clothing. The founder and designer of Payal Jain Design believes that the perception of luxury comes from a combination of details, including fabric, cut, proportions, craftsmanship, finishing and the way a garment sits on the body. We asked her what makes an outfit look expensive and refined, and her answer offers some useful lessons for anyone looking to build a more polished wardrobe.

1. Start with the fabric

For Jain, fabric is the first thing she considers when evaluating what gives a garment a luxurious appearance.

"What makes a garment look expensive is rarely one obvious thing. It is usually a combination of elements that the eye registers instinctively, from the quality of the fabric to the precision of the cut, the proportions, how beautifully a garment is finished, and how it falls, fits and drapes on the body," she says. Her emphasis on textiles is unsurprising given her long association with textile-led design. "After working with textiles for decades, textile is my very first response, from its inherent character to the depth of its colour, the weave, the texture, and the way it drapes and responds to movement," Jain adds. This is an important distinction when shopping for clothes. A fabric does not necessarily need to be the most expensive available to look refined. What matters is how it behaves, holds its shape, catches light and falls on the body.

A fabric with a beautiful drape can often make a relatively simple silhouette feel more considered.

2. Pay attention to fit and proportions

An expensive-looking outfit is not necessarily about having a complicated design. The proportions of the garment can make a significant difference to how the final look comes together. Jain points to precision of cut and proportion as two of the elements that the eye registers, even when we aren't consciously analysing them. This is why a simple shirt, pair of trousers or dress can sometimes look more polished than a heavily detailed outfit. When the shoulders, waist, length and overall silhouette are considered carefully, the garment feels intentional. For everyday dressing, this can translate into paying closer attention to whether your clothes actually fit you rather than simply choosing a particular brand or trend.

A well-cut garment doesn't need to be overly embellished to stand out.

3. Look beyond visible embellishment

When people think about luxury fashion, embroidery and embellishment often come to mind first. But Jain believes craftsmanship extends much further. "Craftsmanship is equally important, and it extends far beyond embroidery to the construction and finishing, the placement of a motif, a hand-finished edge, and details that never draw attention, yet are crucial to the final garment," she says.

That last point is particularly relevant.

Some of the details that make a garment feel refined may not be immediately visible. The finishing of an edge, the placement of a print or motif, the construction of a seam or the way different parts of a garment come together can influence how it looks and wears. In other words, good design doesn't always announce itself.

4. Don't underestimate simplicity

Jain has long been drawn to understated dressing and believes that restraint can be more powerful than adding more elements. "I have always been drawn to understated simplicity. I genuinely believe less is more," she says. That philosophy can be useful when putting together an everyday wardrobe. Instead of adding statement jewellery, multiple colours, elaborate details and bold accessories to make an outfit feel special, consider whether one or two strong elements are enough. A beautifully cut blazer with a simple top and trousers, for instance, can create a more polished impression than an outfit where every individual piece is competing for attention. Simplicity isn't necessarily minimalism. It is about knowing which elements need attention and which can remain quiet.

5. Think about how every element works together

Perhaps the most important part of Jain's advice is that there isn't one single ingredient responsible for making clothes feel luxurious. "The most luxurious clothes are those where you cannot separate the fabric from the cut, the craft from the proportion, or the detail from the whole," she explains.

This is where styling and design meet. A beautiful fabric can lose its impact if the cut doesn't work. Intricate craftsmanship can become overwhelming if the proportions are off. A strong silhouette may not work as intended if the fabric doesn't move or drape properly. The individual components need to support one another.

6. Balance is harder than adding more

Jain believes that achieving harmony between different elements is one of the most difficult parts of design. "Nothing feels excessive, all elements simply work in harmony, and together they create what is luxury. The sense of balance is the hardest thing to achieve in design and remains most valuable to me," she says. For someone putting together an outfit, this can be a useful rule to keep in mind. If the silhouette is dramatic, the accessories don't necessarily need to be equally dramatic. If the fabric has a strong texture, you may not need several additional statement details. And if the outfit already has intricate craftsmanship, keeping the styling restrained can allow those details to stand out.

For a lasting appearance, try these seven smudge-proof kajals

Kajal, deeply rooted in centuries of cultural heritage and traditional beauty rituals across South Asia and the Middle East, transcends the status of a mere cosmetic to become a profound instrument of self-expression and cultural identity, effortlessly bridging the gap between historical reverence and modern cosmetic innovation. When masterfully swiped across the waterline or meticulously smudged along the lash line, this versatile pigment does far more than simply frame the eye; it fundamentally alters the geometry of the face, bestowing an aura of depth, intensity, and magnetic allure that no other single product can quite replicate. Whether one seeks to project an understated, natural elegance for a professional daytime environment or desires a dramatic, smoldering smokey eye that commands attention at a nocturnal gala, the transformative power of a quality kohl pencil lies in its paradoxical ability to be both subtle and commanding. Furthermore, contemporary formulations have evolved significantly beyond the traditional lampblack-and-ghee concoctions of antiquity, now incorporating botanical extracts, soothing almond oils, and vitamin-rich waxes that nourish the delicate ocular region while delivering rich, waterproof, and long-lasting pigmentation that defies humidity and fatigue. This seamless synthesis of therapeutic eye care and high-impact aesthetics ensures that a single stroke of kajal instantly awakens tired eyes, corrects perceived imbalances in facial symmetry, and instills an immediate surge of confidence, proving time and again that this humble cosmetic stick remains the ultimate cornerstone of a timeless, captivating visage. Investing in a reliable, high-performance smudge-proof and waterproof kajal is an absolute game-changer for anyone who has ever experienced the dreaded "raccoon eyes" phenomenon caused by unexpected rainfall, high humidity, or a long, demanding day of wear. Traditional formulations, while rich in nostalgic charm, often lack the advanced polymer technology required to anchor the pigment securely to the delicate skin of the waterline, leading to inevitable smearing and migration that can instantly ruin a meticulously crafted look. Modern long-wear kajals utilize innovative, moisture-resistant formulas that set rapidly into a flexible, budge-proof film capable of withstanding tears, sweat, and sebum without flaking, fading, or bleeding. By incorporating these resilient staples into your everyday makeup kit, you eliminate the constant need for mirror checks and emergency touch-ups, ensuring your eyes retain their sharp, clean definition and dramatic intensity from your morning commute all the way through your evening plans.

Navigating the vast market of eye cosmetics reveals that not all waterproof or long-lasting kajals are created equal, as brands utilize vastly different formulations, wax ratios, and pigment concentrations that directly influence how the product glides, sets, and wears throughout the day. Creamier formulations, enriched with nourishing oils and emollients, offer an effortless, tug-free glide that makes them an absolute dream for sensitive eyes and quick, on-the-go applications, though they frequently require a brief moment to dry down and set before they become entirely transfer-resistant. Conversely, kajals with a firmer texture and tighter molecular matrix often deliver superior longevity and razor-sharp definition, making them ideal for precise graphic lines, but they may demand a slightly heavier hand or warming up against the skin during initial application. Beyond texture, the final aesthetic payoff varies widely, ranging from an ultra-deep, absorbing matte black that devours light for a dramatic intensity, to a subtle satin or slightly glossy sheen that catches the light for a more modern, wet-look finish. Ultimately, curating your ideal makeup bag comes down to aligning these distinct attributes with your personal application habits and style goals—whether you are chasing a crisp, architectural wing that stays pristine for hours, a softly diffused, sultry smudge for a romantic evening, or a reliable everyday staple that applies in seconds and refuses to budge.

