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NDA steps up campaign for Nagaon bypoll; CM addresses 15 public meetings

Guwahati, Oct 04 : With just a day left before campaigning concludes for the Nagaon Lok Sabha by-election, the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) has intensified its grassroots electioneering across all eight Assembly segments in support of candidate Debashis Sharma.

According to a statement issued by the BJP, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma spearheaded the blitz, addressing 15 massive public meetings covering every Assembly segment under the parliamentary constituency.

The party announced that on the final day of campaigning tomorrow, booth committees across all 2,309 polling booths in the constituency will conduct simultaneous padyatras (foot marches) starting at 11:00 AM, involving party workers, local voters, and supporters.

Sarma stated that alongside the Chief Minister, a galaxy of senior leaders and star campaigners addressed over 1,100 meetings, both large and small, across the constituency. Key campaigners included Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal, State BJP President and MP Dilip Saikia, Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) President Atul Bora, Assam Assembly Speaker Biswajit Daimary, and several state cabinet ministers including Pijush Hazarika, Jayanta Malla Baruah, Keshab Mahanta, Rameswar Teli, Sushanta Borgohain, and Ajanta Neog, among others.

Highlighting the micro-level voter outreach, the party stated that 25 Mandal Committees across Nagaon and Morigaon districts organised extensive door-to-door visits and over 5,000 courtyard meetings. Additionally, different wings (morchas) of the BJP independently conducted more than 9,500 courtyard meetings across the constituency to mobilise voters. This included 1,654 meetings by the Nagaon Mahila Morcha, 690 by the Nagaon Yuva Morcha, 621 by the Morigaon Yuva Morcha, 397 by the Nagaon Minority Morcha, and 350 by the Morigaon Mahila Morcha, alongside dedicated outreach by Kisan, OBC, SC, and ST morchas.

The aggressive, multi-tiered outreach across the 25 mandals reflects the NDA's all-out push to consolidate voter support ahead of the silence period, the BJP coordinator added.

Arunachal holds workshop to boost coffee sector

Itanagar, Oct 04 : Arunachal Pradesh is looking to strengthen its emerging coffee sector with a greater focus on cultivation, processing and market opportunities.

Against this backdrop, the Coffee Board of India, in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture, Government of Arunachal Pradesh, organised the 'Hills to Cup' Coffee Workshop at the State Banquet Hall, Itanagar on Saturday. Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu attended the programme along with Agriculture Minister Gabriel D. Wangsu, Chau Zingnu Namchoon MLA, Kardo Nyigyor Deputy Speaker of APLA, agriculture Secretary Samuel Changkija, and M. J. Dilesh, Chairman of the Coffee Board of India.

The workshop brought together key officials and stakeholders to discuss the potential of coffee cultivation in the State and ways to connect Arunachal's hill-grown coffee with wider markets. The initiative highlights the growing attention being given to coffee as an agricultural and livelihood opportunity in the State.

CIJW School conducts training prog for NCC cadets of Mizoram

Aizawl, Oct 04 : Counter Insurgency and Jungle Warfare School (CIJWS), Vairengte conducted an intensive training programme for 83 NCC cadets from Mizoram from September 21 to October 4.

The training provided young boys and girls an opportunity to train in the professional environment of one of the Indian Army's premier training institutions. The two-week programme was conceived to take the cadets beyond routine NCC training and expose them to the discipline, physical standards, field skills and team spirit of military life. The cadets underwent drill, physical training, firing, map reading, fieldcraft, survival training, first aid and team-building activities, while also receiving an introduction to jungle warfare, weapons, equipment and night-vision devices.

An important part of the programme was exposure to the changing character of warfare. Visits to the Information and Research Centre, IED Hall and Technovation Hall familiarised the cadets with technology, innovation and developments relevant to modern military training. The camp also provided a platform for motivational interaction, encouraging the cadets to develop confidence, discipline, leadership and a spirit of service. Training together in mixed groups further promoted camaraderie and a sense of collective identity amongst youth drawn from different parts of Mizoram, informed an official press release.

The initiative assumes particular significance as CIJW School continues to deepen its engagement with the youth of the State. By bringing NCC cadets into the school's training environment, the endeavour seeks to broaden their exposure, strengthen their connection with national institutions, and inspire them to participate more in nation-building and national service opportunities. The programme reflects CIJW School's sustained effort to invest in the youth and to use its professional training capabilities not only for military excellence, but also for character building, national integration and strengthening the bond between the Indian Army and the local community, the release added.

Khandu invites Siang farmers' body for talks on SUMP row

Itanagar, Oct 04 : With protests against the proposed Siang Upper Multipurpose Project (SUMP) continuing in parts of Arunachal Pradesh, Chief Minister Pema Khandu has invited the Siang Indigenous Farmers Forum (SIFF) for talks on October 5, but the cultivators' body has sought to defer the meeting beyond October 11.

The meeting assumes significance as opposition to the proposed pre-feasibility report (PFR) survey for the mega hydropower project has intensified in parts of the Siang belt. According to a communication by the Chief Minister's Office (CMO), the meeting was scheduled at 2.30 pm on October 5 at the conference hall of the East Siang deputy commissioner's office in Pasighat.

The CMO invited the SIFF president along with 15 delegates for discussions on 'vital issues'. The MP and legislators representing the Adi community were also expected to participate. SIFF spokesperson Tagori Mize, however, said on Saturday that the forum has sought to hold the talks only after October 11.

Mize said SIFF would hold a series of internal deliberations from October 4 to 11 to discuss the project and the proposed PFR survey before arriving at a collective stand. "The forum will sit together and collectively decide its position. At present, it is too early to comment on what we expect from the meeting," Mize said.

He also linked the recent unrest and incidents of violence in parts of the Siang belt to what he described as inadequate outreach by political representatives and poor communication with villagers over the proposed project. Mize further alleged that incorrect information had been circulated about the number of households that had consented to the PFR survey.

Black market not a reason to repeal NLTP act, says NBCC

Dimapur, Oct 04 : The Nagaland Baptist Church Council (NBCC) has reiterated its support for the Nagaland Liquor Total Prohibition Act (NLTP Act), 1989, stating that the existence of a thriving black market for alcohol should not be used as a justification for scrapping the law.

In a statement issued by NBCC general secretary Rev. Dr. Mar Pongener and secretary for social concerns Dr. Villo Naleo, the council said the prohibition law was enacted to safeguard families, communities and society from the harmful effects of alcohol abuse, and should be viewed through the lens of public health, human dignity, family welfare and social responsibility rather than revenue generation. While acknowledging that illegal liquor trading remains a serious challenge in Nagaland, the NBCC maintained that weaknesses in enforcement do not invalidate the fundamental objectives of the prohibition law. The council noted that frequent liquor seizures, concerns over spurious alcohol and difficulties faced by enforcement agencies point to implementation gaps that need to be addressed.

"The appropriate response to corruption is not to legalize corruption," the council said, arguing that the black market should not become an excuse for abandoning prohibition. Instead, it called for stronger enforcement, greater transparency and accountability against those involved in illicit liquor trade. The NBCC emphasized that any discussion on the future of the NLTP Act must consider broader questions, including the potential social harm of increased alcohol availability, the protection afforded to vulnerable sections of society and the collective responsibility of institutions and citizens in ensuring effective implementation of the law.

The council also highlighted its efforts to address alcohol dependence through awareness campaigns, counselling, rehabilitation programmes, pastoral care and community intervention. It stressed that its position was not intended to stigmatise people struggling with addiction, but rather to support their recovery and dignity.According to the NBCC, freedom should also be understood as freedom from addiction, exploitation and the breakdown of relationships. It reaffirmed the importance of temperance, self-control and responsible living.

The council said successful enforcement of prohibition cannot rest solely on government agencies, but requires cooperation among churches, village councils, community organisations, women's groups, youth and student bodies, families, healthcare professionals and civil society.Referring to recent deaths reported in Tuensang and Mokokchung, the NBCC welcomed intensified action by the excise and police departments against illegal liquor sales. It also appreciated efforts by student bodies, district administrations and law enforcement officials to strengthen enforcement measures.

The council cited the recent destruction of seized liquor in Zunheboto and the accompanying call for a collective response as an example of the shared responsibility required to tackle the issue.While acknowledging that the NLTP Act is not without flaws, the NBCC said any review of the legislation should focus on strengthening its implementation, closing loopholes, curbing corruption, expanding rehabilitation support and ensuring that the law serves its intended public purpose.

The council further urged the state government to ensure transparent public consultations and rely on credible evidence relating to public health, alcohol-related harm, enforcement outcomes, illegal markets and family welfare while considering the future of the prohibition policy.Concluding its statement, the NBCC said it would continue to support individuals and families affected by addiction, oppose illicit and harmful practices and advocate policies that promote the common good. It stressed that the NLTP Act should be seen not merely as a prohibition measure, but as a reflection of society's responsibility to protect human life, families and communities.

Tinsukia cops awarded DGP's commendation medal

Tinsukia, Oct 04 : Three personnel from Tinsukia district have been awarded the Silver medal in the Assam Police DGP's Commendation Medal 2026 for "outstanding meritorious work".

The awardees are Dinesh Pratap Singh Rathore, IPS, Additional Superintendent of Police (Crime), Tinsukia; Mrinmoy Das, APS, Additional Superintendent of Police (HQ), Tinsukia; and LNK/470 Pankaj Sonar of the 2nd Assam Police Battalion, Makum.The commendations cover different aspects of policing in the district, including crime control, security-related duties and armed police operations.

Rathore had earlier served as SDPO, Margherita, where he was involved in action against anti-social elements and investigations into several cases in the Margherita belt.Das has been associated with security and insurgency-related matters in the sensitive border areas of Tinsukia.

The official order, issued by Assam Police Headquarters on October 1 under the authority of DGP Harmeet Singh, IPS, states that the medals were awarded for "outstanding meritorious work".The seven-page order includes IPS and APS officers, inspectors, sub-inspectors and personnel from various ranks and formations across the Assam Police. Tinsukia has policing responsibilities across areas affected by organised crime and insurgency-related security concerns, as well as locations adjoining Arunachal Pradesh. The district also includes major oil and industrial installations, coal and tea belts and key transport corridors.The order directs the respective formations to make the necessary entries in the awardees' service records and hand over the commendation notifications to them.

100 days campaign on nasha mukt yuva for Viksit Bharat 2026 held in Itanagar

Aizawl, Oct 04 : The 100 Days Campaign on Nasha Mukt Yuva for Viksit Bharat - 2026 was held at the Sangey Lhaden Sports Academy, Chimpu, Itanagar on Sunday.

The campaign was jointly organised by My Bharat, Arunachal Pradesh, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India and the Department of Youth Affairs, Government of Arunachal Pradesh.As part of the programme, a 'Youth Walk' was organised on Sunday morning, which was flagged off by the chief guest Chakat Abo, MLA cum Advisor to Minister of Transport, Government of Arunachal Pradesh. She also addressed the participants.

Gumsen Lollen, president, BJP Kisan Morcha, administered the Nasha Mukt Yuva Sankalp to the participants. He attended the programme as the guest of honour.Shatrughan Gungli, Programme Cordinator cum Nodal Officer, briefed the media about the programme and highlighted the events.Harnam Singh, Centre Head, Khelo India State Centres of Excellence (KISCE), addressing the media, spoke on preventing the unfair use of drugs in sports and creating equal opportunity for all the sportspersons.

He also acknowledged the support rendered by the government attributing it to the success in the just concluded Asian Games.

Restrictions imposed near Sonitpur elephant treatment zone

Tezpur, Oct 04 : District Magistrate, Sonitpur, Ananda Kumar Das, has issued an order under Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023, imposing restrictions within a radius of 1 kilometre of the treatment zone of an injured wild elephant and in and around Phulbari tea estate, Koolny tea estate, Kachariagaon, and adjoining areas under Charid-uar revenue circle. The injured wild elephant has been under continuous veterinary medical monitoring and treatment by the Forest Department since August 27, 2026, within the jurisdiction of Central Range, Sonitpur West Division. Regular tranquilisation/medication and health monitoring are being carried out. The order has been issued in view of large gatherings of residents, tea garden workers, and commuters near the injured elephant, with members of the public approaching the animal dangerously close despite repeated warnings. Such unauthorised human interference poses a serious risk to human life and safety and may also obstruct the ongoing veterinary treatment and wildlife rescue operations. Accordingly, assembly or gathering of five or more persons, unauthorised entry or crowding within the treatment/rescue zone, and any act causing obstruction or interference with the ongoing veterinary treatment and rescue operations of the injured wild elephant have been prohibited within the specified area.

Mizoram to reward lalremsiami, lalthantluangi with ₹25 lakh each for Asian games gold

Aizawl, Oct 04 : Mizoram will award ₹25 lakh each to Lalremsiami and Lalthantluangi, the two Mizo players who were part of India's Asian Games gold medal-winning women's hockey team, recognising a historic achievement that has taken two athletes from Thenzawl's hockey academy to the highest level of Asian hockey.

The two Mizo players were part of the Indian women's hockey team that defeated China 1–0 in the final in Kakamigahara, Japan, on October 2 to win the Asian Games gold medal. Lalremsiami scored the decisive goal in the 10th minute, marking her 200th appearance for India. For Mizoram, the achievement carries particular significance. Lalremsiami and Lalthantluangi are the first athletes from Mizoram to win an Asian Games medal, and they have done so with a gold. Both players began their sporting journeys in Mizoram and trained at the Thenzawl Hockey Academy, highlighting the potential of grassroots sporting institutions to nurture athletes capable of succeeding on the international stage.

Recognising their historic achievement, the Government of Mizoram will award ₹25 lakh each to Lalremsiami and Lalthantluangi under the Mizoram State Sports Incentive Scheme (MSSIS). Hon'ble Sports Minister Pu Lalnghinglova Hmar said the Government was immensely proud of the two players and their achievement. "The Government of Mizoram is very happy to learn that two of our girls, Lalremsiami and Lalthantluangi were among the gold medal winners in Asian Games Women's Hockey. The Government under its Mizoram State Sports Incentive Scheme (MSSIS) will give ₹25 lakh to each of the players." He said the achievement was particularly special because the two players had emerged from a small hockey academy in Thenzawl. "We are very happy that from a very tiny hockey academy at Thenzawl, Mizoram is able to produce two Asian Games Gold Medalists, and we are going to plan a very grand reception with the Hon'ble Chief Minister", he added.

A meeting chaired by the Sports Minister on the evening of October 3 discussed arrangements for welcoming the two players and celebrating their historic achievement. The Government is preparing a special reception to honour the athletes and celebrate their return home. The two players are scheduled to arrive at Lengpui Airport on Monday, October 5, where a reception will be held. This will be followed by a felicitation programme at R. Dengthuama Hall, Mualpui Salem Veng, from 3:00 PM, led by Hon'ble Chief Minister Pu Lalduhoma.