How to pick the right kajal

When embarking on the quest to find your holy-grail kajal, it is essential to look far beyond the superficial allure of a rich black pigment and carefully evaluate critical factors such as ingredient safety, ophthalmological testing, ease of sharpening or twist-up mechanisms, and overall wear comfort on the sensitive waterline. Because the eye area is exceptionally delicate and prone to irritation, opting for formulations infused with soothing botanicals like chamomile, almond oil, or vitamin E can make a profound difference in preventing dryness, redness, and discomfort, especially for contact lens wearers or those with chronic sensitivity. Furthermore, examining the product's resistance to oil transference, its drying time upon application, and whether it requires a specialized bi-phase makeup remover or simply washes away with gentle cleanser will ultimately dictate how seamlessly it integrates into your daily routine and whether it remains a cherished staple or gets relegated to the back of your vanity drawer.

Check the finish: Matte kajals give a classic, defined look, while metallic and shimmer finishes work well for party and festive makeup.

Look for pigmentation: A highly pigmented kajal should give good colour payoff without repeated application.

Consider your eye area: If your eyelids tend to get oily or your eyes water frequently, look for waterproof and smudge-resistant formulas.

Choose the right texture: Creamy kajals glide more easily, while firmer pencils can offer greater precision.

Think about the shade: Black creates maximum definition, brown looks softer and coloured kajals can add an easy pop of colour.

Check the wear claim: If you need your makeup to last through a workday or event, look for long-wear formulas.

Waterline use matters: If you plan to apply kajal directly to the waterline, prioritise a formula that feels comfortable there and follow the product's usage instructions.

Look for convenient features: Built-in sharpeners, twist-up mechanisms and smudge-friendly formulas can make application easier.

Consider removal: A waterproof kajal may stay put better, but it should still be removed gently and thoroughly at the end of the day.

1. RENEE Midnight XXL Kajal | Brown Kohl Pencil with Built-in Sharpener: If you want the intensity of a black kajal but prefer something softer for everyday makeup, the RENEE Midnight XXL Kajal in Brown is worth considering. It has a creamy, smooth-glide formula and delivers rich brown pigmentation in a single stroke. The waterproof and smudge-proof formula is designed for long wear of up to 24 hours, while the built-in sharpener makes it convenient for creating precise lines. The brown shade can also be used to create softer smoky-eye looks.

2. Plum Naturstudio All-Day-Wear Kajal | Water & Smudge-Proof: Plum Natur-Studio All-Day-Wear Kajal is a good option for those who prefer a classic black kohl look with long-lasting wear. Its pencil format makes it easy to use along the lash line or waterline, while the intense black colour can help define the eyes without needing multiple layers. It works well for everyday makeup as well as more dramatic eye looks. If you like a traditional kajal finish but want better staying power, this is one to consider.

3. IRIS COSMETCS Kajal Kohl Pencil Intense Black Waterproof: The IRIS Cosmetics Back To Black Waterproof Kohl Kajal is designed for those who like deeply defined eyes. Its waterproof formula makes it particularly useful for humid weather, long workdays and occasions when you do not want to keep touching up your eye makeup. The classic black shade can be used on the waterline or along the lash line, depending on the intensity you want. It is a practical pick if bold black kajal is your everyday makeup essential.

4. L'Oréal Paris Kajal, Waterproof Eyeliner, 14 Hours of Smudge-Proof Wear: For a more defined eye look, L'Oréal Paris' waterproof eye pencil range offers formulas designed for long-lasting definition. A black kajal or gel-pencil finish can instantly make the eyes look more defined, whether you prefer a thin line or a more intense kohl effect. It is particularly suited to people looking for a product that can transition from a simple daytime look to more dramatic evening makeup.

5. FAE Beauty Eye-Deal Jewel Toned Metallic Purple Kajal: Want to move beyond black kajal? FAE Beauty Eye-Deal in a jewel-toned metallic purple shade brings colour and shine to the eyes while keeping the application easy. The Eye-Deal range uses an intense gel formula designed for long wear, making it suitable for creating colourful eye looks without reaching for a full eyeshadow palette. The purple shade can be worn along the lash line for a subtle pop or layered for a more noticeable festive or party look.

6. Recode Black Kohl Kajal Pencil last upto 14 hours: Recode Black Kohl Kajal is a straightforward option for anyone who loves intensely defined eyes. A classic black kohl can be used along the waterline, upper lash line or lower lash line, depending on the look you want to create. It is particularly useful for everyday Indian makeup, where kajal is often used as a quick way to add definition without applying a complete eye look. Pair it with mascara for an easy, polished finish.

7. LoveChild Masaba Colored Kajal: If your makeup routine could use a little more colour, LoveChild by Masaba Coloured Kajal is a fun alternative to traditional black kohl. Coloured kajals are an easy way to experiment with eye makeup without having to master complicated eyeshadow techniques. Use the pencil along the upper lash line for a subtle wash of colour or pair it with neutral eyeshadow when you want the kajal to become the focus of the look.

Hit Malayalam film Bethlehem Kudumba unit confirms digital premiere

Chennai : Bethlehem Kudumba Unit is all set to make its digital debut. The Nivin Pauly and Mamitha Baiju starrer will premiere on JioHotstar on October 2, with the streaming platform confirming the release on Sunday. Directed by Girish AD, the Malayalam film arrived in theatres on August 21 as part of the Onam releases and has continued to find an audience several weeks into its theatrical run.

The film's arrival on streaming comes while it is still playing in cinemas. Bethlehem Kudumba Unit has also managed to attract viewers beyond Kerala, adding to its theatrical reach. With its JioHotstar premiere, the film will now be available to a wider audience, including those who could not catch it on the big screen.At the heart of

the film is Justin, played by Nivin Pauly, an unmarried man whose fairly routine life takes a different turn when Ashley, portrayed by Mamitha Baiju, moves into the neighbourhood. Their relationship forms the central thread of the narrative, with the film leaning into a straightforward romantic story rather than relying heavily on dramatic twists and turns.

Bethlehem Kudumba Unit brings together Nivin Pauly and Mamitha Baiju in a story that places their characters and their evolving relationship at the forefront. Justin's life begins to change following Ashley's arrival, setting the stage for a romance that develops through their interactions and the situations around them.The film is directed by Girish AD, who has previously explored youthful relationships and everyday emotional experiences in films that place considerable emphasis on character dynamics. With Bethlehem Kudumba Unit, the filmmaker opts for a relatively uncomplicated approach, allowing the central relationship to drive the narrative.

The supporting cast includes Sangeeth Prathap, Suresh Krishna, Vinay Fort, Srinda and Shyam Mohan. The ensemble adds to the world around Justin and Ashley, with the film balancing its romantic core with the people and circumstances surrounding the central characters. Bethlehem Kudumba Unit was among the Malayalam films that arrived during the Onam season, a period that traditionally sees several major releases competing for audience attention. Despite the crowded theatrical calendar, the film has remained in cinemas even as its digital premiere approaches.Its theatrical run has also extended beyond Kerala, allowing the film to connect with Malayalam audiences in other markets. The continued presence of the film in theatres ahead of its streaming debut means that audiences still have an opportunity to experience it on the big screen before it arrives online.Behind the camera, Ajmal Sabu has handled the cinematography, while Akash Joseph Varghese is responsible for the editing. Vishnu Vijay has composed the music for the film.

For viewers who missed Bethlehem Kudumba Unit during its theatrical run, JioHotstar will offer the next opportunity to watch the Nivin Pauly and Mamitha Baiju starrer from the comfort of home. Meanwhile, those who have already watched the film in theatres can revisit Justin and Ashley's story when the film begins streaming on October 2.

Parineeti Chopra recalls crying for three hours after leaving her baby for work

Mumbai : Parineeti Chopra has been refreshingly honest about motherhood lately, and her latest confession is one that a lot of working mothers will recognise instantly. In a recent chat, the actress opened up about the first time she left her son Neer to travel for work, and how it left her completely shaken.

She described the moment in vivid detail. "The very first time that I had to leave my baby, and this was after many, many months of postpartum, being at home 24/7, day and night," she began. What followed was a journey she barely remembers. "When I left him for the first time, I don't remember that flight to Bombay. I don't remember it. I don't know when I walked through the airport, boarded the flight, landed, reached home. I have no memory. I was only sobbing for three hours."However, there was nothing to worry about. Her family had everything under control. "The baby's fine. They're nothing to do with your absence. The family's fine. Everybody's having a blast," she said, before adding, "But the mom guilt is crazy."

Parineeti believes the feeling comes from two directions at once. "I think it's, of course, biological, but it's also societal," she said, recalling how strangers often ask her where her baby is whenever she steps out for work. It's a question that quietly assumes mothers should pause everything else. She also made it clear she doesn't expect the feeling to fade. "I don't think that mom guilt is emotional. It will never go. Even when I'm 90 years old, my mom will ask me, 'Have you eaten today?' That will never end, and I will never let it end."

Parineeti and husband Raghav Chadha, who married in September 2023, welcomed Neer on October 19, 2025. She's back at work now with her Netflix series Shaque: Trust No One, which premiered on September 24.

Akshaye Khanna invests Rs 33.26 crore in a new Mumbai home

Mumbai : Akshaye Khanna is on a roll. After playing Rehman Dakait in Dhurandhar, the actor has now splurged Rs 33.26 crore on a luxury apartment in Mumbai's Malabar Hill. According to property registration documents reviewed by Square Yards, the actor purchased the apartment in September 2026. The property is spread across 2,341.39 sq ft of carpet area, with an additional 175.45 sq ft balcony.

That takes the total area to 2,516.84 sq ft. It also comes with three parking units. The purchase also came with a hefty stamp duty bill. Documents accessed by Square Yards show that the transaction attracted stamp duty of Rs 1.99 crore, along with Rs 30,000 in registration charges. Khanna could not be reached for comment. Malabar Hill is located in South Mumbai along the Arabian Sea, the area is known for its luxury residences, greenery and prime location.

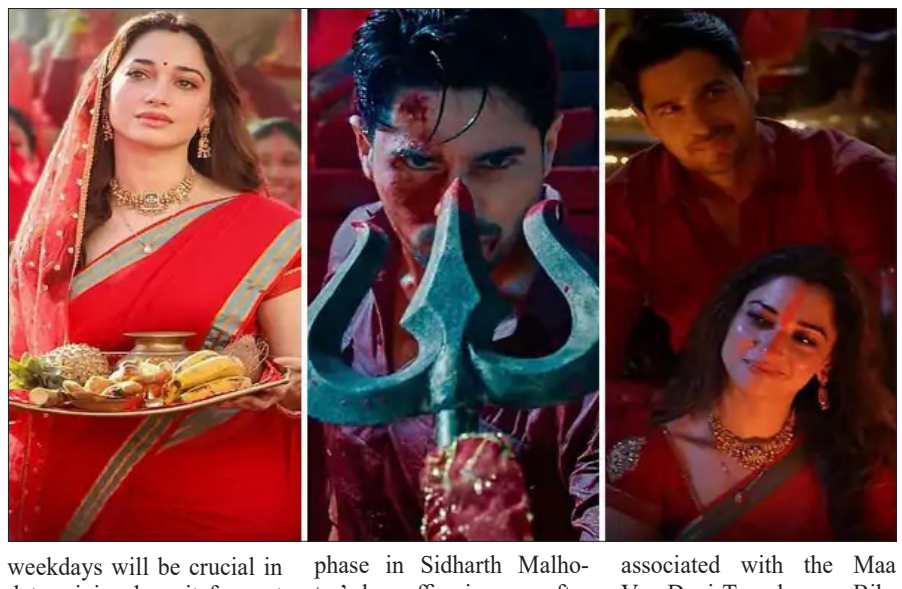
Meanwhile, Akshaye Khanna is the son of veteran actor Vinod Khanna. He has built a career spanning several decades and has taken on roles across genres. His film credits include Dil Chahta Hai, Gandhi, My Father, Hulchul, Race and Drishyam. More recently, he played Aurangzeb in Chhaava and Rehman Dakait in Dhurandhar. Both films emerged among the highest-grossing Bollywood films.

Sidharth Malhotra's The Vvaan registers impressive growth on day 3

Mumbai : Sidharth Malhotra and Tamannaah Bhatia's The Vvaan: Force of the Forrest continued its upward trajectory at the box office as it entered the first weekend. The film recorded its highest single-day collection so far on Day 3, taking its India nett collection beyond the Rs 33-crore mark.

According to trade website Sacnilk, The Vvaan earned an estimated Rs 14.35 crore nett in India on Day 3 across 7,135 shows. With this, the film's total India gross collection stands at Rs 40.15 crore, while its India nett collection has reached Rs 33.60 crore.The film also recorded a collection of Rs 1.25 crore overseas on Day 3, taking its total overseas gross to Rs 3.50 crore. Its worldwide gross collection currently stands at Rs 43.65 crore.

With the film showing stronger momentum over the weekend, its performance during the upcoming



weekdays will be crucial in determining how it fares at the box office. The film has recorded a 27.6% growth on Day 3.Released in theatres on September 25, the Sidharth Malhotra and Tamannaah Bhatia starrer is a fantasy thriller that blends folklore, supernatural elements and the mystery surrounding a forbidden forest.

The film marks a notable phase in Sidharth Malhotra's box office journey after a prolonged run of underperforming releases. Alongside Malhotra and Bhatia, the film features Anup Soni, Sunil Grover, Shweta Tiwari and Maniesh Paul in supporting roles.

Directed by Deepak Kumar Mishra, The Vvaan: Force of the Forrest draws inspiration from folklore associated with the Maa Van Devi Temple near Bihta in Bihar. Local traditions and stories surrounding the temple, including beliefs linked to the forest after sunset, reportedly helped shape the film's premise. With the film witnessing a rise in collections on Day 3, its performance through the weekdays will be closely watched.