Members of the public have been invited to join the celebrations and welcome the two gold medallists. The players are expected to leave Lengpui Airport at around 1:30 PM and proceed towards Chanmari via Hunthar, Treasury Square, Republic Veng and ITI Veng, before reaching R. Dengthuama Hall. People along the route have been encouraged to come out and welcome the athletes. The Asian Games triumph has also secured India's qualification for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics, adding another significant milestone to the achievement of the two Mizo players. The Government of Mizoram has identified hockey as one of the priority disciplines under its Empowering Mizoram Sports initiative, with a long-term vision that includes preparing athletes for the 2036 Olympics.The remarkable journey of Lalremsiami and Lalthantluangi, from the hockey fields of Thenzawl to an Asian Games gold medal, stands as an inspiring example of how determination, grassroots sporting opportunities and sustained support can create athletes capable of representing the country at the highest level.

Smuggled timber seized in Goalpara district

Goalpara, Oct 04 : The Forest Department has seized a pickup van allegedly carrying timber suspected to have been transported illegally in the Kharmuja area of Goalpara district. Two persons were detained in connection with the incident and later handed over to Goalpara Sadar police station.

According to the Forest Department, the incident occurred on Friday night when the pickup van bearing registration number AS18C1503 was intercepted at the Kharmuja outpost while allegedly transporting logs of Poma wood.During questioning, the presence of timber logs in the vehicle came to light, following which officials at the Kharmuja outpost informed the Goalpara Forest Range Office. A Forest Department team subsequently reached the spot, seized the vehicle, and detained the two persons allegedly involved in transporting the timber. The detained persons were identified as Ibrahim Hussain of Jaipur, Baguan, and Zahidul Islam of Kharmuja. The seized timber is estimated to have a market value of around Rs 30,000-40,000, according to the Forest Department.

CSOs call for NRC update before census amid security demands

Imphal, Oct 04 : The Government of India must immediately stop what five civil society organisations described as "terrorism" in Manipur and update the National Register of Citizens (NRC) with 1951 as the base year before conducting the Census, AMUCO president and convenor of the five organisations Sorokhaibam Sanjoy said today.

Speaking at a public meeting at Uripok Sorbon Thingel Haorongbam Leikai, Sanjoy said the Census should not be conducted in Manipur until the NRC is updated. The five organisations also demanded that the recently concluded Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls be annulled, internally displaced persons (IDPs) be resettled in their native places and the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958 be repealed from Manipur. Similar demands have been raised by the organisations in recent protests.The five organisations are the All Manipur United Clubs' Organisation (AMUCO), All Manipur Women's Voluntary Association (AMAWOVA), Poirei Leimarol Meira Paibi Apunba Manipur (PLMPAM), Committee on Human Rights (COHR) and Manipuri Students' Federation (MSF).

Sanjoy alleged that the violence in Manipur was the result of actions by the Government of India and accused the Centre of pursuing what he described as an undemocratic approach in the state. He alleged that the role of the Centre and the state government had contributed to prolonging the crisis and warned that continued failure to address the grievances of the people could lead to a stronger public movement.He further criticised the deployment of a large number of central security forces in Manipur, alleging that their presence had failed to protect civilians. He said the forces should instead be withdrawn from the state and alleged that civilians continued to face insecurity despite their deployment.

Sanjoy warned that unless the government took immediate steps to address the crisis, including the NRC issue, rehabilitation of IDPs and withdrawal of AFSPA, public resistance would intensify. The organisations have previously warned of intensified agitation if their demands are not addressed.A separate torch rally was also held at Eroisemba by the Eroisemba Youth Development Club and Eroisemba Apunba Meira Paibi Lup in support of the demands.

Sikkim launches women-centric initiative; cheques distributed across constituencies

Gangtok, Oct 04 : The Sikkim Aama Sashaktikaran Yojana, a flagship women-centric welfare initiative of the government, was organised across constituencies of Gangtok district for the distribution of financial assistance to eligible non-working mothers.

The scheme aims to provide financial support to non-working mothers, thereby strengthening their economic well-being, self-reliance and dignity, while ensuring that the benefits of the welfare initiative reach deserving beneficiaries at the grassroots level.The constituency-wise cheque distribution programmes were conducted under the respective area MLAs, wherein cheques were distributed to eligible beneficiaries.

The programme was organised in Khamdong-Singtam; Syari, Martam-Rumtek, Upper Tadong, Arithang, Tumin-Lingee, Gangtok and Upper Burtuk constituencies.The events witnessed active participation from GMC Councillors, CLC Presidents, OSDs, BDOs from the respective BACs, GPU-wise Panchayats, Ward Panchayats and Zilla Panchayat representatives, along with other local representatives.

The programmes were also supported by the team of the Social Welfare Officer and Social Welfare Inspectors of the Women, Child, Senior Citizen and Divyangjan Welfare Department, Gangtok District, who facilitated and coordinated the constituency-wise activities and ensured smooth implementation of the programme.

Amit Shah's Meghalaya visit cancelled; police colour ceremony also called off

Shillong, Oct 04 : Union Home Minister Amit Shah's proposed two-day visit to Meghalaya on October 4 and 5 has been cancelled amid escalating protests in New Delhi over Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls.

The President's Police Colour Presentation Ceremony, scheduled to be held on October 5 at Shillong's Jawaharlal Nehru (JN) Stadium, has also been cancelled.A government notification confirming the cancellation of Shah's visit did not specify any reason for the decision, nor did it indicate when the visit would be rescheduled. In a separate notification, Meghalaya Police stated that the Police Colour Presentation Ceremony had been called off due to "unavoidable circumstances." A fresh date for the event will be announced later.

Shah was expected to attend the prestigious police ceremony and take part in other official engagements during his planned visit to the state.The cancellation comes at a time when protests against the Election Commission's SIR exercise have intensified in the national capital. Demonstrations continued for a second consecutive day on Saturday, with around 150 protesters detained while marching towards Jantar Mantar.

Among those participating in the protests were AISA national president Neha Bora, activist Yogendra Yadav, and senior advocate Prashant Bhushan. The protesters demanded the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and raised concerns over the electoral roll revision process.The latest mobilisation followed Friday's protests, during which nearly 1,000 demonstrators were detained after police and paramilitary forces prevented large groups from reaching Jantar Mantar and nearby protest sites.

Delhi Police has registered at least three FIRs in connection with the demonstrations, citing alleged violations of prohibitory orders in the national capital.The controversy has also been fuelled by reports that Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi had, on multiple occasions over the past 10 months, objected to decisions and orders related to the SIR exercise, claiming they were issued without their knowledge or recommendation.The Election Commission, however, has maintained that differing opinions are a normal part of institutional deliberations. It has asserted that all its decisions are legally valid and made in accordance with established statutory procedures.

In Meghalaya, the SIR exercise has already generated political and public tensions, with protests and disruptions reported during the ongoing revision process. The cancellation of Shah's visit and the Police Colour Presentation Ceremony is expected to draw significant attention in the state, particularly as preparations for both events had been underway. No new dates have yet been announced for either programme.

Anti-drugs walkathon held in Guwahati

Guwahati, Oct 04 : A 'Nasha Mukt Yuva for Viksit Bharat' Walkathon was organised today by Mera Yuva Bharat (MY Bharat), Assam, in collaboration with the NSS Unit of Karmashree Hiteswar Saikia College, at Srimanta Sankardev Kalakshetra, Guwahati.

The walkathon was organised with the objective of creating awareness among young people about the harmful effects of drugs and substance abuse and encouraging them to adopt a healthy, confident and responsible lifestyle. The programme also highlighted the vital role of the youth in nation-building and in realising the vision of a Viksit Bharat.

Vijay Kumar Gupta, MLA, Guwahati Central LAC, attended the programme as the Chief Guest. Addressing the participants, he spoke about the serious challenges faced by young people who fall prey to addiction and highlighted the physical, mental, social and personal consequences of substance abuse. Gupta urged the youth to remain conscious of their choices and stay away from activities that could adversely affect their health, career and future. He emphasised the importance of self-discipline, a positive environment, constructive engagement and a healthy lifestyle in preventing addiction among young people.

Speaking on the occasion, Dinobondhu Saha, State Director, Assam, said that the responsibility of carrying forward the vision of a Viksit Bharat rests significantly with the younger generation. Referring to the present period as 'Amrit Kaal', he called upon the youth to become the 'Amrit Pidi' that would carry forward the vision of a developed India through self-development, a progressive mindset, a Nasha Mukt lifestyle and self-confidence.

Dr. Nurul Islam, NSS Programme Officer, encouraged the participants to focus on self-development, acquire knowledge and skills, maintain a positive and progressive outlook and contribute meaningfully to society. He stated that a confident and addiction-free youth population would be an important strength in the journey towards a developed India. The programme was attended by Bondita Gogoi, District Sports Officer, Kamrup Metro; Biswajit Nath, District Employment Officer, Kamrup Metro; and Rajib Das, Secretary, All Assam Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Committee, among others.

The walkathon witnessed enthusiastic participation from young people, who joined the campaign with the message of building a healthier, stronger and drug-free society and contributing towards the making of a Viksit Bharat.

CM hands over 50 motorcycles to Assam Police for patrolling

Guwahati, Oct 04 : Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma today formally handed over 50 Mavrick 440 motorcycles provided by Hero MotoCorp under its 'Ride Safe India' CSR initiative to the Assam Police at the Lok Sewa Bhawan complex in Dispur, with the objective of strengthening traffic management, patrolling, law enforcement and emergency response mechanisms.

During the programme, the Chief Minister also rode a motorcycle wearing a helmet on the roads within the Janata Bhawan complex, sending a strong message on the importance of road safety and responsible riding. The motorcycles handed over to the Assam Police will enable police personnel to move more easily and swiftly through congested roads and enhance the effectiveness of patrolling, traffic management and law enforcement.

The motorcycles will also play an important role in ensuring a faster police response to road accidents, traffic congestion and other emergency situations. Specially prepared for the Assam Police, the motorcycles feature Assam Police logos and branding. Equipped with a 440 cc engine, 6 speed transmission with an assist-and-slipper clutch, dual channel ABS with front and rear disc brakes and full LED lighting, the motorcycles are expected to enhance the operational efficiency of traffic police personnel and improve police responsiveness on the roads. As part of the initiative, traffic police personnel have also been provided specialised capacity building training in traffic management, road safety, law enforcement and emergency response.

Director General of Police, Assam, Harmeet Singh, Guwahati Police Commissioner Parthasarathi Mahanta and senior officials of Hero MotoCorp were present at the programme.

Assam's wildlife tourism season begins as Manas reopens

Guwahati, Oct 04: Assam's annual wildlife tourism season has begun with the reopening of Manas National Park on October 2, while Kaziranga National Park is set to welcome tourists from October 3. Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary in Morigaon district will reopen on October 13. Assam Environment and Forest Minister Jayanta Malla Baruah announced the reopening schedule in a social media post on Friday, marking the return of visitors to the state's major wildlife destinations after the monsoon closure."With the monsoon giving way to a new tourism season, Assam is ready to welcome visitors back to some of its most iconic wildlife destinations," Baruah said.Manas National Park, located across Baksa and Chirang districts, reopened on Friday. Kaziranga National Park, which spans Golaghat and Nagaon districts and extends into parts of Biswanath and Sonitpur districts, is reopening on Saturday. Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary, known for its population of the greater one-horned rhinoceros, will open to tourists later this month. The parks and sanctuaries are generally closed during the monsoon months, with reopening dates determined by weather and field conditions.

The phased reopening is expected to bring tourists back to Assam's wildlife circuit during the 2026-27 tourism season.The new season follows a rise in visitor numbers at several wildlife destinations during 2025-26, with Kaziranga recording a notable increase in both domestic and foreign tourist arrivals. Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve received 4,68,147 visitors during the 2025-26 season, compared with 4,06,564 in the previous season, an increase of more than 15 per cent. The total included 4,37,673 Indian tourists and 30,474 foreign nationals.Visitor numbers at Kaziranga have also increased substantially over the past decade, rising from around 1.55 lakh. Foreign tourist arrivals increased from 17,693 to 30,474 during the period covered by the reported figures.

AAP Workers Detained At Jantar Mantar

New Delhi, Oct 04: Delhi Police apprehended multiple Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) members who were attempting to organize a protest at Jantar Mantar against Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar. The police denied them permission to proceed, leading to the sealing of the protest area with barricades and increased security around the Election Commission office. Prohibitory orders were enforced in the surrounding areas, significantly disrupting vehicle movement and resulting in the closure of entry and exit points at 11 Delhi Metro stations, including major hubs like Rajiv Chowk, Mandi House, and Central Secretariat. The opposition party is currently demanding several actions, including Gyanesh Kumar's resignation, the suspension of the Special Intensive Revision process, the restoration of voters who had been deleted, and a thorough investigation into discrepancies related to election data.

CBSE Keeps 33% Aggregate Passing Requirement for Class X

New Delhi, Oct 04: The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has decided to retain the existing 33 per cent aggregate passing requirement for Class X board examinations for the 2026-27 academic session. In a notification issued on September 21, the board said there would be no changes to the question paper format or assessment system for the upcoming academic year.

The passing criteria will remain the same as those followed in 2025-26. Earlier, the CBSE had proposed that Class X students would need to secure at least 33 per cent separately in every subject, covering both the board examination and internal assessment. Under the existing system, students are required to obtain 33 per cent overall, with most subjects following an 80:20 weightage between the written examination and internal assessment.

An Education Ministry official said the government had advised the board to avoid introducing several changes in quick succession. The proposed subject-wise passing requirement has therefore been deferred and could be considered for implementation from the 2027-28 academic session.

The decision comes after concerns were raised over recent assessment changes, including the introduction of an on-screen marking system that was followed by irregularities and a delay in the Class XII results earlier this year.

During a recent CBSE webinar, Controller of Examinations Sanyam Bhardwaj clarified that the board had withdrawn the proposed subject-wise 33 per cent requirement and would continue with the existing aggregate-based criterion. The CBSE has begun the process of submitting candidate details for the 2027 Class X and XII board examinations and has advised schools to ensure accuracy in registration and candidate records.

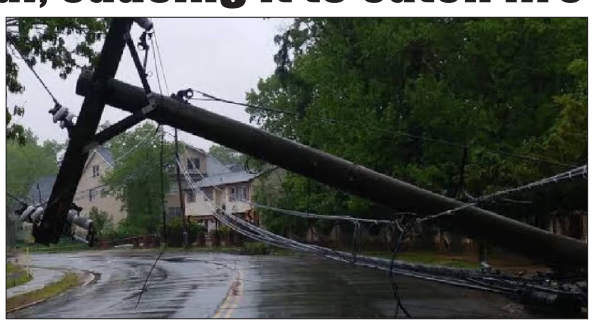
Bus plunges into gorge after hitting road pothole

Sribhumi, Sep 29: A bus travelling from Rangamati to Silchar met with an accident at Berajal in Nilambazar, Sribhumi district, after reportedly hitting a pothole on National Highway 8.

According to preliminary information, the bus lost control after encountering the pothole, veered off the highway and fell into a roadside gorge. The incident has raised fresh concerns over the condition of NH-8, a key road link between Assam and Tripura. Authorities are yet to confirm details regarding casualties, injuries or the extent of damage caused in the accident. Further details regarding casualties, injuries and the extent of damage are awaited.