Bollywood stars unite against AI misuse

Mumbai : Artificial intelligence has made it easier than ever to create realistic images, videos and voice clips. But for many, especially celebrities, the technology has also created a new problem: their faces and voices can be used without permission, sometimes to make them appear to say or do things they never did.

Recently, Salman Khan addressed the misuse of AI-generated videos during Bigg Boss 20. Speaking about manipulated videos circulating online, the actor said that AI can be used to clone people's voices and create videos that make it appear as though they have said things they never did. He shared that he has himself appeared in fake AI-generated videos, and called for strict laws and censorship to curb the misuse. He isn't the only celeb to speak out against AI misuse, with several others raising similar concerns. On Bigg Boss 20, Salman Khan said, "People who don't know it is AI generated content might say that Salman Khan was there. But those who know this reality and still created the video—what kind of people are they? Those people should be put behind bars. Until one or two of them go to prison, this will not stop. There has to be a censorship on social media. And I am going to take this up very seriously."The actor had also taken the legal route earlier. In 2025, Salman approached the Delhi High Court over the unauthorised use of his name, image, voice and other aspects of his persona, including through AI, morphing and fake content.

Shalini Pandey recently spoke out after a fake AI-generated video featuring her began circulating online. Taking to Instagram in August 2026, she clarified that the video was completely fabricated and did not depict her. Calling the misuse of technology deeply disturbing, Pandey said such abuse should not be normalised. She also asked people not to download, forward or engage with the video and instead report it. "It is deeply disturbing to see technology being misused in this way to target and harm individuals, especially women," she wrote. In 2025, Sreeleela expressed concerns over the misuse of Artificial Intelligence (AI). "I put my hands together and request every social media user not to support AI-generated nonsense. There is a difference between using and abusing technology.

Ritesh Pal expresses gratitude after winning India's best dancer season 5

Mumbai : Raipur's Ritesh Pal has won India's Best Dancer Season 5, taking home the trophy with his choreographer Pratik Utekar after a season that saw him take on different dance forms and repeatedly test his versatility. Ritesh emerged as the winner after competing against fellow finalists Dipali Borkar, Prathamesh Mane, Anshika Dhara and Geetanjali Marwaha in the grand finale of Sony Entertainment Television's dance reality show. The season was built around the theme 'India Wala Dance', with contestants challenged to explore different styles through their performances.

One of the biggest highlights of Ritesh's run was his record of winning the coveted Battle Trophy three times during the competition. His consistency across the season helped him remain among the standout performers and eventually secure his place at the top. The finale also gave Ritesh and Pratik the opportunity to bring their journey together on stage. The pair performed across multiple dance forms, with Ritesh continuing to push himself beyond the styles he was most familiar with.

For Ritesh, the win was also about the learning he took from the competition. Speaking about his win, he told Free Press Journal, "Dance has always been my passion, and winning India's Best Dancer Season 5 is a dream come true. I feel truly fortunate to be a part of this journey with Sony Entertainment Television. India Wala Dance pushed me beyond my comfort zone and helped me grow as a performer. I am grateful to Karisma Ma'am, Jaaved Sir, Geeta Maa and Terence Sir for their guidance, with Geeta Maa holding a special place in my heart. A special thank you to my choreographer Pratik Utekar Sir for believing in me and transforming my journey. I have learnt so much from my fellow contestants. This trophy makes every challenge worthwhile." Pratik Utekar also credited Ritesh's commitment to the process. He said, "Winning India's Best Dancer Season 5 with my shishya Ritesh Pal is an incredibly proud and emotional moment. I am so happy to see his growth, and Ritesh has always trusted my vision and wholeheartedly accepted my guidance. Since we both come from a contemporary dance background, India Wala Dance challenged us to step out of our comfort zone and explore new dance forms. We overcame every challenge together, and lifting this trophy with him makes this victory truly special."

Jailer 2 anticipated ticket price hikes likely to draw criticism in Telugu states

Hyderabad : A proposed ticket price hike for Rajinikanth-starrer Jailer 2 in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana could invite criticism from audiences, a Telugu distributor said.

Despite recent setbacks for big-ticket films, some Telugu distributors of the Tamil film are reportedly seeking permission from the state governments for an increase in ticket prices. "Better avoid a ticket hike for a dubbed film. The negative response to the ticket prices for Yash's Toxic helped Irumudi make more money, as Telugu audiences were upset with the hike and seemingly responded by avoiding the film," the distributor said.

According to him, Jailer 2 is expected to have ticket prices of around Rs 180 in Tamil Nadu, including multiplexes. However, distributors in the Telugu states are seeking an additional hike of Rs 100 to Rs 200, which could push ticket prices significantly higher for Rajinikanth fans. "When Rajinikanth is being offered at around Rs 180 in Tamil Nadu, why should Telugu audiences pay Rs 400 to Rs 500? It amounts to taking advantage of the Telugu audience, who have traditionally supported films across industries," he said.

The distributor said the performance of films such as Coolie, War 2 and Toxic should prompt distributors to reconsider aggressive ticket pricing. "This should be a lesson for Telugu distributors. Instead of increasing ticket prices in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, they should leave some money in the pockets of audiences, especially during the festive season in October," he said. He also urged the Telugu state governments to reconsider granting special ticket hikes for dubbed films. "No other state follows this practice in the same way. We should also avoid it," he said.

After India's amazing eighth day at the Asian Games, Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated the medal winners

Aichi-Nagoya: On Sunday, Indian athletes and squash players who won gold at the Asian Games were congratulated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The Prime Minister's Office celebrated the nation's seven-medal haul on Day 8 of the continental showcase with a series of postings on X. India now has 37 medals total—four gold, sixteen silver, and seventeen bronze—after winning seven more on Sunday, including two silver in squash and five in athletics. At the end of the day, India was ranked 12th. Congratulating Anahat Singh on her silver medal in women's singles squash, the PMO said, "A splendid Silver for Anahat_Singh13! Her performance in the Women's Singles Squash at the Asian Games has been impressive. She has shown tremendous skill, notably while competing against some of the finest players. May she continue to scale new heights and bring many more laurels to India: PM narendramodi"Anahat became the first Indian woman to reach an Asian Games squash singles final before losing 4-11, 4-11, 7-11 to Malaysia's Sivasangari Subramaniam. PM Modi also congratulated Abhay Singh, who won silver in the men's singles squash competition. "Congratulations to abhaysinghk98 on winning the Silver Medal in Men's Singles Squash at the Asian Games! His skill and determination have made India proud. This achievement reflects the hard work he has put in over the years. Best wishes to him for the journey ahead: PM narendramodi," the PMO said on X.Abhay, ranked 26th in the world, lost 9-11, 5-11, 5-11 to Malaysia's world No. 17 Ng Eain Yow, who successfully defended his Asian Games title.In athletics, Ancy Sojan won silver in the women's long jump, Sarvesh Kushare took silver in the men's high jump, while Harita Bhadra, Parul Chaudhary and Tejaswin Shankar secured bronze medals.Congratulating Ancy, the PMO said, "Congratulations to Ancy Sojan on winning the Silver Medal in the Women's Long Jump at the Asian Games! Hers has been a strong and spirited performance that has brought immense joy to the nation. May she keep achieving greater success in the coming times: PM narendramodi" Sarvesh's silver ended India's five-decade wait for a medal in the men's high jump."A historic Silver for Sarvesh Kushare in the Men's High Jump at the Asian Games! With a superb effort, he has ended India's five-decade wait for a medal in this event. It is truly a memorable achievement powered by perseverance and determination: PM narendramodi," the PMO posted on X.Harita, making her Asian Games debut, won bronze in the women's 200m in 23.20 seconds. "A fantastic Bronze for Harita Bhadra in the Women's 200m at the Asian Games! Making her Asian Games debut, she raced with confidence and determination to secure a well-deserved place on the podium. Congratulations to her on this wonderful achievement. India is proud of her: PM narendramodi," the PMO said.Parul secured bronze in the women's 3000m steeplechase with a personal best and national record of 9:08.67."A brilliant performance by Parul Chaudhary to win Bronze in the Women's 3000m Steeplechase at the Asian Games! Making the achievement even more special, she clocked a personal best on her way to the podium. Her dedication and perseverance have made India proud. Best wishes for her endeavour ahead: PM narendramodi," PMO posted on X. Tejaswin completed India's athletics medal haul with bronze in the men's decathlon, finishing with 7,934 points."Congratulations to Tejaswin Shankar on winning the Bronze Medal in the Men's Decathlon at the Asian Games! Competing across demanding events over two days requires exceptional versatility, endurance and resolve. He displayed all three, finishing his campaign strongly. A commendable achievement. Best wishes on the endeavours ahead: PM narendramodi," the PMO said.Tejaswin signed off his decathlon campaign by winning the 1500m in 4:33.09, but his total was not enough to retain the silver medal he won at the 2023 Hangzhou Asian Games.India's seven-medal haul came without a gold on Sunday, with the country slipping from 10th to 12th in the standings despite increasing its medal count to 37.

The BJP wins 204 seats in the Rajasthan civic elections, while the Congress only wins 96

Rajasthan, Sep 28: In Rajasthan's urban local body elections, the BJP has performed admirably. Nine of the ten municipal corporations in the state have the party on their boards. When all urban local bodies are included, the Congress was only able to create boards in 96 entities, whilst the BJP has formed boards in 204. The BJP participated in the urban civic votes with meticulous preparation, from local organizations to senior leadership. Roadshows conducted by Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma also had an effect. Many are surprised by the BJP's success, particularly in the tribal belt. The BJP has established boards in seven of the nine urban local bodies in the tribal-dominated districts of Pratapgarh, Dungarpur, and Banswara. The Congress won one of the three urban local bodies in Banswara, while the party won two. Both urban local bodies in Dungarpur were won by the BJP.

Three of the four urban local bodies in Pratapgarh were founded by the BJP, while one was won by the Congress.The Chief Minister had been to several parts of the tribal belt before to the elections for urban local bodies. Even at the local level, the party had concentrated. As a result, the BJP was able to carve out a niche for itself in the tribal belt between the Bharat Adivasi Party's (BAP) Bhil identity politics and the Congress's traditional voting base. The BAP suffered the greatest defeat in these elections. In all three districts, the party was unable to get support in even one urban local body. The Bharat Adivasi Party had surprised everyone by making significant gains in the Assembly and Lok Sabha elections. In the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, BAP's Rajkumar Roat won by a margin of 2,47,054 votes. The party also won four assembly seats and emerged as Rajasthan's third-largest party. Its vote share had also increased rapidly after the 2018 assembly elections. The BAP entered the urban local body elections with enthusiasm this time, but failed to secure a board in any of these tribal-dominated areas. At the same time, members of the tribal community, traditionally seen as Congress voters, appear to be moving away from the party. Political experts say the BAP made major gains in the assembly and Lok Sabha elections as people connected with its demand for a separate 'Bhil Pradesh' and its focus on tribal identity. The party, however, has not been able to strengthen its organisational structure. On the other hand, the BJP has consistently taken the issues of development and nationalism to the tribal belt. Its strong organisation and election planning helped it gain an advantage. Along with this, the Vanvasi Kalyan Parishad, associated with the RSS, has also been working at the ideological level in the tribal belt of Rajasthan, as it does in other parts of the country. This provides ideological support to the BJP.

The ideological work of the Vanvasi Kalyan Parishad and the BJP's political management together appear to have played a key role in the party's gains in the tribal belt. The BJP began preparing for the elections even before the Panchayati Raj elections were announced. Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma toured several parts of Pratapgarh and Udaipur on Saturday. He engaged with both locals and leaders throughout the tour. Nitin Nabin, the leader of the BJP, launched chariots on Friday to advertize the party's programs. The party is proceeding according to plan and seems ready for the elections.

Bengal will defend cows and imprison anyone who disparage monks, according to Suvendu Adhikari

Kolkata, Sep 28: Suvendu Adhikari, the chief minister of West Bengal, declared on Sunday that the winds in the state had shifted and that his administration will defend "gaumata" and imprison anyone who disparages monks. Speaking at a Bhagavad Gita recital event hosted by the Bangur Jagaran Mancha at this city's Netaji Indoor Stadium, he declared that there was nothing to be afraid of when practicing or advancing a religion.Distribute Hanuman Chalisa without reluctance and recite the Bhagavad Gita. Blow conches and recite the Hare Krishna mantra; there is nothing to be afraid of. "The winds have shifted ('mausam badal gaya hai')," he said. "Tika, Sikha, Dhoti, and Tulsi's government has come. At the occasion, when 11,000 people recited the Bhagavad Gita in unison, he declared, "The government to protect 'gaumata' is here."Additionally, the chief minister declared that his administration "would imprison those who insult monks."Adhikari added that religious leaders and saints should be allowed to teach their ideas, citing the recent visit of Dhirendra Krishna Shastri, also known as Bageshwar Baba, to Bengal.Additionally, he said that pictures and effigies of Shastri had been set on fire across the state and that his administration had taken action against those responsible. "I have already said in the assembly that those who insult sadhus, saints and mahants will have to go to jail," the chief minister said.Adhikari urged people to remain united and alert against what he described as the "tukde tukde gang", referring to those he alleged were raising slogans of "Kashmir maange azadi" (Kashmir wants freedom)."Do not be afraid at all. Everyone must remain united," he said.Taking a dig at former chief minister Mamata Banerjee over her "azadi" remarks in Serampore on Saturday, he said, "India got independence in 1947. If she makes such statements, the nationalists will teach her a lesson."Adhikari said he was a part of Sunday's event not in his capacity as a chief minister, but "as a Sanatani".Referring to previous Gita recitation programmes, he said around one lakh people had gathered at the Brigade Parade Ground last year, followed by a programme in Siliguri with around 50,000 participants. According to Adhikari, another recital session with over 10 lakh participants was planned for December 29. Mohan Bhagwat, the head of the RSS, is expected to attend.The chief minister also mentioned Jagadguru Rambhadracharya, a spiritual leader who has indicated interest in visiting Bengal for Makar Sankranti next year and hosting a sizable religious gathering at the Brigade Parade Ground.Adhikari further mentioned that the state government will have a booth during Kurukshetra's Gita Mahotsav.