An 11-KV power line falls on a passenger car, causing it to catch fire

Shillong, Sep 29: Late on Monday, September 28, a passenger car near Umkiang in Meghalaya's East Jaintia Hills district caught fire after an 11-KV power wire fell on it. At least one person was killed and another was injured. Both the total number of casualties and the number of passengers in the car were not immediately apparent. The car was heading toward the Barak Valley when the tragedy happened on the Barak-Guwahati connecting National Highway. Preliminary reports state that a fire was started when the high-voltage power line unexpectedly fell onto the moving car. Passengers were trapped inside the car as the flames quickly consumed it. Witnesses at the site were concerned that the fire might have killed other people. Authorities have verified one passenger's death thus far, but another passenger was reportedly rescued with injuries. The precise number of passengers in the car was still unknown, and more information on the casualties was still pending. Meghalaya Police and personnel from the Fire and Emergency Services reached the spot after being alerted about the incident. The fire was subsequently brought under control.Further details, including the identity of the deceased and the condition of the injured passenger, are awaited. Authorities are also expected to ascertain the circumstances that led to the power line falling onto the vehicle.



Pratibha Meshram, the Nazira Co-District Commissioner, Examines Flood Zones

Nazira, Oct 04: On Monday, Nazira Co-District Commissioner Pratibha Meshram traveled to the badly flooded areas around Amguri Tol Line and Bamunpukhuri Tea Estate to evaluate the post-flood scenario and the state of the impacted households. The co-district commissioner visited the locations designated for the rehabilitation and relocation of families whose homes were totally destroyed by the recent floods. With a focus on guaranteeing suitable rehabilitation measures for the impacted families, the suitability of the suggested areas for resettlement was also evaluated. Officials reviewed the ground situation and the requirements for relocating the families to safer and suitable locations as part of the post-flood rehabilitation process.

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GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM

PM Modi thanks Indian pilot for preventing FlyDubai mid-air disaster

New Delhi, Oct 04: This is an effort to describe an Indian Indian Indian Indian Indian Indian Indian Indian Indian aircraft. Machchhar, the captain of Flydubai flight FZ1073 traveling from Dubai to Tel Aviv, was reportedly stabbed by his co-pilot during the flight on Wednesday. The plane then descended about 14,000 feet in a couple of seconds before making an emergency landing in Tabuk, Saudi Arabia.

In the end, all 174 passengers were declared safe. "Captain Smit Machchhar is a hero," Modi wrote in a post on X on Thursday. He shown tremendous bravery and an unflinching will to save the lives of others in the face of the greatest peril and despite suffering severe injuries. His valor helped save hundreds of lives and avert a huge tragedy," the Prime Minister said. "Captain Machchhar is the pride of India."

I'm praying for his quick recuperation, strength, and well-being," Modi continued. Israeli officials have said that the incident started when the co-pilot allegedly struck Machchhar in the cockpit, causing the plane to rapidly lose altitude. Despite his wounds, Machchhar managed to open the cockpit door, enabling crew members and passengers to enter and subdue the assailant. There were two pilots that were pilots that were under the pilots. Benjamin Netanyahu, the prime minister of Israel, also commended Machchhar for his actions, claiming that the Indian pilot's reaction prevented a significant mid-air catastrophe. According to Netanyahu, despite suffering severe injuries, Machchhar was able to unlock the cockpit door, allowing passengers and crew to go in. In a separate account of his discussion with Netanyahu over the incident, US President Donald Trump called Machchhar a hero. According to Indian authorities in Saudi Arabia, Machchhar was being treated at a hospital in Tabuk, and they were in communication with both Saudi authorities and his family. His status was stable, according to the Indian Embassy in Saudi Arabia. According to reports, Machchhar had surgery after the incident. Machchhar is a Mumbai native with a wealth of Boeing 737 flying expertise. His professional profile states that he worked for SpiceJet for over 11 years before becoming a captain at Flydubai in 2022. He has around 9,750 hours of flying experience listed on his profile. Flydubai has said that an incident occurred while the aircraft was en route but cautioned against speculation, stating that the underlying reasons and motives were not yet known and remained subject to a formal investigation. The airline also suspended flights to and from Israel following the incident. Saudi authorities are investigating the incident, while the alleged attacker remains in custody. The exact circumstances behind the cockpit confrontation and the motive remain unclear.

Arunachal MLA Ninong Ering Supports Siang Project, Urges Informed Debate

Itanagar, Oct 04: Pasighat West MLA and former Union Minister Ninong Ering has voiced support for large-scale dam projects and urged people to take an informed and constructive view of the proposed Siang Upper Multipurpose Project (SUMP). Speaking to reporters, Ering said major dam projects could help address flooding, improve irrigation and promote regional development, provided strong safety measures are put in place and the interests of affected communities are properly considered.

Citing projects such as the Bhakra Nangal and Hirakud dams, Ering said India has experience in developing large reservoirs with measures aimed at addressing seismic risks, along with provisions for the rehabilitation and relocation of affected people. He also highlighted the possibility of tourism and other economic activities developing around such infrastructure. On concerns related to earthquakes in the Northeast, Ering acknowledged that the region is seismically active. He also referred to China's proposed large hydropower project and stressed the importance of adequate safeguards while considering major infrastructure initiatives. Ering said his support for large dams dates back to his involvement with the Brahmaputra Flood Control team in the 1970s, adding that he has long viewed such projects as a potential means of managing floods and supporting irrigation. Regarding the proposed SUMP, which is expected to have a generation capacity of around 11,000 MW or more, Ering emphasised the need for a Pre-Feasibility Report (PFR) before reaching conclusions about the project. He urged residents to allow the preliminary assessment to be undertaken, saying the findings could provide a clearer understanding of the Siang River's potential as well as the project's possible advantages and challenges .

The proposed Siang Upper Multipurpose Project has remained a subject of discussion in Arunachal Pradesh, with attention focused on its potential for hydropower generation, flood management and water security, alongside concerns over seismic safety, environmental effects and the possible displacement of local communities.

BJP Questions INDIA Bloc Unity Over Rahul Gandhi's Support

New Delhi, Oct 04: Agriculture and Rural Development Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Wednesday questioned the unity of the INDIA bloc after several opposition leaders were absent from its meeting, while also raising questions about support for Rahul Gandhi's leadership. His remarks came as opposition parties met to discuss their campaign against Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar over the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls.

The parties announced plans for protests and rallies seeking Kumar's resignation. Chouhan pointed to the absence of leaders including Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav and questioned the alliance's cohesion. Akhilesh was represented at the meeting, reportedly due to his involvement in the party's Rajya Sabha nominations in Lucknow.

Uddhav Thackeray and Hemant Soren joined the meeting virtually. The DMK and AAP are no longer members of the INDIA bloc but have agreed to support the opposition's petition in Parliament seeking the Chief Election Commissioner's removal. Chouhan also criticised the planned protests against the Election Commission, describing them as an attempt to frame an explanation for a possible electoral setback. He further questioned Rahul Gandhi's position within the opposition alliance and the Congress, referring to Gandhi's reported remarks at a Congress Working Committee meeting about seeking acceptance of his leadership.

Meghalaya SIR: BLOs will visit voters' homes; final electoral roll now due on October 26

Shillong, Sep 04: Electors who have received alerts regarding unmapped entries or anomalies in the electoral roll will no longer be required to visit election offices for hearings under new voter facilitation measures announced by the Election Commission of India (ECI). Under the current Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, Booth Level Officers will visit the homes of concerned electors, gather the necessary papers, and submit them to the ECINet platform for review by the Electoral Registration Officer. A hearing will be required only in extreme situations, as assessed by the ERO, and such hearings will preferable take place online. Where a hearing is necessary, an elector can authorise an adult family member to attend on their behalf. The District Election Officers (DEOs) have also been asked to set up help desks and organise special camps, where required, to assist people living in night shelters, labourers, economically disadvantaged persons, homeless people and others who may need support during the revision process. The final publication of Meghalaya's electoral roll has also been extended to October 26, 2026, according to the ECI's September 30 press note. The Meghalaya Election Department said that 6,06,939 of the 6,51,735 notices issued under the SIR process had been completed as of October 1, accounting for 93.13 per cent of the cases. Of the 21,69,243 electors included in the Draft Electoral Roll, notices were issued to 6,51,735 people. These comprised 2,22,786 no-mapping cases and 4,28,949 cases involving mapping discrepancies. So far, 1,194 electors have been found ineligible for inclusion in the Final Electoral Roll following the prescribed process, while 19,71,723 electors have been kept for final publication. The department also received and digitised 23,259 forms during the revision, including 12,624 Form 6 applications, 1,616 Form 7 applications, 1,590 Form 8 applications for shifting and 7,429 Form 8 applications for corrections. Political parties have appointed 1,814 Booth Level Agents across Meghalaya to participate in the revision process. The Election Department has asked electors who have received notices to cooperate with BLOs and provide the required documents when contacted. It has also advised all electors to check their names in the Final Electoral Roll once it is published.

North East Chronicle

Reflections on life's subtle lessons

There was a time when the ringing of a telephone could make a whole room stop for a moment. I grew up in a remote village where our house had no telephone connection. My aunt's house had one, and whenever we went there, that telephone became a centre of attraction. We would wait for it to ring, listen to people talking and watch with curiosity as voices travelled from somewhere we could not see. Sometimes, we would call a friend whose house had a telephone connection. The calls were short, but the excitement lasted longer. That simple instrument became part of our childhood memories. Looking back, what feels precious is not the telephone itself, but the way we experienced life around it. We noticed it because it was not always there. Once the conversation ended, the receiver went back in its place, and we returned to whatever we had been doing. There were no notifications demanding attention or endless streams of information competing for our time. We talked, played, read, wandered around or sat together. Life had more empty spaces, and perhaps those spaces were not empty at all.

Today, that telephone has become a smartphone capable of bringing almost the entire world into our hands. It helps us work, study, communicate, travel, read, listen to music, take photographs and stay connected with people thousands of kilometres away. Technology has made life easier. The real question is whether we are still using the phone or whether the phone has quietly begun using our time. The biggest change may be in our attention. We can sit across a table from someone we love while looking at a screen. We may know what is happening in another country or what a stranger has posted online, yet fail to notice that the person beside us has something important to say. We can be connected to hundreds of people and still miss the conversation that mattered most that day. Distance does not always begin with separation. Sometimes, it begins when we stop paying attention.Relationships need time, but they need presence even more. A parent may be sitting in the next room, a child may be waiting to tell us something, a friend may need to share a worry, or a loved one may simply want to talk about an ordinary day. None of these moments comes with a notification or becomes a photograph. Yet years later, these may be the moments we remember most clearly. We rarely regret missing one more message; we are more likely to regret not being fully present with someone who mattered.

Something similar has happened with photographs. We can now capture almost everything-a meal, a journey, a sunset, a birthday, a family gathering and countless ordinary moments. Photographs let us revisit the past, but sometimes, in trying to capture a moment perfectly, we forget to experience it. I sometimes think we have become photographers of our own lives when what we really need to be is participants in them. We watch a beautiful sunset through a camera screen, thinking about the picture we will keep, instead of simply standing there and allowing the evening to become a memory. We attend an occasion but think about how it will look to others. We travel somewhere beautiful while dividing our attention between the place before us and the screen. Some of the most precious memories of our lives may never have a photograph. There may be no picture of the evening when a parent sat beside us and talked about life, no photograph of the friend who arrived when we needed company, and no recording of a child's laughter that suddenly made the whole house feel lighter. Yet these moments can remain more alive than hundreds of photographs stored on a phone. The phone has a gallery. So does the heart. The difference is that the heart does not measure memories in megabytes. We have also started to feel that an experience becomes more meaningful when other people can see it. A beautiful meal needs a photograph, a journey needs a post, and an achievement can feel incomplete without public approval. Slowly, we begin living the experience and its imagined version for an audience. But life does not need an audience to have meaning. Some of our happiest evenings will never be posted. Some deep conversations will leave no digital record. Some acts of kindness will never receive a like. That does not make them less valuable. Some moments become more beautiful precisely because they belong only to us and the people with whom we shared them. So, perhaps, life is asking us for something very simple: look up sometimes. Listen when someone speaks. Stay a little longer at the dinner table. Let a beautiful evening pass without feeling the need to prove that it happened. Keep some memories only for yourself. Give your attention to the people and moments that will matter when the screen is finally switched off. Because one day, the notifications will stop, the scrolling will end and the photographs will become memories themselves. What will matter then will not be how much of our life we managed to record, but how much of it we actually felt.

Flipping public opinion on the triple lock was Burnham magic

Here is rare clearcut proof of the power of political persuasion. Party conference speeches, the lifeblood of political obsessives, rarely reach the public beyond a brief news clip. But this time was different. Andy Burnham's speech spun the dial on public opinion on several political hot potatoes, defining who he is. The pensions triple lock, which guarantees that pensions rise faster than average incomes, has been a no-go electoral minefield despite a groundswell of economists (and even a Times leader) calling for reform to prevent pensions skyrocketing. Touching this live rail was an act of bravery – or recklessness. Polls over the years strongly supported the lock: a Persuasion UK poll this week found 65% in favour of keeping it, more among over-65s. A Times YouGov poll this month went as high as 93% of pension-age people defending it. So the sudden change in public opinion after the speech has been astonishing. YouGov now reports that 48% support the Burnham plan, with just 28% against. Survation finds 64% backing it with only 15% against. The magic was linking reform of the lock with creating a national care service. Never mind that it barely begins to cover the cost, it makes an emotional link between the two policies. I can't think of any other conference speech that reversed public opinion on such a sensitive policy. Kemi Badenoch's Tories protested that it was just "robbing Peter to pay Paul", while Nigel Farage's party vowed, "Reform UK will always protect our pensioners and maintain the triple lock." Both are out of touch with the public (at least, for now). But this is only week one on a long and winding journey to 2030, when plans for the triple lock and a national care service have appeared in the next Labour manifesto – and fickle voters have reelected a Labour government.

When the world so often turns upside down in the blink of an eye (Burnham keeps reminding himself he is the seventh PM in a decade), 2030 can feel light years away. We don't yet know what a national care service is. But the most moving and easiest to implement promise in Burnham's speech is to improve the lives and status of care workers like those he watched looking after his father: "Caring for other people's parents on poverty pay, but doing it with huge skill, humour and humanity." He pledged, "I promise you, I won't leave this job without doing everything I can to change things for you." Starmer's fair-pay agreement for care workers is already on its way, to be agreed between trade unions and employers. Yvette Cooper, the health secretary, this week announced the first national pension scheme for care workers. Next, they need training, pay and career ladders the same as NHS healthcare assistants, merging the two together. But the rest of Burnham's "landmark policy as significant as the creation of the NHS itself" looks perplexingly difficult. He promised "care that is about people, not profit", but Margaret Thatcher privatised care, breaking it into fragments by denying central funds to any council keeping its own service. There are now about 19,000 organisations providing adult care in England, some big, most small, some good, some pretty terrible, some voluntary, many understaffed. In theory, they are inspected by the regulator, but the Care Quality Commission, knowing the shortage of beds and services, sets a low bar in standards. Could that be in-sourced? But here's the biggest conundrum of all. Who pays for social care goes right to the heart of social justice and fair taxation. Currently, most people in England already have their care paid for by the state, because they have less than £23,250 in savings and no property that is not lived in by a partner. But 23% of people in England who get at-home care and 37% of those in residential care are self-funders. Between them, they pay £14bn a year. Burnham seemed to imply they would be relieved of that burden, NHS style – but if so, that would be a whopping £14bn given to better-off elderly people, paid for by taxpayers. That's unthinkably expensive and unfair to younger working people, a generation with less income and less property. So it won't and shouldn't happen. Instead, as hastily explained afterwards, self-payers will only get their care paid for, but they will still pay for their bed and board in care homes – as in Scotland, where standard weekly costs of about £1,000 are mitigated by the state contributing £260 for care. Burnham said that people should no longer lose their homes to pay care costs; they still do in Scotland. And rightly. Only 21% of people think the state should pay for it all, regardless of the recipient's wealth, according to a King's Fund survey.