A notice of appeal against Brij Bhushan Singh's acquittal is issued by the Delhi Court

New Delhi, Sep 28: A notice about the appeal filed by four female wrestlers against a magistrate's decision to clear former WFI chairman Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh in a sexual harassment case was released by a Delhi court on Monday.The acquittal of former Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) assistant secretary Vinod Tomar of the criminal intimidation allegation in the case has also been challenged in the criminal appeal filed on September 25.Singh, Tomar, and the state received notice from Special Judge Dig Vinay Singh.The case has been scheduled for additional sessions on October 9. Due to a lack of evidence, the magisterial court cleared former BJP MP and former WFI chairman Brij Bhushan Singh on August 3 of this year in a sexual harassment case brought by six female wrestlers, including world champion Vinesh Phogat. Tomar was also found not guilty by the court.

The wrestlers' petition, which was submitted on Friday, claimed that the acquittal was legally unsustainable, that it was based on a "manifestly erroneous and selective appreciation" of the available evidence, that it relied on speculation and guesswork, and that it "failed to apply binding and well-settled principles of law".

Three Indian boxers go to the semifinals and win medals at the Asian Games

Aichi-Nagoya: While Sachin Siwach's campaign ended in the round of eight, Indian boxers Parveen Hooda, Ankush Panghal, and Narender Berwal ensured the nation of three gold with commanding quarterfinal victories at the Asian Games on Sunday. Parveen advanced to the women's 65kg semifinals by defeating Navbakhor Khamidova of Uzbekistan, the silver medalist from the world championships, 5-0. After forcing the referee to halt his quarterfinal match against Adthapong Saengtep of Thailand in less than two minutes, Narender (90 kg) added another medal to his bronze from the previous tournament.

The referee had to give Saengtep three standing counts before ending the fight as the Indian super heavyweight unloaded a torrent of powerful strikes on his Thai opponent.Ankush defeated Nekruz Salimov of Tajikistan 5-0 by unanimous decision in the men's 80kg quarterfinal. Ankush won gold in the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow last month.But in the men's 60kg quarterfinal, local favorite Shunsuke Kitamoto of Japan defeated Commonwealth Games champion Sachin 0–5, ending his career. The Haryana fighter had been given a walkover in the previous round, thus it was her first fight of the current tournament. However, Parveen showed no symptoms of rust, skillfully hitting a barrage of combination blows on Khamidova.I'm feeling great. My instructors devised a strategy for fighting. I concentrated on counterpunching and effectively controlled the distance. After the victory,

she remarked, "That was our strategy for the bout."The International Testing Agency (ITA) punished Parveen for 22 months due to a whereabouts failure, which resulted in the removal of her bronze medal from the previous event. Since returning from her suspension late last year, Parveen has moved up from 57kg to 65kg. She was one of only three boxers who failed to finish on the podium in last month's Commonwealth Games."I'm getting my confidence back. Being away from your sport for so long makes you doubt yourself and wonder how you'll perform in the future.

"But now I feel confident again and want to achieve even more than what I lost during that time away," she added. Making his Asian Games debut, Ankush put up a dominant display to outclass Salimov and book his place in the semifinals."In the first two rounds I boxed at long range, and I had already won those two rounds. After that the opponent was just passing the time," Ankush said."There was no difficulty at all. I am not satisfied with my performance. I have already secured a medal. But it doesn't matter because I am looking ahead," he added.The Haryana boxer started strongly, landing clean singles, including a straight left and a right hook, to keep Salimov on the back foot. The Tajik tried to counter, but his punches lacked the accuracy and impact to trouble Ankush, who took the opening round on all five cards. Ankush maintained the pressure in the second round, continuing to attack and landing a steady stream of punches. Salimov tried to close the distance and find openings on the counter, but Ankush was quick to respond and largely kept control of the exchanges. As the round went on, the Indian again shown good poise, avoiding needless confrontations and timing his attacks. On all five cards, he won the round once more.Ankush kept Salimov at bay whileonserving energy with a comfortable lead going into the last round. Ankush had already done enough to guaranty the result, despite the Tajik's attempts to quicken the tempo and land a few blows.The Indian won 5-0 with ease, making him one of India's three medal winners that day.

Amritpal Singh's Waris Punjab De presents the Akali Dal with a new challenge

Chandigarh, Sep 28: A fresh political fight is taking place in Punjab ahead of Mandate 2027, with Amritpal Singh's Waris Punjab De posing a threat to the Shiromani Akali Dal.In the Panthic political sphere, which is typically connected to the Akali Dal, the competition is very important. Waris Punjab De gained significant political traction with Amritpal Singh's win from Khadoor Sahib in the 2024 Lok Sabha election. In front of the 2027 Assembly elections, the group is now looking to increase its footprint.Amritpal Singh and Waris Punjab De have been often singled out by SAD president Sukhbir Singh Badal at political gatherings, making the gang a major focus of his campaign. Badal has described Waris Punjab De as a "virus" and questioned Amritpal's political credentials.

He has also criticised Amritpal over the 2023 Ajnala incident and his political rise after returning from Dubai. Sukhbir Badal has also alleged that the Aam Aadmi Party is using Waris Punjab De to divide the Panthic vote. He has claimed that there is an understanding between AAP and the outfit - an allegation the two parties would need to respond to.The political contest has gained another dimension with the entry of Dakha MLA Manpreet Singh Ayali into the Waris Punjab De camp. Ayali's move has given the outfit greater visibility in the Malwa region and taken the contest beyond Amritpal's Khadoor Sahib base. Sukhbir has subsequently intensified his attacks on both Amritpal and Ayali, particularly questioning their political and religious positioning.The rivalry was also visible at the Chhapar Mela, where SAD and Waris Punjab De emerged as prominent competing political formations, highlighting the growing contest for the Panthic electorate.For the Akali Dal, the challenge is therefore not limited to AAP, Congress and BJP. It is also about retaining its traditional political space against a new formation seeking to build an alternative Panthic identity.

Pincky Balhara loses 78 kg in the semifinals but wins Kurash Bronze for India

Aichi-Nagoya: Pincky Balhara, an Indian Kurash athlete, won her second Asian Games gold on Monday after losing to Mo Sumin of South Korea in the women's 78 kg quarterfinal at Aichi-Nagoya.

Pincky, a silver medalist from the 2018 Asian Games, won India's third-ever Asian Games medal in the sport after losing 0-5 against Sumin, the gold champion from the 2026 Asian Championships. After receiving an early warning and trailing the whole game, Pincky was able to score a "chala" (half point/throw). Pincky received a "dakki" (two warnings, one short of DQ) when Sumin upgraded the "chala" to "yonbosh" (full point, short of immediate victory) with still another warning. In the end, the Indian was forced to accept a bronze.

This is India's 38th medal at the Asian Games, having won four gold medals, 16 silvers and adding the 18th bronze to the contingent's tally. India's third-ever medal in Kurash at the Asian Games was confirmed on Monday after Pincky secured a place in the women's 78 kg semifinal, beating South Korea's Lim Garam by a 3-0 scoreline in the women's 78 kg quarterfinal, as per ESPN. Indian Olympic medalist Lovlina Borgohain confirmed yet another boxing medal for the nation at the ongoing Asian Games in Japan, beating 2010 Asiad bronze medallist Seong Suyeon of South Korea in the women's 75 kg quarterfinal at Aichi-Nagoya on Monday. Lovlina outclassed Seong by 5-0 via unanimous decision, as per ESPN. Both Lovlina and Seong were not playing defence in the first round, raining punches on each other, with the Indian getting the edge and judges voting 10-9 in her favour, giving her the round 5-0.

Protesters versus. Police Over Removal of Ujjain Mosque: Tear Gas and Lathi Charges

Bhopal, Sep 28: Videos from the site showed a confrontation between police and a sizable crowd in Ujjain on Monday at the location where a section of the Shahi Masjid is planned to be destroyed as part of a road-widening project. Videos revealed that police deployed tear gas shells to quell the unruly mob as stones were hurled at the security guards. There are also members of the Rapid Action Force (RAF) on the scene. In order to handle the enormous inflow of pilgrims anticipated for the Simhastha Mela in 2028, Ujjain is undergoing a larger infrastructure revamp, which includes the road-widening project. There are 272 buildings designated for destruction. Community members characterize the Shahi Masjid as a centuries-old Waqf property, with some reports dating it to around 1390. Parts of the prayer hall, a minaret, and adjacent structures are to be demolished. Citing the public interest and traffic requirements for the impending Simhastha, the Madhya Pradesh High Court in Indore has already rejected petitions contesting the Ujjain Municipal Corporation's notifications. The Indore High Court was set to hold another hearing on the subject on Monday.

Rohit and Kohli Return for India's Final World Cup Preparations Against West Indies

New Delhi: Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli are back in action, and with the 2027 ODI World Cup now just over a year away, India's three-match series against West Indies comes at a time when their World Cup plans need to start taking shape. There is still plenty to sort out, and every ODI between now and next October will give India a chance to settle combinations, look at their options and work out who fits where. West Indies arrive with a very different set of priorities. Their hopes of direct qualification for the 2027 World Cup are over and they will have to go through the Qualifier for the third successive time to make it to the ICC event. The India tour is therefore an important test for Darren Sammy's side, both in terms of seeing how they measure up against a strong opponent and identifying what needs to improve before the qualifier, which is five months away. India have played three ODI series this year and lost two of them. Injuries, along with the focus on the T20 World Cup, which India won, have meant they have struggled to put their strongest side on the field consistently. They will again be without Hardik Pandya and Jasprit Bumrah for this series, leaving two significant holes to fill. Pandya gives India the all-round balance that can change the make-up of the XI, while Bumrah remains the leader of their pace attack and one of their most important white-ball players. If both are fit and available when India travel to Southern Africa for the World Cup, they will be central to the team's plans. West Indies, ranked 10th in the ICC ODI rankings, are also trying to put together a settled side after a period of corrective measures in their cricketing system. Sammy has looked at the India series as an opportunity rather than a daunting assignment, describing it as a chance to "challenge and measure ourselves as to where we are in ODIs." Shai Hope offered a similar assessment, calling it a real test for the West Indies to play India in their own backyard. They will also have history to contend with. West Indies have not won a bilateral ODI series against India since 2006, while their last series win in India came in 2002.

Asian Games: At 33, Fate Beats Karthik Unnikrishnan in Battle With Destiny

New Delhi: The rain had made the runway at the Nagoya City Mizuho Park Athletic Stadium difficult to negotiate. It was coming down steadily as Karthik Unnikrishnan prepared for the biggest competition of his life, at an age when most triple jumpers would be thinking about the end of their careers rather than the beginning of their international ones. Karthik was 33 and making his Asian Games debut. He had waited years for this opportunity. He had also spent years wondering whether it would ever come. There was more bad news waiting for him on the runway. Praveen Chithravel, India's 2022 Asian Games bronze medallist, pulled a muscle in the opening round and was ruled out without completing a jump. The responsibility of carrying India's challenge in the event was suddenly on Karthik, who had already arrived in Nagoya knowing that this could be the only major continental Games of his career. It was hardly the debut he had imagined. But then, very little about Karthik's career has gone according to plan. Karthik was born in 1993 and has been part of India's triple jump scene since 2015. He is not a late starter in athletics; what slowed him down was everything around the sport. His parents ran a tea shop in Ooty, while Karthik grew up at his maternal grandparents' home in Kerala. He was not particularly good at studies, and when his family saw a six-foot boy who needed direction, sport became the obvious option. At Parali High School in Palakkad, he was initially put into the hurdles, where he struggled. For a child living away from his parents and finding success in neither studies nor sport, failure quickly hardened into self-doubt.

Asian Games: Tajinder Misses Historic Shot Put Hat-Trick, Claims Silver Medal

Tajinder Wins Silver, Misses Shot Put Gold

New Delhi: Tajinderpal Singh Toor's bid for a historic hat-trick of Asian Games gold medals came to an end on Saturday, but the Indian shot putter ensured he extended his remarkable podium streak at the continental showpiece. Toor finished with silver in the men's shot put final after producing a season-best throw of 20.64m in tricky wet conditions. Iran's Mohammadreza Tayebise won gold with a Games record of 20.81m, while Saudi Arabia's Mohammed Tolu took bronze with an effort of 20.48m. Tayebise's winning throw also erased Toor's Asian Games record of 20.75m, which the Indian had set while winning his first gold medal at Jakarta 2018. The competition did not go according to plan for Toor early on. Tayebise took control with his 20.81m effort, while Toor's 20.26m initially left him in third place behind the Iranian and Tolu.

Toor needed a response and found one in his fifth attempt. The 31-year-old sent the shot to 20.64m, his best effort of the competition and his season-best mark, to move past Tolu and into second place. However, he could not find the extra distance needed to overhaul Tayebise and eventually finished 17cm behind the Iranian. The result ended Toor's run of two successive Asian Games gold medals but extended his podium streak to three editions. He won gold in Jakarta in 2018 with a 20.75m throw and defended his title at the Hangzhou Games, held in 2023, with an effort of 20.36m.

Toor had arrived in Aichi-Nagoya with an opportunity to become the first Indian track and field athlete to win three successive individual Asian Games gold medals. Tayebise's record-breaking throw ended that possibility, but Toor still walked away as a three-time Asian Games medallist with two golds and a silver. Toor admitted he had entered the competition confident of producing his best and breaching the 21m mark, leaving him disappointed despite finishing on the podium.