Keeping an empty home to pass on as inheritance is not something the state should subsidise, when every spare penny is needed to pay for better social care. More than 400,000 are on official care waiting lists in England, while Age UK says 2 million older people have unmet care needs, putting a huge burden on families. Burnham himself talked of the miserably inadequate 15-minute homecare visits. Meanwhile, the NHS desperately needs a better care service to save the 13,000 beds a day filled with those waiting for a care package. At any one time, few people use social care, so few understand the system, according to the King's Fund. Simon Bottery, who leads its work on adult social care, says, "Frailty and dementia in later life are issues that most people just don't want to think about until they really need to." But it's about to become a hot political battleground, with its fiendish complexities and its difficult moral and political choices. When problems look insoluble, the last five prime ministers have summoned the great troubleshooter Louise Casey. She reports next year on what should be done.

Releasing prisoners won't solve the crisis in English and Welsh jails

The flipchart in the corner of the staff meeting room, deep inside a prison in the south-east of England, tells its own story about what our overcrowded jails are having to deal with, day in day out. Under the heading "Challenges", it lists gangs, the destruction of cells, prisoners exploiting each other and complex behaviours. Committed, hard-working staff talk about the high levels of psychosis, often combined with drug abuse. They provide examples of people actually committing crimes to go back into jail to get some respite from their chaotic, dysfunctional lives. To tackle the current prisons crisis in England and Wales, planned changes to sentencing will see almost 2,000 people released early from Thursday and over the following month. It is the first tranche of the estimated 5,000 releases that will take place in phases over the coming year. This will address the immediate crisis, but by the government's own admission it is not a permanent fix. If it wants to ensure that the new approach to early releases does not need to be further accelerated, wider reforms will be needed across the system. As a first step, we need to address the staggering increase in people recalled to prison.

The power that probation officers have to send someone back behind bars plays an important role in protecting the public, but with recall now accounting for one in seven of the prison population compared with one in 13 a decade ago, it is neither sustainable nor effective. Cases of people being recalled for missing probation appointments because transport was delayed or for moving out of their accommodation to get away from drug dealers and gangs, are too often punished with a return to custody. A justice secretary under the last Labour government tells me it's a ludicrous approach that must change if prisons aren't going to stagger from crisis to crisis. Second, we need to focus on the probation service. It is critical to fixing prisons and too often undervalued. Today it is a long way from its original social-work ethos to advise, assist and befriend those once described as clients but now always labelled offenders. The focus is much more on surveillance and compliance. Consecutive reports by the Chief Inspector of Prisons during the last two weeks reveal how, after years of being run down, the service is struggling to get the basics right.

Electronic tags are a critical and expanding part of supervision on release from custody, but the inspector found the "systems, processes and frontline practice needed to make it effective have not kept pace".

The standard of probation work is not consistently what it should be, with staff shortages, poor information sharing and gaps in the capability of probation officers to keep people safe. The government is committed to recruiting thousands more probation staff and to improving practice but, faced with people who have a complex mix of needs and behaviours, a more person-centred approach closer to the profession's social-work roots is needed. Those coming out of custody whom we work with say they want probation officers to get alongside them and build trusting relationships so they can get their lives back on track. We need to be more open with the public. Prisons and probation are there to keep the public safe, but to do that, ministers need to be much more transparent about the importance of rehabilitation as well as punishment. The justice secretary's speech to Labour conference this week started this, but far too many are still leaving prison to commit further offences because the system does not provide the drug treatment, access to employment, training and education – and then stable accommodation on release – that will help turn them away from crime.

The fact that half of those rough sleeping in England and Wales have spent time in prison is a stark reminder of what's not working. The services need connecting. Fixing this cannot be achieved by the justice system alone. Public bodies from the NHS to local councils have a role to play in giving people the support they need to stay out of prison.

Electoral reform could be a gamble too far for Burnham – but so far he's on a winning streak

Anumber of people have admitted to tears during Andy Burnham's Labour party conference speech, and most of them mean when he talked about his father, who died very recently. But then there were a few (not me) who welled up when he announced a commission on electoral reform. It was just the sheer shock of it: that we may finally have a prime minister who will follow through on his own long-held beliefs and remain loyal to his long-term support base, even if it makes him avoidable enemies and, medium-term, destroys Labour's only-trodden path to victory. It felt a bit like slipping through time, and I couldn't even tell you to when (definitely not the 1990s). Burnham's support for proportional representation has always been extremely unusual for a Labour politician. To this day, he ascribes that to his experience of winning an election as mayor of Greater Manchester on a supplementary votes system, where people get to choose a first- and second-preference candidate. He said that campaigning under that system "finally aligned the conversation on the door with what people want from politics, which is about problem-solving first and foremost, not about point-scoring". He went a bit further this morning, asking Nick Robinson on the Today programme: "Can we really watch a party with less than 30% walk into Downing Street?" Plainly, he was talking about the spectre of a Reform government, and it's that very context that makes this already difficult constitutional conversation even more vexed. Back in May, the all-party parliamentary group for fair elections held a meeting to discuss the aftermath of the local elections. It feels like a long time ago, and furthermore, so different in atmosphere as to be irrelevant to the prime minister, but 2020s politics are defined by their switchblade turns. In the matter of constitutional reform, the overriding priority has to be to build a system that's fair across a range of imaginable scenarios, not just the one in front of you.

The locals delivered great results for Reform, and satisfactory ones for the Liberal Democrats, which reflected the realities of a first-past-the-post (FPTP) system – first, it rewards the winner, and second, it rewards geographical concentration. Labour walked away from the 2024 general election with 63% of the seats on 34% of the votes, the largest overrepresentation ever. The Greens have spent years commanding the fervent support of a geographically diffuse but not insignificant minority, with almost nothing to show for it in parliamentary terms. The distortions of FPTP have been well-known for years, but historically they were only ever discussed in terms of the barrier to entry they presented to insurgent parties, and the democratic deficit they constituted to any voter who didn't live in a marginal seat, which is to say the majority of voters. So the counter-arguments were that, for all its flaws, by keeping out insurgents, the traditional voting system kept out extremists: and who wouldn't sacrifice a little bit (or a huge amount) of democracy, for the sake of steadiness? Stability was the first myth to fall, when it transpired, over the past 10 years, that you can keep on returning one of two main parties as reliably as you like, and they will have no problem confecting so much intra-party turmoil that you might as well have voted for the Monster Raving Loony party. The efficacy of FPTP in keeping out extremists, meanwhile, was – like a stock market bubble – true until it wasn't. Once politics has fragmented, the system rewards short bursts of popularity with potentially very long periods of power.

That has a toxic effect on the supposedly sober heads of the political centre who, once they see extreme, often bigoted, positions pay off in the polls, steer straight towards them. The best prophylactic against extremism is not a gamified voting system but some political backbone. Undoubtedly in response to all that, public attitudes to proportional representation have changed enormously, hitting an all-time high of 60% support last year. In 2011 it was 27%. To return to that meeting in May, there was one more finding from the local elections: once you start to lose, under FPTP, you lose calamitously. So the obvious solution, to a room full of already fully committed constitutional reformer MPs, was for the next prime minister to change the system, right? Psephologists John Curtice and Prof Tim Bale sounded the warning: you can't change the rules just because you're losing. The point was so self-evident, from such trusted sources, that all the air seemed to leave the room. But four months on, Labour is ahead in the polls, Reform's support is tailing off and seems to have further to fall. Far more importantly, this week Burnham showed himself prepared to have a thorny, inconvenient debate that wouldn't necessarily even serve his political interests, and even if it did, would certainly disperse his power, because he believes in his cause and does so persuasively. So he doesn't look like he's losing.

Broken borders: how the Iraq war fractured a region

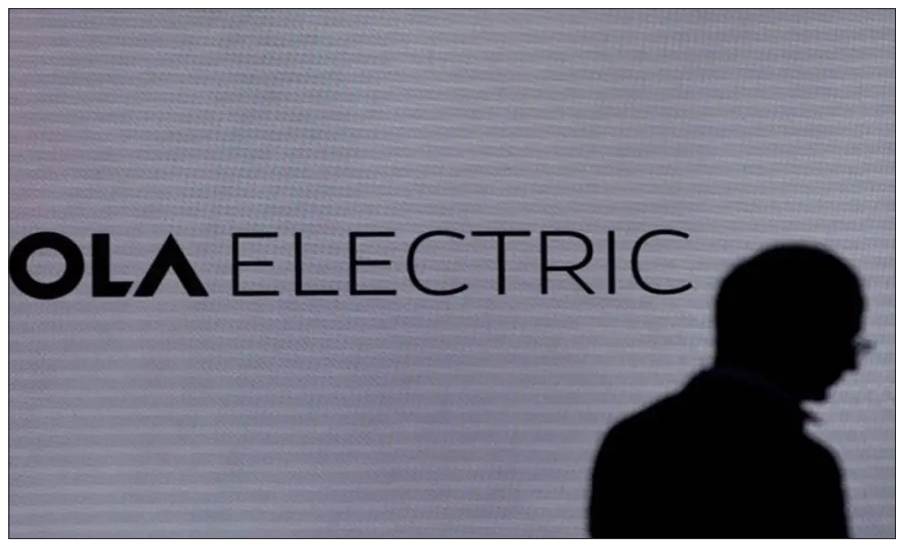
They came. They ruined. They handed us back to the same old enemies. This is how a war supposedly fought for security can end: with a country left carrying the consequences long after the soldiers who invaded it have gone.

Twenty-five years after September 11, 2001, the American-led wars in Afghanistan and Iraq offer a record of military intervention that is impossible to separate from the destruction of institutions, displacement, sectarian violence and the weakening of societies supposedly being protected. Brown University's Costs of War project estimates that the post-9/11 wars produced between 4.5 million and 4.7 million direct and indirect deaths and displaced more than 38 million people. Iraq remains the clearest example of how quickly the promise of security can become a prolonged political and human disaster.The 2003 invasion was justified through the claim that Saddam Hussein possessed weapons of mass destruction and represented an urgent danger. The weapons were not found. The Iraq Survey Group did not discover an active Iraqi WMD stockpile, while later official investigations exposed serious failures in the intelligence used to support the pre-war case. Saddam's dictatorship and his previous use of chemical weapons were real. What collapsed was the proposition that Iraq possessed the active WMD capability used to justify the invasion. Yet the war went ahead, and the United States then faced the far more difficult question of what would replace the state it had destroyed. The occupation did not simply remove Saddam Hussein while preserving Iraq's governmental machinery. Coalition Provisional Authority Order No. 1 imposed sweeping de-Ba'athification, while Order No. 2 dissolved the Iraqi military and other state institutions. These were occupation decisions, not inevitable consequences of removing Saddam. The dissolution of the army was especially consequential. Hundreds of thousands of trained personnel suddenly lost employment, authority and their place in the new state. Not all had been committed Ba'athists. Many had joined the army as a profession.

Manufacturing Sector Gains Momentum on Higher Output, Job Growth

New Delhi: India's private manufacturing sector recorded a stronger performance in September, with activity reaching a seven-month high as new orders, production and employment improved, according to a private survey released on Thursday. The HSBC India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) climbed to 55.1 in September from 52.8 in August. Despite the monthly improvement, the average PMI for the second quarter of FY27 was 53.8, marking its weakest level since the corresponding quarter of 2021.The final September reading, which takes into account new orders, output, employment, supplier delivery times and purchasing inventories, was marginally below the flash estimate of 55.7 released last month. A PMI reading above 50 indicates expansion, while a reading below that level points to contraction. The latest figure marked the 59th consecutive month of growth in manufacturing activity and was the strongest reading since February, when the index stood at 56.9. HSBC Chief India Economist Pranjul Bhandari said the manufacturing sector closed the quarter on a stronger note, supported by an improvement in domestic and international demand. She added that hiring increased at its fastest rate since May, while manufacturers reported greater optimism about the outlook. The survey showed that stronger demand contributed to the fastest increase in factory output in four months. New business expanded at a faster pace, with manufacturers reporting increased demand for electronics, food, pharmaceutical and textile products. New export orders also accelerated, with respondents citing stronger demand from Brazil, Europe, the UAE and the US. Among the major categories, intermediate goods recorded the most significant improvement, leading growth in both new orders and output. Capital goods, meanwhile, recorded comparatively modest gains, with growth slowing from August. Employment also recovered after declining in August. The pace of job creation during September was the strongest recorded since May. Manufacturers faced higher input costs during the month, with respondents citing increased prices for electronic components, pharmaceutical products and steel. Input cost inflation accelerated from August but remained below its long-term average. Selling prices also increased at a faster pace, although the rate remained below the historical trend. Cost pressures were strongest among intermediate goods producers and comparatively lower in the capital goods segment. Consumer goods manufacturers recorded the sharpest increase in selling prices. Manufacturers also increased purchases of raw materials and accumulated inventories in anticipation of stronger future sales. The survey noted that stocks of finished goods recorded their second-highest increase in almost 12 years, indicating a notable move away from previously lean inventory levels.

Bhavish Aggarwal pledges 4.32% stake for OLA rights issue



New Delhi: Ola Electric promoter Bhavish Aggarwal has pledged a 4.32% stake in the electric two-wheeler maker to fund his subscription to the company's proposed ₹1,000-crore rights issue, the Bengaluru-based company said in an exchange filing.

The pledge is solely to fund Aggarwal's subscription to the rights issue and there are no other pledges on his securities currently, the company said. "No shares are being sold. The promoter will invest alongside all other shareholders on the same terms," it added. Aggarwal and the promoter group together held 32.97% of Ola Electric as of June 2026. Aggarwal individually holds 1.23 billion equity shares, representing 26.52% of the company. At Friday's closing price of ₹37.08, Ola Electric's market capitalisation stood at ₹17,162.14 crore. The 4.32% stake pledged by Aggarwal has a market value of approximately ₹741 crore at the prevailing market price. The value of the pledged shares, however, should not be construed as the amount Aggarwal will subscribe to in the rights issue as the company is yet to announce the rights issue price, entitlement ratio, record date, timing and payment schedule.

Ola Electric's board last week approved a rights issue of up to ₹1,000 crore. According to the Draft Letter of Offer, around ₹350 crore of the proceeds will be used for repayment or prepayment of debt, while ₹400 crore will be allocated towards organic growth initiatives. The remaining amount will be used for general corporate purposes. The latest fundraise comes just months after Ola Electric raised ₹780 crore through a qualified institutional placement in June, which was part of the ₹1,500 crore fundraise approved last year.

The latest fundraising comes at a crucial juncture for Ola Electric, which has been grappling with weak sales and loss of market share, even as rivals TVS Motor, Bajaj Auto and Ather Energy as well as the larger electric two-wheeler industry continue to report record volumes.

RBI governor warns: current resilience doesn't mean immunity

Mumbai : Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Sanjay Malhotra on Saturday cautioned against complacency over the strength of the Indian financial system, saying that "today's resilience may not necessarily imply tomorrow's immunity", as new risks emerge from geopolitical shocks, elevated global debt, stretched artificial intelligence-related valuations and cyber threats. "Overall, therefore, the Indian financial system is assessed to be very resilient, supported by healthy balance sheets of banks and NBFIs," Malhotra said at the Kautilya Economic Conclave. "At the same time, I would like to mention that today's resilience may not necessarily imply tomorrow's immunity."

Malhotra said prolonged periods of financial stability can themselves encourage greater risk-taking and leverage. "Fading memories of past crises can weaken the appetite for prudence," he said, adding that while he did not see "any imminent signs of stress", there was a need to remain alert to risks. He identified five major global financial stability risks elevated

global debt, stretched asset valuations particularly around AI, high leverage, private credit and cyber risks compounded by AI. On AI, Malhotra warned that any slowdown in investment or earnings as the investment cycle matures could trigger a sharp repricing of financial assets, particularly those linked to the AI value chain. Higher leverage, along with declining cash flows among major AI firms, could amplify market corrections and volatility. Cyber risk was the "most immediate concern", he said, as sophisticated AI tools with greater autonomy and problem-solving capabilities heighten cyber and model risks, third-party dependence and the erosion of human oversight. "Each of these five risks individually…may not be a matter of concern as of now, but simultaneous occurrence of these shocks can put significant pressure on the global financial architecture," Malhotra said.

India, however, was navigating the current environment from a "position of strength", he said. Banks' common equity tier-1 ratios remain comfortable even under adverse scenarios, while NBFCs have average capital adequacy of over 25%, against the regulatory requirement of 15%. Malhotra outlined five priorities for policymakers to safeguard financial stability. First, policymakers must accept that shocks are inevitable and focus on building a financial system capable of absorbing them. Second, they need to prepare for a new generation of systemic risks that are increasingly cross-border and interconnected. "The next financial crisis may not originate in a bank or even in the world of finance," he said. "It may begin with a geopolitical event, a cyberattack, or a technological failure that affects the financial system through multiple channels."

Third, monitoring and assessment frameworks need to improve through better and more granular data, particularly on NBFIs, interconnected exposures, technology and cross-border positions. Fourth, resilience must extend beyond banks to financial markets, payment systems, technology infrastructure providers and critical third parties. Fifth, innovation must strengthen rather than fragment trust in the financial system. Responding to questions, Malhotra said the hardening of global bond yields reflected higher government spending and private investment, including AI-led spending, amid scarce money. While monetary policy remains primarily driven by domestic growth-inflation dynamics, global interest rates could have implications for interest rates and real rates in India, he said.

Sensex falls 1,671 points in eighth week of losses

Mumbai: The Indian equity market extended its corrective phase for the eighth consecutive week, with benchmark indices ending sharply lower amid sustained foreign fund outflows, rising crude oil prices and weak global cues.

The bearish sentiment persisted throughout the week. The Sensex fell 1.52 per cent on Monday and continued to witness losses over the following sessions before dropping another 0.79 per cent on Thursday. Overall, the 30-share index lost 1,670.84 points during the week, while the Nifty declined more than 3 per cent. On Thursday, the Sensex and Nifty closed lower for the fourth straight session as persistent selling by foreign institutional investors (FIIs), elevated bond yields and a fresh rise in crude oil prices weighed on investor sentiment.

The Sensex fell 570.59 points, or 0.79 per cent, to settle at 71,909.70. During intra-day trade, it plunged as much as 1,187.41 points to touch a fresh 52-week low of 71,292.88. The Nifty dropped 198.50 points, or 0.88 per cent, to close at 22,421.95.Despite the prevailing weakness, market experts said technical indicators point to the possibility of a short-term recovery.

Market experts said the Sensex remains below its key moving averages, with the index trading under the 50-day exponential moving average (EMA) of 75,544.56 and the 200-day EMA of 77,684.60. "The immediate support zone for the index is placed between 71,000 and 71,200, while resistance is likely to emerge in the 72,300-72,500 range," analysts stated. Analysts said that while the broader market structure remains weak, oversold readings and the proximity of important support levels could help the indices stage a relief rally in the near term.

Market watchers said traders may consider a hedged approach as market conditions remain volatile. "Participants may adopt a hedged approach, with 22,800 as the initial upside target, followed by 23,100-23,200. A decisive break below the April low could negate the rebound possibility and drag the index towards 21,700-22,000," market watchers stated. Analysts said the market's near-term direction will largely depend on global cues, crude oil prices, bond yield movements and the trend in foreign institutional investor activity.

Jio platforms to target ₹12 trillion valuation in October IPO

New Delhi: Digital services major Jio Platforms is likely to get listed by the end of this month at an enterprise valuation of $143-146 billion or above ₹12 trillion, sources tracking the development said.

Jio Platforms IPO is touted as India's largest public offer at an estimated size of $3.8 billion.The company has concluded overseas roadshows and is expected to file final papers with market regulator SEBI for the initial public offering in the week starting October 12, banking and other sources who did not wish to be identified.

"Based on interest received from overseas roadshows, Jio Platforms is likely to list at a base enterprise valuation of $143-146 billion or at least ₹12 trillion by end of this month," one of the banking sources said. The overseas roadshows held in the US, UK, Dubai, Hong Kong and Singapore were led by Jio Platforms Managing Director and Reliance Jio Chairman Akash Ambani and Reliance Retail Ventures Limited Executive Director Isha Ambani.

One of the event vendors said that JPL is expected to hold a roadshow for the IPO in India in the week starting October 12 after filing the red herring prospectus. According to banking sources, Jio Platforms is expected to start an anchor round before Dussehra and the issue is expected to open post-Dussehra before October 23.

"The company is expected to list on the stock exchange by the end of this month," the source said.The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) issued its final observations on August 28. Jio Platforms had filed its draft IPO papers in June.According to its draft prospectus, the company plans to issue up to 27 crore fresh equity shares, equivalent to about 2.9 per cent of its post-issue equity base.

Sources have indicated that the company may raise around $3.8 billion from the offer.The public offering comes as India's primary market has remained active, with strong participation from retail investors and domestic institutions. More than two dozen IPOs have been announced or launched since July 1, nearly matching the 28 recorded in the first half of 2026.

Jio Platforms houses Reliance's digital businesses, including its telecommunications operations.Reliance Jio Infocomm, the telecom arm of JPL, dominates the Indian telecom market with a 32.89 per cent market share in fixed-line connections, serving 157.9 million customers, and a 39.29 per cent share in mobile connections, with 506 million customers.

IBBI proposes insolvency pros for failed bank liquidations

Mumbai: Bank liquidation needs to be handled by insolvency professionals (IPs) under the supervision of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC), according to an Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) study.

At present, IPs do not handle failed banks under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), as banks are outside the Code's corporate insolvency framework. Instead, bank failures are dealt with under banking laws with RBI, DICGC and the relevant registrar playing different roles. Liquidators are appointed under the existing bank liquidation framework. The study has recommended bringing IBBI-certified IPs into bank liquidation. They would manage the failed bank's remaining assets, while RBI and DICGC would retain oversight. The proposal would still not bring banks fully under the IBC, the study stated.

"One key recommendation is to integrate IPs into the bank liquidation framework. This would involve appointing IBBI-certified professionals to administer bank liquidations under the guidance of RBI/DICGC, without bringing banks fully under the IBC," it said . The study added that such a move can be achieved through "regulatory changes or minor legislative amendments and would inject much-needed expertise and accountability into the system."

Experts said the proposed role for IPs could help strengthen the liquidation process, provided they have expertise in the regulations governing the financial sector."While financial service providers are outside the purview of the IBC, where liquidation is envisaged, it would be prudent to appoint an insolvency professional with expertise in the regulations governing that sector," said Devendra Mehta, fellow, INSOL International.

"Bringing insolvency professionals into the liquidation process could improve the recovery of bank loans and other assets after insured depositors have been paid," said an insolvency expert.Further, the study noted that more than 97% of depositors in failed banks now get their money from DICGC in a timely manner. As per rules, deposits are insured up to Rs 5 lakh per depositor.

But it has also identified the next stage as a problem. "However, the resolution of the failed bank's remaining affairs essentially, maximising recovery from the bank's assets and minimising losses to the insurance fund and uninsured creditors – remains an Achilles' heel," the study said. Once DICGC pays insured depositors, it becomes a creditor of the failed bank. It then has to recover the money from the bank's remaining assets.

The study referred to the Punjab & Maharashtra Co-operative Bank (PMC Bank) crisis as one example. PMC Bank had assets of more than Rs 10,000 crore when it collapsed in 2019 after a major fraud came to light. It was later merged with Unity Small Finance Bank. DICGC paid Rs 3,791.6 crore towards PMC Bank's insured deposits. Subsequently, DICGC carried the risk of recovering money from PMC Bank's assets, including its loans and collateral. Madhavpura Bank was also cited as an example, with the report noting that an IP serving as liquidator might have brought clearer timelines and asset-resolution strategies, potentially leading to better recoveries for DICGC and other creditors.

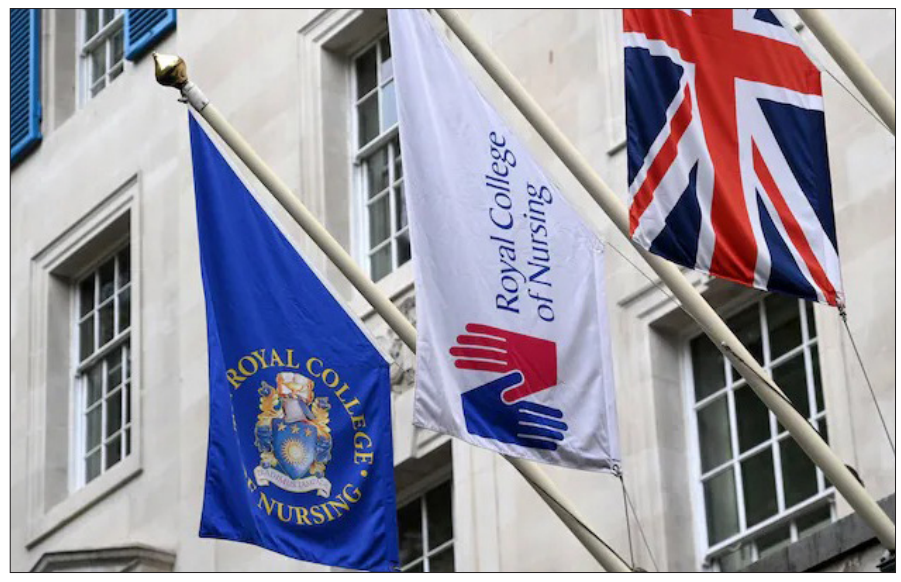
The German town where the right has banned new 'stumbling stones' for Nazi victims

London: The town hall of Heidenau, Germany has a freshly restored cream-coloured facade, tidy flower boxes on the windowsills and a charming shingled clock-tower. At the entrance, closer inspection reveals a single brass plaque embedded in the pavement honouring the former mayor Paul Gröger, whom the Nazis hounded into killing himself. The plaque is one of 128,000 Stolpersteine (stumbling stones) across Europe, a donor-funded project keeping alive the memory of individual victims of the Nazi era. It is by some measure considered the world's biggest grassroots memorial project, and has become an integral part of Germany's "remembrance culture" for the atrocities committed under Adolf Hitler. But last week at the same town hall, the council of Heidenau voted to halt the laying of future stumbling stones. In a decision that drew a national outcry, the far-right Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) party joined forces with the conservative Christian Democratic Union (CDU) of Germany's chancellor, Friedrich Merz, to help form the majority. "They want to drive the victims' memory out of the city centre, just like the victims themselves were driven out," said Anne Nitschke of AKuBiZ, a citizens' group coupling history education with pro-democracy work in Saxony state, a hotbed of rightwing extremism. "The point of the Stolpersteine is that you stumble across them every day and then think about who lived here and who was forced to leave," said Nitschke, 40. Her organisation had filed for permission to lay another 12 plaques for Holocaust victims, until the Heidenau council stopped them. The vote came in a month in which the anti-immigrant, pro-Kremlin AfD widened a lead at the top of the national polls, won two state elections and performed strongly in a third, in the capital, Berlin. Like the other mainstream parties, Merz's CDU has ruled out cooperation with the far right in a stance known as the "firewall". But political realities have often made the AfD an unavoidable partner in municipal policymaking, particularly in the former communist east. Supporters of the stumbling stones ban criticised that their placement on the ground meant they were walked on and exposed to the elements. They called for a "memorial space" in a Christian cemetery north of town "for the victims of war, terrorism, dictators and forced displacement".

Nitschke noted that the council had not made any plans or committed funding for such an endeavour, and said the broad spectrum cited served to deny the "singularity of the Holocaust". Merz's national CDU referred queries to the Heidenau chapter, which did not respond to a request for comment. The AfD began as a Eurosceptic party 13 years ago and has morphed into an increasingly nationalist force. It has long targeted memory culture as detrimental to patriotism. One of its founders, Alexander Gauland, compared the Nazi period to a "speck of bird shit in over 1,000 years of successful German history". The Saxony-Anhalt chapter, which won a record 44% of the vote in September, pledged to "liberate" Germans from shame over the Holocaust while offering "more Bismarck, less Hitler" in schools.

And the part's co-leader, Alice Weidel, falsely called the Nazi leader "a communist, socialist guy" in a campaign appearance with Elon Musk last year. (The tech billionaire told AfD supporters at the event there was "frankly too much of a focus on past guilt" in Germany.) Many residents of the town said they supported the Stolpersteine and were sceptical of the councillors' motives. "Why would they have anything against the Stolpersteine? It's easy enough to walk around them if you don't want to step on them," said Christine Bauer, 85, who uses a rolling walker to move about town."I'm a child of the war and remember its awful aftermath," said Bauer, who worked on Elbe river ships until she retired. "It's not as if the town council didn't have bigger problems to worry about now," she added, mentioning affordability.