Virat Kohli Gives His Final Verdict on the Catchy and Viral 'Ro-Ko' Moniker

New Delhi: There was a time when Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma were simply two of the biggest names in Indian cricket. Then came the nicknames. Virushka was already a thing. MahiRat followed. And somewhere along the way, with Kohli and Rohit having spent years batting, leading and winning together for India, another one stuck: Ro-Ko. Kohli, for one, has no complaints. "Ro-Ko has a nice ring to it," he told JioStar ahead of India's three-match ODI series against the West Indies. "It sounds nice, it sounds good, and people are having a lot of fun with it." There is more to the moniker now than just a catchy combination of two names. With both Rohit and Kohli having retired from T20Is after India's 2024 T20 World Cup triumph and then calling time on their Test careers in 2025, ODI cricket is the only international format they continue to play. That has inevitably made their partnership feel different. The two veterans are no longer fixtures across three formats. Every ODI appearance comes with a little more attention, a little more nostalgia and, increasingly, a little more discussion about how long they can continue. Kohli understands the appeal. "Now that we only play one format, even from the broadcaster's perspective, I'm sure it's a very nice tagline to use - 'Oh, Ro-Ko aa gaye! They are back'," he said."Accha hai (It's nice), it's got a ring to it, and it's benefiting everyone, so it's cool." The scrutiny surrounding the pair has hardly disappeared. After the 2025 Champions Trophy, there were questions about whether Rohit and Kohli would remain part of India's plans for the 2027 ODI World Cup. Both, however, have continued to make their case with the bat. Kohli returned to the ODI set-up strongly in 2026, and briefly returned to the top of the ICC ODI batting rankings. He has not looked back since then, scoring 3 hundreds in his last 10 ODI innings. Rohit, meanwhile, produced a spectacular 138 against England at Lord's in July, becoming the first Indian men's batter to score an ODI century at the iconic ground. The two also shared a 113-run partnership in that game. For Kohli, though, the equation with Rohit has never been about personal numbers or individual milestones. It has been about finding ways to move the Indian team forward. "When you have played for so long and you have been in leadership positions respectively for India, the goal is always that, as a senior player, you would bounce off things with your captain," Kohli said.

Panama Coach Blames Bengaluru Traffic and Logistics for 1-1 Draw Against India

Bengaluru: Panama coach Thomas Christiansen did not want to call it an excuse, but after watching his side surrender the lead and settle for a 1-1 draw against India in Bengaluru, he had little hesitation in pointing towards the circumstances around the team's preparation. Speaking at the post-match press conference at Sree Kanteerava Stadium, Christiansen said Panama had not had enough time to train together because of travel and logistics, while the team's journey to the stadium on matchday took around two hours in Bengaluru traffic. He also took responsibility for the result, with five players making their first starts for the senior national team as Panama begin a generational transition. "A generational change is not easy. Five players got their first start today. The result is my fault. We didn't have time to work, to train, because of the travel and logistics. But I'm happy to see them start with five debutants. We have to learn from this experience." "I don't want this to sound like an excuse, but it is not easy to be in a bus for two hours in traffic to get to the stadium. The logistics and the travel here were also complicated. We have to be smarter when we sign these agreements again. I don't want this to sound like an excuse, but we have to be careful with how we handle things inside and outside the pitch because our players deserve better."

Asian Games, Sept 27 Schedule: Anahat Eyes Squash Gold While Manu Seeks Redemption

New Delhi: India faces a packed day of medal opportunities on September 27, with action beginning early in the morning with the women's marathon race walk finals featuring Priyanka and Manju Rani. Equestrian dressage, shooting and archery will also provide medal and progression opportunities as the day gathers pace. Harjinder Kaur will be in action in the women's 69kg weightlifting final at 10am, while the afternoon brings two major squash finals. Abhay Singh takes on Malaysia's NG Eain Yow in the men's singles final at 12:30pm, followed by Anahat Singh's women's singles final against Sivasangari Subramaniam at 1:30pm. The athletics programme dominates the evening, with Ancy Sojan Edapilly and Shaili Singh in the women's long jump final, Animesh Kujur in the men's 200m final and Indian athletes competing in the women's 200m, men's high jump, 100m hurdles and 3000m steeplechase finals.On September 27 at the 2026 Asian Games, India has a full day of medal events across diverse sports including athletics, archery, shooting, weightlifting, squash, fencing, and equestrian. Key highlights feature finals in womens marathon race walk, weightlifting, squash singles, and multiple athletics track and field events. Indian athletes such as Priyanka, Manju Rani, Harjinder Kaur, Abhay Singh, and Anahat Singh compete for top honors, with extensive action from early morning to evening showcasing India's broad sporting talent.

IND vs WI: Captain Shai Hope Urges West Indies Squad to Relish India Challenge

New Delh: West Indies captain Shai Hope admitted that taking on India in their own backyard will be a tough challenge but urged his players to embrace it as they prepare for a three-match ODI series starting Sunday. Hope will lead a West Indies side featuring a mix of experienced players and promising youngsters, with the visitors looking to end a long wait for an ODI series win in India. "Playing India in their backyard is always a challenge. It's one that we definitely need to grasp and embrace. It's a great indicator for us to see where we are as a team," Hope said at the pre-match press conference. "But it's something that we always look forward to when you're playing international cricket. You want to play against the best in their home conditions, and you get the real test. So, we're definitely looking forward to it, and it's going to be an exciting one for us," he added. Hope knows what it takes to score runs against India. The 32-year-old has scored 988 runs in 26 ODIs against India at an average of 47, including three hundreds and five fifties. His record in India is even better. Hope has scored 741 runs in 14 ODIs in the country at an average of 74.1, with three hundreds and three fifties. Asked about his success against India, Hope said adapting to different conditions has been key. "I pride myself a lot on trying to be the best I can be. One of those things, you have to be able to adapt to different conditions, and play against different oppositions.

Asian Games: Shuttlers Face Cruel Midnight Matches Amid Scheduling Issues in Japan

New Delhi: PV Sindhu's third-round match against Japan's Tomoka Miyazaki began when most other shuttlers in the competition had gone to bed on Saturday. Yes, it began at 12:07 am on Sunday morning. It was the second match of the day for both shuttlers. Sounds gruelling, right? The scheduling of badminton matches at the Asian Games 2026 in Aichi-Nagoya has left fans and shuttlers bewildered. With the team events taking place in the first week of the quadrennial event and the individual events following them, the organisers have come under fire for not being player-friendly. The issues around accommodation and travel to and from the venue, Ichinomiya City Municipal Gymnasium, have also shown Japan in a poor light. Indian shuttler HS Prannoy, who returned home after being part of the team event in which India won bronze, called the organisation of the Asian Games mediocre, saying the lack of a Games Village took away the novelty of competing in a multi-sport spectacle. Prannoy was among the first to raise concerns about the scheduling with a post on X. Speaking to the Badminton Association of India in a YouTube show later on Saturday, Prannoy, a bronze medallist from Hangzhou, lashed out at the scheduling. "A lot of people commented on my X post, saying other people are not complaining. I was about to reply saying I was not playing and I was just speaking for everybody out there, not just the Indian players," Prannoy said. "Because, I remember, when we finished the team event, the prize distribution took almost an hour, and it was 11:15 pm by the time we left the stadium. And it's one hour from the stadium to our hotel. By the time we all got back, we did not have anything to eat over there like a meal. Obviously, there were snacks. You were there from 3 pm to 11 pm the day before and there is nothing around the stadium to go to and have a meal. "All the players came back and then had a meal at 12:30 or 1 am. I remember Dhruv and Tanisha had their first match at 9 am. What if it was against a top seed or probably a higher seed? It would have been very taxing," he said. "I think it's so unfair on a lot of players. I feel it's cruel. Everybody is aiming for a good Asian Games.

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