Royal College of Nursing cuts ties with Israeli drug company



New York: : Britain's nursing union has cut its ties with an Israeli drug company over the firm's links to the country's military and track record of corporate misconduct. The Royal College of Nursing (RCN) has axed Teva UK as a commercial partner and as sponsor of a forthcoming event on migraine and headaches at the union's London headquarters. Pro-Palestine groups who were pushing the RCN to drop Teva UK claimed the decision was "a major breakthrough for grassroots healthcare organising and the international boycott, divestment and sanctions movement" aimed at isolating Israel worldwide. The RCN represents more than 500,000 nurses in the UK. Teva UK is the British arm of the global drug giant Teva Pharmaceuticals, which is one of the NHS's biggest suppliers of medicines. It acted after coming under pressure from campaign groups Nurses for Palestine and UK Healthcare Petitions to Royal Colleges (UKHPRC) to end its relationship with Teva UK. Carmel O'Boyle, the chair of the RCN's ruling council, confirmed the decision in a letter to Nurses for Palestine. "Going forward [the] RCN is ending its commercial partnership with Teva UK. Teva UK will no longer be a sponsor of the RCNi nursing leadership summit: migraine and headache services event on 30 October 2026. The event will go ahead as planned," she said. "We are taking this action because further due diligence showed that there are a number of Teva Pharmaceuticals' operations, which have been the subject of legal sanction and public scrutiny, which are not in line with RCNi [the union's publishing and education arm] and RCN values. "We know how important it is that the RCN only enters commercial relationships with companies that represent the values of the nursing profession." Teva said it was "disappointed" at the RCN's decision and that healthcare had been "politicised". Nurses for Palestine welcomed the move. "Teva has no place sponsoring professional bodies dedicated to healing, care and preserving human life," a spokesperson said. UKHPRC said: "It is unthinkable that in this day and age healthcare organisations continue to enter into commercial relationships with companies linked to sustaining state systems accused or found by international bodies to involve grave violations of international law, including crimes against humanity, apartheid and genocide." Pro-Palestine campaigners are now calling on the Royal College of Pharmacy to drop Teva UK as a sponsor of its annual conference next month and cancel the exhibition stand the firm has booked. Teva has been ordered to pay about £1bn in fines and other payments by the European Commission and US authorities over the last decade for bribery, price-fixing and abuse of its market position. In 2024 the European Commission fined Teva €462.6m for blocking rival firms from competing with Copaxone, its treatment for multiple sclerosis, in seven European countries for between four and nine years. In 2023 it agreed with the US Department of Justice to pay $225m in fines as an alternative to prosecution after it was charged with fixing the price of three drugs. And in 2016 it struck a deal with the US Securities and Exchange Commission and the US Department of Justice to pay $519m to settle civil and criminal charges involving its bribery of government officials in Russia, Ukraine and Mexico. A Teva spokesperson said: "As one of the largest suppliers of medicines to the UK we have valued our longstanding partership with the RCN and the opportunity it has provided to support healthcare professionals and the patients they care for."We are disappointed by the RCN's decision to end this relationship and are seeking further dialogue with the organisation. Healthcare is at its best when it remains focused on patients rather than being politicised."

How success of Manchester City helped put Andy Burnham in power

London: In July 2016, the Manchester City player Yaya Touré ambled into a small bar near Beijing's Workers' Stadium and offered a bemused smile as dozens of Chinese fans rushed towards him.Manchester City had just won their sixth trophy under the big-spending ownership of Sheikh Mansour's Abu Dhabi United Group and the blues were international megastars. They were also magnets for investment. On a trade mission led by Sir Howard Bernstein, the architect of modern Manchester, civic leaders rolled out club legends such as Mike Summerbee and Sun Jihai in a charm offensive to football-mad Chinese businessmen who saw that the club and the city were on the rise. A decade on, Manchester is transformed. Estate agents advertise £15,000-a-month penthouses in a city-region growing faster economically than any other in Britain, while the success of "Manchesterism" has powered its mayor, Andy Burnham, to Downing Street. Yet the city's close ties with Abu Dhabi United Group are now facing fresh scrutiny, after Manchester City's owners were found guilty of more than 100 breaches of Premier League financial rules. In a surprising intervention on Wednesday, Burnham praised Abu Dhabi United Group as "such a huge partner in the building of modern Manchester" and said he would be "really concerned" to lose them as the club's owners.

The prime minister went on to say that he would not get involved in the Premier League's disciplinary process, but appeared to express some sympathy for City's plight by referring to a similar investigation into Everton, the club he supports. Burnham's comments raised eyebrows given the continuing disciplinary process – the Premier League is considering a range of sanctions – and because it turned the spotlight on to Abu Dhabi United Group's wider investments in Greater Manchester, where he was mayor from 2017 until June this year. One Burnham ally said it was "absolutely mad" for the prime minister to comment and risk being seen to be influencing a disciplinary process, describing it as his "biggest mistake so far". In an attempt to clarify the prime minister's remarks on Thursday, a No 10 spokesperson said: "As the prime minister made clear, the initial judgment is serious and there can't be any suggestion that anyone is above the rules. He also stressed that it is an ongoing independent process. "It is essential that it is allowed to run its course and the outcome respected. Wherever wrongdoing is established, those responsible should face the appropriate consequences." When Mansour's Abu Dhabi group took over Manchester City in 2008, the grounds for success had already been laid.

Labour figures uneasy about Healey's 'underpowered' approach to budget

London: Senior Labour figures are privately voicing unease about John Healey's approach to his crucial first budget this month, against the backdrop of volatile global markets and soaring energy costs. The chancellor's work has been made significantly harder by the global bond sell-off, which continues to raise the cost of government borrowing, and ever increasing energy prices as Donald Trump continues the US war with Iran. The yield – in effect the interest rate – on 30-year UK government bonds hit 6% on Thursday for the first time since 1998. Barclays raised some of its mortgage rates for the second time in a week, underlining the impact of these market moves on UK borrowers. The chancellor's party conference speech, which centred on the theme of reindustrialisation, was warmly received by Labour members in Liverpool. But government insiders and other Labour figures cast doubt over the lack of detail about policy on investment and growth or any pitch-rolling for possible tax rises. One senior Labour politician said: "I missed any real sense of growth and investment, which Rachel [Reeves, the former chancellor] often emphasised, despite her faults – when business leaders speak to me, that's what they were waiting to hear, and we got nothing." A Labour MP lamented the fact that on tax and spending Healey had gone little further than reiterating the fiscal rules. "It was Rachel's speech delivered by John," they said. One senior Labour insider said they believed the chancellor was risking a fresh market shock on 28 October if he was not willing to be clearer about his approach to taxation, headroom and spending. Market moves since the spring are expected to have wiped out at least half of the £24bn "headroom", or buffer, Reeves had built up against Labour's fiscal rules. Healey is believed to be minded to accept a slimmer margin, but he gave no indication of his likely approach in his speech, aside from repeatedly stressing the need for discipline. Rebuilding the headroom in full could require significant tax increases or spending cuts. Prof Arun Advani, the director of the centre for the analysis of taxation at the University of Warwick, said: "The chancellor didn't give us a sense of how he's thinking about these issues. It was a speech where at the end of it we didn't come away understanding more about the direction of policy, or what he wants to do with the Treasury." There are concerns, too, about how Healey will tough out demands to say when the UK will spend 3% of GDP on defence – having resigned as defence secretary three months ago over the issue. Treasury sources stressed that Healey was intimately involved in some of Andy Burnham's significant conference announcements, with 40 officials working at the department through the weekend on the details of the triple lock pension changes. They also pointed out that the chancellor opened the door to a renewed attempt to overhaul welfare for the young unemployed – a fraught issue for Labour – and stressed his determination to present an optimistic picture of the UK economy. Healey's team are committed to avoiding the rollercoaster of leaks that happened in the run-up to Reeves's budgets, particularly last year. The Treasury team have initiated military-style "black boxes" – learned from Healey's time in the Ministry of Defence – for different teams to work within to avoid accidental leaks. They also remain committed to what one called a "tightly focused" budget, though they concede that offering voters more "breathing space" on energy costs had become more urgent. The narrow focus of the statement is expected to rule out radical changes to property and capital gains taxes previously mooted by Burnham supporters including the first secretary, Louise Haigh; though reports that Healey is calling in bank bosses next week has reignited speculation of a windfall tax on the sector. Labour MPs fear that failing to take more drastic action, particularly on surging energy prices, could leave voters nonplussed. One MP said: "The budget is only a few weeks away. He may want it to be low key but it will send a massive signal of our intent." Others are concerned that Burnham's focus on long-term issues such as social care and public ownership of utilities will suck up political airtime without helping with the immediate crisis. Alfie Stirling, the director of policy and insight at the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, said: "The focus on 'room to breathe' now, alongside the focus on taking greater control over the costs of essentials over the longer term, is the right strategy for government. But families are currently facing the worst parliament on modern record for real incomes and they simply cannot wait three years for government to grip this in the here and now." Several Labour figures pointed to Burnham's last-minute decision to appoint Healey as one factor making the chancellor's job harder, giving him little time to build up an effective team before the budget. Rav Athwal, an economist and the author of Labour's 2024 manifesto, has only just joined Healey as a senior special adviser. Reeves's chief economic adviser, Neil Amin-Smith, was poached by No 10. One Treasury insider said: "He's slow to get through his boxes and it's hard to get meetings in the diary because he needs time to prepare before each one. It all feels a bit underpowered." But another Labour figure defended him: "John got virtually no notice he was getting this job. He's not an economist. He didn't have two years in opposition to prepare. It's early days and the Treasury is there to support him. He's very capable – just give him time."

Letitia James appointed special prosecutor in alleged gang-rape at Cornell

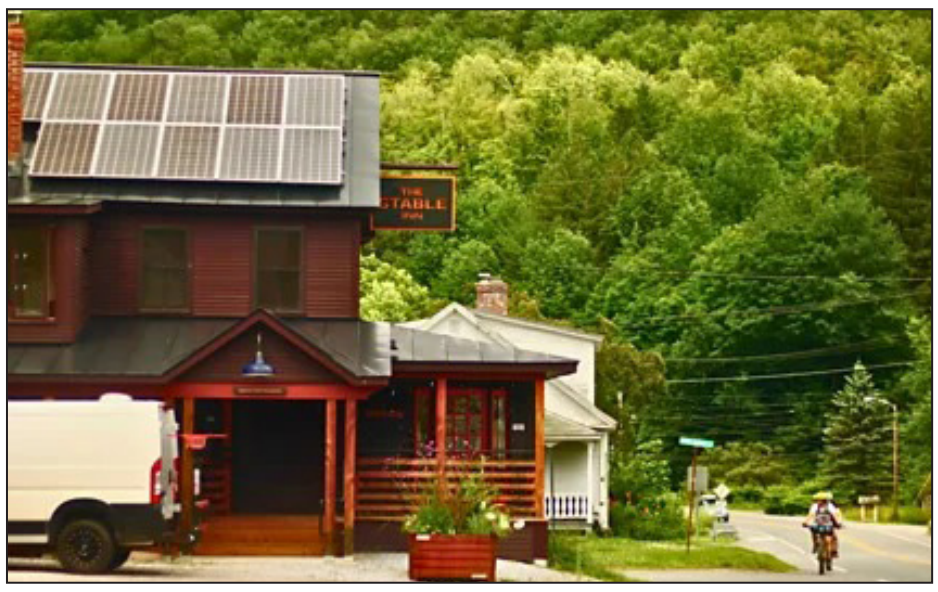
London: Kathy Hochul, the New York governor, said on Thursday she is appointing Letitia James, the state's attorney general, as special prosecutor to investigate the alleged gang-rape at Cornell University. "The young woman at the center of this case deserves to know that every fact will be examined and justice pursued," Hochul said in a statement. "This action will ensure that the matter is fully and thoroughly investigated without conflict or bias, and handled independently with the rigor that this matter demands." In her statement, Hochul said the decision by Matthew Van Houten, the Tompkins county district attorney, not to prosecute the 2024 case, and the questions raised in recent days over the Cornell police department's investigation of the allegations, have "undercut my faith, and the public's faith, in the district attorney's ability to effectively investigate and prosecute the case at this time".

Hochul said James would oversee the investigation and, if warranted, present evidence to a grand jury. The former Cornell University student who alleges she was gang-raped at a fraternity in 2024 filed a lawsuit in September, in a case that has sparked national outrage, roiled the Ivy League campus and raised questions about why no criminal case was brought. Van Houten declined at the time of the alleged assault to bring criminal charges, but this week said he would reopen the investigation based on new information in the woman's lawsuit, which identifies her only by the pseudonym Jane Doe. He has maintained that the woman's first account to police did not include allegations that she was drugged, incapacitated beyond the ability to consent or forced into sex. After CBS News this week revealed details from the police interview transcript, he told the network he'd never seen her detailed account and had relied instead on a statement written by a campus police officer and signed by the accuser. She is suing seven men whom she said perpetrated the assault, as well as the university, the fraternity and others.

Lawyers for two of the men she is suing have denied they perpetrated a sexual assault. One said his client had not touched the woman or engaged in any drug use. Cornell has said it suspended the Chi Phi fraternity indefinitely and disciplined or expelled some students, but the university has declined to provide specifics, citing student privacy rules. Under pressure from the public and politicians, including Hochul, Cornell, a private university, agreed on Wednesday to bring in outside lawyers to independently investigate how it handled the woman's allegations.

The US's newest bikepacking trail is pioneering a whole new way to see Vermont

My mountain bike tyres thud over pebbles and roots as I whizz through the darkening path. Dusk has fallen over Vermont's Green Mountain National Forest and nearly 400,000 acres of woods extend in every direction. In the distance, I spot pinpricks of light. The campsite is finally near. In the last fleeting moments of light, I arrive at the Chittenden Brook campground. As I wheel my bike past the welcome sign, I spy a slick, modern hut with pine siding. I'd planned to simply pitch a tent – to this weary bikepacker, the hut's glass windows and wraparound porch seem like the lap of luxury. Next time, I thought, I'm staying there. This hut is part of the Heart of the Greens Loop, a 38-mile (61km) bike trail loop and the first completed segment of an ambitious, continuous bikepacking network that, when completed, will stretch 485 miles (780km) and span the entire state.



Blazing a path for bikepackers

My journey began that morning in Rochester, a picturesque village nestled in Vermont's mountainous White River Valley. I've driven through it dozens of times without stopping, but since it became the official start and end point of The Heart of the Greens when it opened in 2024, the tiny town has become a magnet for bikepackers. Like me, many are eager to blend the escapism of camping with the thrill of cycling through Vermont's glacial-carved wilderness and explosion of autumnal colours. The loop is a closed-circuit preview of the forthcoming Velomont, a bikepacking route through Central Vermont with a twist: it will be connected by 30 cleverly spaced off-grid huts allowing tired pedallers to bed down in protected forest shelter. On track to finish the first 200 miles (321km) within the next 10 years, the project echoes a larger trend in bicycle travel: statewide bikepacking routes are in development in Utah, Massachusetts and along the entire West Coast. I grew up near Rochester and have dreamed of such a multi-day bikepacking route. For now, I'm thrilled to take on the Heart of the Greens. Two huts are already placed along the trail, roughly 19 miles (30km) apart: the Chittenden Brook Hut, featuring simple bunks and a self-service kitchen, and Spikehorn Yurt. The yurt doesn't have electricity, and neither accommodation has running water. The route's huts will straddle a curious middle ground between camping and traditional stays, allowing bikepackers to carry lighter gear and immerse themselves in the wilderness. The Heart of the Greens may be considerably shorter than the Velomont, but with a cumulative ascent of nearly 6,000ft (1,830m) on largely unpaved forest roads and trails, it's no less intense. "It's a big walk on the wild side," says Doon Hinderyckx, owner of Green Mountain Bikes in Rochester, when I stop by before shoving off. Hinderyckx encourages visitors to hire e-bikes for navigating the steeper grades: "You're mixing mountain biking and the adventure of the challenging terrain. You're on and off the seat a lot." It also requires a bike with thick tyres and suspension, a water filter and provisions, since the current route passes through only two small backcountry villages – Rochester and, 9 miles (14km) south, Pittsfield. Like the huts, eateries and general stores along the trail itself are still in development, so I've packed several meals, plus rain gear and insect repellent, despite the beautiful late summer weather. Hinderyckx checks the air pressure in my inner tubes and oils my chain. He's the last mechanic I'll see for the next two days. Next door to Green Mountain Bikes stands the Stable Inn, run by Hinderyckx's wife, Anni MacKay.

This handsome two-story guesthouse opened in 2023, with a range of rooms, Nordic-chic decor and rooftop solar panels, converted from a timber-frame warehouse from the 1840s. While not an official hut on the trail, the Stable Inn has become a base for many Heart of the Greens riders to unwind, or bookend their bikepacking journey with jaunts to the village's quaint art centres and shops. "[The loop is] a very strategic, positive thing," says MacKay. "People always want to have access to the backcountry, in a safe way, with the benediction of the community that is providing services. It's a complete win-win."

Ups and downs in the Green Mountains

I know Vermont well and have bike-toured widely, but this is harder than I expected. On asphalt, a 38-mile ride makes for a pleasant afternoon. The Heart of the Greens is far more demanding – and adventurous. Rugged roads lead to mountain bike trails, which scissor their way up the alpine forest. The first day, I coast south along Route 100 and turn onto State Garage Road, into a residential area. Houses disappear beyond the canopy, and I huff up one shelf of road, then another. All at once, the road transforms into steep gravel. I grind past the Spikehorn Yurt, the Loop's first hut, a rounded fabric enclosure with bunk-beds, a futon, homey furniture and a spacious terrace with views of the mountains.

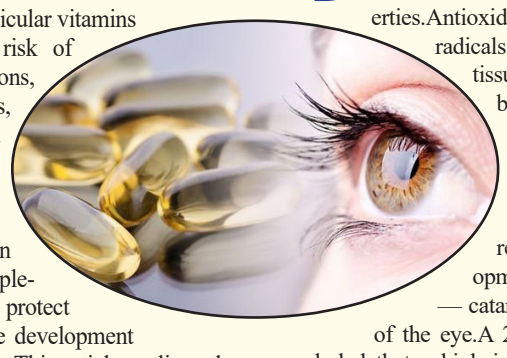
The route then devolves into two dirt tyre trenches cutting through the grass – what mountain bikers call "double track". My temples pound as I climb. Summer mosquitoes drone in the sultry air. After a couple of gruelling miles, the road finally descends, and so do the conditions. Logging lorries have shredded the ground into potting soil, my wheels sink into a mire of turned earth and broken branches. As I struggle, another cyclist pulls up behind me. "This is crazy, isn't it?" he wheezes. "I don't think I'd have made it if I wasn't on an e-bike." I can't help but agree. The grades are tough on my middle-aged thighs, and I frequently dismount and push. I got a late start to begin with, and as I reach the third major trail section of the day – a mile of switchbacks cheekily named "Perspiration" – my legs boil with lactic acid, and the Sun melts beyond the ridge. This is how I come to arrive at Chittenden Brook Campground after nightfall. I pitch my tent onto the cold ground and gaze longingly at the modern hut before me.

Riding high

After a decent night's sleep, I finally hit my stride. I sail down the smooth pavement of Route 73 and pedal through the pastoral scenery of the quiet, unpaved Bingo Brook Road. Dense trees all around, I pass occasional farmhouses and cottages, but most of this land is national forest. Fog lifts over a pond, and the air is cool and quiet. I try to imagine what the Velomont will look like in future decades. The Heart of the Greens now passes through just two village centres with a loose string of businesses straddling Route 100. As the Velomont expands, it will tether together more towns and country shops, making it easier for cyclists to resupply and interact with locals. Bikepackers will traverse ever-more-varied terrain and, like me, stop in towns they might never notice by car. "You're camping, but you're not really camping," says Georgia Grzywacz, a Maine resident who rode the loop and stayed at the Chittenden Brook Hut in June. She appreciated the kitchen, electricity and bunk mattresses, as well as the nearby brook.

"You're without running water, but you have these creature comforts." Even the booking process was easy: "The [Vermont Huts] website is so navigable." I veer off Bingo Brook Road to find a final trailhead. Two mountains remain, totalling 12 miles (19km) and more than 2,000ft (609m) of climbing, but this time, I'm prepared. Teeth clenched, I grind my way up the switchbacks of Swan's Mill Trail, fighting for every foot of elevation. At last, my reward: Tunnel Ridge is a five-mile-long (8km) flow trail that snakes its way back down to Rochester, for a total of 110 switchbacks. My tyres shudder over washboard terrain and swerve around S-curves. I choke the brakes, my saddlebags bounce noisily over my rear rack. The forest becomes a wash of brown and green. Gravity lures me downward, into the valley. Endorphins flood my brain as I drift into The Stable Inn's parking lot, back to my waiting car. I'm euphoric but exhausted. For now, I'm closing the loop. But in time, there should be many miles, and many huts, more. And I'll be ready.

What are the best vitamins for eye health?



Deficiencies in particular vitamins can increase the risk of some eye conditions, such as cataracts, glaucoma, and age-related macular degeneration. Research suggests that some vitamin and mineral supplements may help protect against or slow the development of these conditions. This article outlines the vitamins and minerals essential for good eye health and how people can add them to their diet.

Vitamin A and beta carotene

Vitamin A is essential

Trusted Source for good vision. It is a component of the protein rhodopsin, which allows the eye to see in low-light conditions. According to the American Academy of Ophthalmology, a deficiency in vitamin A can lead to night blindness. Vitamin A also supports the function of the cornea, which is the protective outer layer of the eye. A person who is deficient in vitamin A may find that their eyes produce too little moisture to stay lubricated. Beta carotene is the primary source of vitamin A in the human diet. Beta carotene is a type of plant pigment called a carotenoid that exists in many colorful fruits and vegetables. When a person consumes carotenoids, their body converts the pigments into vitamin A.

Foods for vitamin A

People can add vitamin A into their diet by eating the following foods:

sweet potato
carrots
red pepper
pumpkin
squash

Vitamin E

Alpha tocopherol is a form of vitamin E that has particularly powerful antioxidant properties.Antioxidants help fight free radicals, which damage tissues throughout the body. Sometimes, free radicals may damage proteins within the eye. This damage can result in the development of cloudy areas — cataracts — on the lens of the eye.A 2015 meta-analyses concluded that a high intake of vitamin E, whether through the diet or supplementation, may reduce the risk of developing cataracts.

Foods for vitamin E

Foods high in vitamin E include:

almonds
sunflower seeds
peanuts
safflower oil
soybean, corn, and wheat germ oil
asparagus

Discover more foods rich in vitamin E here.

Vitamin C

Vitamin C plays an important role in the eye itself, protecting against UV light damage. While the concentration of vitamin C in the eyes lessens with age, diet and supplementation can counteract this.Vitamin C also helps protect against oxidative damage. Oxidative damage is a key factorTrusted Source in two of the most common age-related cataracts: cortical and nuclear cataracts.

Cortical cataracts develop on the edges of the lens, while nuclear cataracts occur deep in their center.

A 10-year longitudinal study investigated different factors that may help prevent nuclear cataract development. The study involved more than 1,000 pairs of female twins. At the end of the study period, participants who consumed more vitamin C showed a 33% reduction in the risk of cataract progression. They also had clearer lenses overall.

Overall dietary pattern more important for heart disease prevention, management

Heart health is closely linked to dietary choices, with experts emphasizing that regular consumption of heart-healthy foodsTrusted Source can not only help improve heart health but also lower the risk of developing heart disease by reducing risks like high blood pressure and high cholesterol. Now, a new scientific statement from the American College of Cardiology (ACC) highlights the importance of overall dietary patterns for cardiovascular health, rather than focusing on individual nutrients or specific foods. The statement, published in the Journal of the American College of Cardiology (JACC), reviews current evidence on nutrition and cardiovascular disease, and provides recommendations for more consistent integration of nutrition to help prevent and manage heart disease. Rather than emphasizing a particular percentage of carbohydrates, fats, or protein, the authors highlight the importance of overall dietary quality, food sources, and the degree to which foods are processed.

A shift from nutrients to heart-healthy dietary patterns

The central message of the ACC statement is that heart-healthy eating does not necessarily require following a single dietary plan or eliminating one particular nutrient, such as dietary fat or carbohydrates. Instead, the authors emphasize maintaining a consistent dietary pattern centered on nutritious, minimally processed foods that are sustainable over time and support cardiometabolic health. A suboptimal dietary pattern is a key risk factor cardiovascular disease. The concept of heart-healthy eating plans have evolved from a nutrient-focused approach toward food- and dietary-pattern-based strategiesTrusted Source that better reflect what is known about the relationship between diet and cardiometabolic health. The statement recommends emphasizing minimally processed, plant-forward foods while limiting foods that are high in refined starches, added sugars, sodium, and unhealthy fats. The authors particularly support replacing saturated fats with unsaturated fats, including those found in liquid plant oils, nuts and seeds, and fish. They also suggest prioritizing whole grains and other high-fiber foods. Notably, two dietary patterns with substantial supporting evidence are the Mediterranean diet and the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) diet. Both dietary patterns emphasize an overall eating plan that includes foods such as vegetables, fruits, whole grains, nuts, legumes, and other sources of healthy protein, along with unsaturated fats. The statement also recommends choosing water and other unsweetened beverages more often than sugar-sweetened drinks. They note that moderate coffee or tea consumption can fit within a healthy dietary pattern, while advising that people generally limit or avoid alcohol consumption.

Highly processed foods remain a concern

The statement also considers the potential cardiovascular implications of highly processed foods.Rather than suggesting that all processed foods should be eliminated, the statement emphasizes the nutritional quality of foods and their degree of processing. Highly processed foods that provide relatively little nutritional value are among those the statement recommends limiting. This distinction is important because processing itself does not necessarily make a food unhealthy. Some forms of processing can improve food safety, preservation, or convenience.

Diet, obesity, diabetes, and kidney disease are interconnected

The ACC statement also places nutrition within the broader context of cardiovascular-kidney-metabolic (CKM) health. In June 2026, the ACC and the American Heart Association (AHA) published the first-ever clinical guideline on CKM syndromeTrusted Source, a complex health disorder linking cardiovascular disease, chronic kidney disease, and metabolic disorders such as type 2 diabetes and obesity. The authors therefore emphasize dietary approaches that may support health across these interconnected conditions. Plant-forward eating, lower sodium intake, and limiting highly processed foods of poor nutritional quality are among the dietary priorities highlighted in the statement. Access to healthy food mattersThe authors also point out that a person's ability to follow a healthy dietary plan depends partly on circumstances outside of individual choice.Having access to nutritious food can be affected by factors including availability, affordability, accessibility, and the ability to use and prepare nutritious foods. The statement recommends considering food security and social determinants of health when discussing dietary patterns. This means that dietary counseling may need to account for whether recommended foods are realistically available and affordable, rather than assuming that everyone has equal access to healthy options. Another emerging area discussed in the statement is the use of "Food Is Medicine-Trusted Source" programs. These programs provide nutritious foods as part of clinical care, rather than treating food solely as a lifestyle recommendation. According to the statement, growing evidence suggests that such interventions can improve diet quality and may benefit clinical outcomes.

Ajay Devgn's Drishyam sequel crosses Rs 175 crore worldwide instantly

Mumbai : Ajay Devgn's Drishyam 3: The Conclusion finally hit theatres on October 2 and received positive reviews from critics and audiences alike. The film also opened to a strong response at the box office by collecting Rs 66.75 crore net in India. However, on the second day of its release, Drishyam 3 witnessed a slight dip in its collections.

According to Sacnilk, the film earned Rs 53.50 crore net in India on Day 2 across 16,868 shows. This is a 13.7% drop from its Rs 62 crore net collection on the opening day. Despite the decline, Drishyam: The Conclusion continues to hold steady at the box office. The film has so far grossed Rs 138.60 crore in India, with its net collection standing at Rs 115.50 crore. It added another Rs 20 crore from overseas markets on Day 2, taking its total overseas gross to Rs 38.50 crore. With this, Drishyam: The Conclusion has reached Rs 177.10 crore in worldwide gross collections.

Drishyam 3 picks up Vijay Salgaonkar's story after the events of Drishyam 2. Vijay had once again managed to save his family, even after the police got their hands on important evidence. The third instalment is expected to put him in another difficult situation as he tries to protect the secrets he has worked so hard to hide. It is also worth noting that the Hindi Drishyam: The Conclusion is not a direct remake of the upcoming Malayalam Drishyam 3 starring Mohanlal. The two franchises are following different storylines, with the Hindi film set to bring Vijay Salgaonkar's journey to a final conclusion.

Unlike its predecessors, the film features an original story and is not narratively connected to its Malayalam counterpart.[6] The film stars Ajay Devgn, Jaideep Ahlawat, Tabu, Shriya Saran, Rajat Kapoor, Prakash Raj, Ishita Dutta and Mrunal Jadhav. "Drishyam 3: The Conclusion is a gripping and fast-paced thriller that understands the appeal of its franchise. It keeps you invested and benefits from strong performances, particularly from Ajay Devgn, Jaideep Ahlawat, Prakash Raj and Kamlesh Sawant. However, the film's biggest strength is also its weakness. It is not a bad film but it sticks closely to the Drishyam formula, making it familiar. It is not a grand conclusion that the franchise deserved," a part of our review reads.

VisionQuest trailer: Paul Bettany & James Spader return to MCU

Mumbai : MCU viewers have every reason to celebrate as Marvel Television's Vision Quest prepares to land exclusively on JioHotstar this October 14, featuring audio in English, Hindi, Tamil, and Telugu. Serving as the conclusion to the trilogy that began with WandaVision and continued through Agatha All Along, the original series reunites fan favourites Paul Bettany as Vision and James Spader as the iconic Ultron. Its trailer is out.

After being rebooted, White Vision slips away from the people who want to turn him into a weapon and goes into hiding. Unsure of what he is for, he searches his own internal subroutines for direction, consulting the familiar AI personas stored there: J.A.R.V.I.S., F.R.I.D.A.Y., E.D.I.T.H., and Ultron. His solitary search for identity doesn't last long. A lucrative bounty is placed on his head, and suddenly he is hunted. On the run, Vision crosses paths with Thomas Shepherd, an enigmatic young man who may be the reincarnation of Vision's lost son. The two team up to evade relentless pursuers, all while Vision struggles against Ultron's sinister pull on his mind, a battle he must win if he hopes to keep them both alive. Co-starring Ruaridh Mollica and Todd Stashwick, Vision Quest promises a new style in MCU storytelling. Showrun by Terry Matalas (Star Trek: Picard), with a strong cast and a surreal, AI-focused tone, it builds on the inventive style of the earlier trilogy entries.

Marvel enthusiasts across platforms are celebrating the return of James Spader's chilling yet charismatic voice performance, praising Marvel for bringing back one of its most compelling villains. Many are equally thrilled about Paul Bettany's continued evolution as Vision.

Legendary director Singeetham Srinivasa Rao passes away

Mumbai : Veteran and legendary director Singeetham Srinivasa Rao passed away in Chennai on Saturday night. He was 94. According to reports, Singeetham was undergoing treatment for age-related ailments and breathed his last at a hospital in Chennai on Saturday. Many superstars and directors from the film fraternity have mourned the filmmaker's loss.

Regarded as one of the most versatile and innovative filmmakers, Singeetham was a screenwriter, producer, director, composer and actor. Recognised for transforming South Indian cinema, Singeetham directed around 60 films across Telugu, Kannada, Tamil, Hindi and English, leaving behind an inspiring body of work. The director's experimental approach to filmmaking was his biggest strength. He disrupted predictable commercial formulas, introduced raw realism and expanded the creative boundaries of mainstream cinema.One of Indian cinema's most prolific filmmakers, Singeetham's nearly seven-decade career was marked by an extraordinary resistance to formula filmmaking. He started his film career as an associate to legendary director KV Reddy and worked on iconic films such as Mayabazar (1957) and Jagadeka Veeruni Katha (1961). His directorial debut came with the Telugu film Neethi Nijayithi (1972). Singeetham subsequently directed critically acclaimed social films such as Dikkatra Parvathi (1974), Tharam Marindi (1977), Panthulamma (1978), Mayuri (1985) and Anand (1986). Singeetham returned to the director's chair after 13 years with Sing Geetham, which released in June 2026. Kalki 2898 AD director Nag Ashwin produced the musical fantasy drama. The film demonstrated his continued commitment to and passion for cinema.

Mika Singh questions Diljit Dosanjh over Border 2 promotion

Mumbai : Diljit Dosanjh is one of the most popular singers and actors in India. The Punjabi artist has worked in two of the most talked-about films this year, Border 2 and Main Vaapas Aaunga, and now Mika Singh has spoken about how the former chose not to promote the Bollywood films. Mika Singh, in a recent chat, has spoken about how he found Diljit's decision not to promote the films quite odd.

Singh, while speaking to Times Now, shared that he is proud of Diljit Dosanjh for the work that he is doing and said, "Why would I be jealous of Diljit? I am actually proud of him. After Daler paaji, if someone has come wearing a turban and made it as a singer, it is Diljit. And he is doing very good work," Mika said. Further, he spoke about how he felt odd when Diljit didn't speak about Border 2 and said, "I could be wrong, but I feel that when Border 2 came out, Diljit paaji did not promote it even one per cent. He didn't even thank Sunny paaji one per cent," Mika said.

"I have never seen Diljit say, 'It is a big thing that my film with Sunny Deol is coming.' He never spoke about Border 2. When the film came out, and even afterwards, I didn't see him post about it. And Main Vaapas Aaunga was also released, but he didn't put up any post. He made only one post about his film in which there was a Pakistani artist," he continued and spoke about how Diljit promoted Sardaar Ji 3 with Pakistani actress Hania Aamir.Mika concluded, "I don't understand this. Why don't you promote Bollywood when you work in Bollywood? Then you say, 'I don't need Bollywood,' but you work in Bollywood. I am saying these things to him as a brother. Border 2 is one of the biggest films for our country. It is a film about Hindustan. Why don't you post about it? You can check his Instagram and see if there is even one video where he has promoted Border 2."

Sardaar Ji 3 was withheld from Indian theatres following backlash over the inclusion of Hania Aamir, a Pakistani actor, in the lead cast. The controversy emerged after the Pahalgam terrorist attacks, which claimed 26 lives, prompting protests from various groups in India. In response, the makers decided not to release the film domestically, sacrificing a potentially massive chunk of its revenue.

Sudha Chandran pays tribute to singeetham

Mumbai : Film personalities from various industries have been remembering Singeetham Srinivasa Rao for his contributions to cinema. Bharatanatyam exponent and actress Sudha Chandran who made her acting debut with the film, Mayuri (1985), remembers the legendary filmmaker as her 'father figure.'

Sudha Chandran is a globally renowned Bharatanatyam dancer and actress whose inspiring life story became a global symbol of resilience. She lost her right leg in an accident on her way from Trichy to Madras in June 1981. But after two years, she returned to dance and performed. After listening to her heartwarming story, director Singeetam wanted to make a Telugu film Mayuri (1985) and wanted to cast her in the lead role. "I never dreamt of doing films because I was only a dancer and didn't know anything about acting. But Singeetham Sir insisted that I do the film," Sudha recalls. "When I came to Hyderabad from Mumbai for the story narration, I felt homesick, and started crying. I have never stayed out of Mumbai. But Singeetham sir made me comfortable. He has put me at ease and clearly explained how he wants to shoot the film. His clarity of thought and narrative style made me give a shot. He was instrumental in me taking the acting plunge." Sudha made history in Indian cinema by reprising herself in the lead role in the film, Mayuri. It's the first time a real-life personality has starred in their own biopic. She describes Singeetham as her first guru and a father-figure. Since she was new to acting, the legendary filmmaker taught and made her understand the nuances of acting.

The director treated her like his daughter, and said that if she didn't like the acting, she could always go back to Mumbai. "He kept me busy with the filmmaking process throughout the movie. He explained all the technicities and creative things involved in the process. I thoroughly enjoyed working. Apparently, Sudha cried on the last of shooting of Mayuri. "Singeetham Sir asked me 'Why are you crying now? I said I enjoyed working with him and for the film so much that I don't want to go back to Mumbai." Post release, Mayuri was a blockbuster. The film went on to win National Film Award – Special Jury Award for Sudha Chandran, apart from winning 14 Nandi State Awards - the most by any other Telugu film. It was later dubbed and also remade in many languages.

Talat Aziz recalls 'close call' after fire at juhu home

Mumbai : he news of a fire at the residential building in Juhu, which is home to singer Talat Aziz, left many concerned. However, the singer has now confirmed that everything is under control, that he is out of danger, and mentioned that it was a close call. The veteran ghazal singer and actor confirmed that there was a short circuit on the ground floor, which caused the accident. The accident happened on October 2, Friday night. Later, police confirmed that those affected were sent to the hospital for treatment.

Speaking about the accident, Talat Aziz told HT, "There was a short circuit on my ground floor and gutted the ground floor plus parts of the first floor. We suffered lots of damage and it's unlivable until it's restored." He went on to add, "We are safe but had a close call." As per reports,

the fire broke out in A Wing of Mittal Park, a ground-plus-five-storey residential building on A.R. Mhatre Road, near the ISKCON temple in Andheri West. Following a call to the fire brigade, the rescue team arrived and brought the situation under control. A senior officer from the BMC's disaster control department said, "It was a minor fire caused by a short circuit. It was doused within minutes of receiving the call."

Following suffocation, five people were sent to the hospital, including Talat Aziz, Shahin Aziz, Adnan Aziz, Bina Aziz and Sikandar Singh. They were discharged later after their condition became stable. The fire caused damage to the house's property, including electrical wiring and installations, a sofa, a split air-conditioning unit and other household articles. Trained by stalwarts like Mehdi Hassan, Aziz has extensively toured India, the USA, Canada, and several other countries for shows. Born in Hyderabad to famous Urdu writer and poet Abdul Azeem Khan and Sajida Abid, Aziz went on to release his first album in 1980, under the tutelage of Jagjit Singh.

The ghazal singer has also crooned the ever-popular Sufi number "Damadam Mast Kalandar" and was the voice behind the soul-stirring rendition of "Aaina Mujhse Meri" from the film Daddy.

Digger struggles at box office, but Tom Cruise stays proud

Los Angeles : Hollywood star Tom Cruise said he is proud of his recent film "Digger" despite the film's low opening at the box office. The film, which released globally on Friday, only earned over USD 3.4 million on the opening day at the global box office, emerging as Cruise's lowest first-day grosser.

Cruise shared a series of pictures from the film on his Instagram handle on Saturday and thanked the entire cast and crew. "'DIGGER' is officially in theatres, and I am so honoured to have had the opportunity to create this film alongside such talented artists," he wrote. "Thank you to the entire cast and crew for your dedication, hard work, and joy. The experience was truly unforgettable, and I'm so proud of what we created," he added.

The film is directed by Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu and serves as the first collaboration of the actor with the Oscar-winning filmmaker, whose projects include "Birdman or (The Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance) " and "The Revenant", among others. The film is Inarritu's first English-language film after the Leonardo DiCaprio-starrer "The Revenant", which released in 2015. It revolves around the "most powerful man in the world" who embarks on a "frantic mission to prove he is humanity's saviour before the disaster he is unleashed destroys everything", according to the official logline.

The actor features in the film as Digger Rockwell, an oil baron whose company's actions trigger an ecological disaster with the potential to spark a nuclear war. It is produced by Inarritu, Cruise, and Michael Sharp under TC Productions and M Productions. Warner Bros Pictures is a presenter and the global distributor of the film.

Yami Gautam urges media to stop using AI on her photos

Mumbai : Yami Gautam has asked the media to refrain from using artificial intelligence to alter or enhance her pictures from public appearances. She took to X (formerly Twitter) to write that such changes should not be made without an individual's knowledge and consent.

Her post read, "A sincere request to the media. Please refrain from using AI to alter or enhance my photographs from public appearances. Kindly use images in original form. Altering or manipulating an individual's image or likeness using AI should not be done without their knowledge and consent. Thank you in advance for respecting my request!" The actor's post comes at a time when the use of AI to manipulate photographs, videos and other forms of digital content has become an increasingly contentious issue. Celebrities have raised concerns over their faces, voices and likenesses being digitally altered or used to create content that they have neither participated in nor approved.

The issue has come into sharper focus in recent days following an AI-manipulated video involving Janhvi Kapoor. A digitally altered version of the Devara: Part 1 song Chuttamalle, featuring Kapoor alongside Jr NTR in the original, surfaced online with explicit imagery that was not part of the original video. Jr NTR condemned the video and said legal action would be taken, while actors including Chiranjeevi and Vijay Deverakonda also spoke out against the misuse of AI. Meanwhile, on the work front, Yami Gautam will next be seen in Nayyi Navelli, directed by Balaji Mohan. The film, which also stars Adinath M. Kothare, Anurag Thakur, Sunita Rajwar and Mita Vasisth, is scheduled to release in theatres on October 16.

Verstappen claims maiden 2026 win at Bahrain grand prix

Sepang : Max Verstappen took his first win of the year but a retirement for George Russell handed a huge title boost to Kimi Antonelli at Formula 1's Bahrain Grand Prix in Malaysia on Sunday.

Verstappen was leading from Antonelli and Russell behind the safety car with five laps to go when Russell suddenly pulled over in his Mercedes. That means Antonelli further stretches his big standings lead over his teammate Russell from 66 points to 84. Mercedes told Antonelli over the radio it appeared Russell had suffered a power unit problem.

Antonelli finished second and Ferrari's Lewis Hamilton passed Verstappen's Red Bull teammate Isack Hadjar for third. Four-time champion Verstappen hadn't won since the final race of last season, but upgrades to his Red Bull car made him competitive again in Malaysia this week.

"Good job guys, wow," he told the team over the radio. Delays for rain and software issues The first wet-weather race for F1 in 2026 started more than 90 minutes later than planned. The start was first delayed 40 minutes for heavy rain, then suspended again when cars had apparent software problems on the formation lap. When it finally did get under way, Verstappen was slow off the line and lost places to Antonelli and Russell. He chased down Russell and then got past Antonelli in a side-by-side fight after a safety-car restart.

The race was relocated because of the Iran war , becoming F1's first event at the Sepang circuit in Malaysia since 2017. Ferrari recovers from early blunders Hamilton's third place capped a remarkable recovery for the seven-time champion and ends a run of five races without a podium finish for the Italian team. It seemed almost impossible early in the race as Hamilton, and his teammate Charles Leclerc, were near the back of the pack. Ferrari had gambled on sending them to the start on dry-weather tires as the track began to dry after rain, causing Hamilton to drop from second to near the back. Leclerc also overtook Hadjar late on to follow Hamilton with fourth place, as Hadjar ended up fifth. Oscar Piastri was sixth for McLaren after a punchy late battle with Liam Lawson of Racing Bulls, who was seventh after racing near the front at the start.

Odisha CM invites global investors to tourism sector

Bhubaneswar, Oct 04 : Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi on Saturday called upon global and domestic investors to partner with Odisha in developing its tourism potential, asserting that the state offered opportunities for large-scale investment in hospitality and tourism infrastructure. "My State deserves more than any other State," Mr Majhi said while inaugurating the seventh edition of the Odisha Travel Bazaar (OTB) 2026 here at a city hotel.

The three-day event, organised by the Odisha tourism department in partnership with FICCI, has brought together international and domestic tour operators, hospitality investors, hosted buyers and tourism industry leaders to promote Odisha as a major tourism destination and facilitate business and investment opportunities. Mr Majhi said tourism was a key pillar of Odisha's Viksit Odisha Vision 2036–2047 and could play a major role in generating employment, promoting sustainable economic growth and preserving the state's cultural heritage.

He highlighted Odisha's beaches, forests, tribal traditions, artistic heritage and biodiversity, particularly mentioning Bhitarkanika and Chilika, and said the government was preparing comprehensive master plans for 15 marquee tourism destinations to develop them as globally competitive attractions. The Chief Minister also highlighted the Odisha Tourism (Amendment) Policy, 2026, aimed at attracting larger investments. The minimum room requirement for star-category hotels has been reduced from 50 to 10, while the capital subsidy ceiling has been raised to Rs 120 crore. Museums and heritage properties are eligible for subsidies of up to 40 per cent, while electric boats, electric caravans and art and

craft complexes can receive capital subsidies of up to 50 per cent.

The government has also approved an Rs 1,500-crore scheme for acquiring 5,500 acres of land bank for hospitality infrastructure. More than Rs 163 crore in capital subsidies has already been disbursed, Mr Majhi said. Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida said Odisha needed to move from conventional sightseeing to experiential tourism, with greater participation of local communities, women, artisans, guides and small entrepreneurs.

The event also saw the launch of the new Odisha Tourism website and Tourism Investment Incentive Management System. Celebrity chef Ranveer Brar released Pitha, Mitha & Pana, while cricket legend Kapil Dev unveiled the jersey and medal for the upcoming OMC Puri Coastal Marathon. OTB 2026 has attracted 145 domestic operators from 32 cities and 45 foreign operators from 27 countries. More than 100 local tourism service providers are participating, with over 6,000 B2B and B2G meetings scheduled. Around 40 major hospitality brands and 250 state investors are taking part in a dedicated investors' session.

The Delhi High Court suspends the FSSAI's judgment prohibiting Red Bull from using the term "energy drink"

New Delhi, Oct 04: : The Delhi High Court overturned an order from the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) directing Red Bull to cease using the term "Energy Drink," allowing the business to keep using it on its product labels for the time being. Red Bull was not given a chance to reply before to the June 30, 2026 order, the court concluded. Red Bull's petition was granted by Justice Amit Mahajan on the narrow grounds that natural justice norms were not adhered to.

The court did not, however, permanently end the case. FSSAI remains free to reconsider its decision after issuing a show-cause notice and giving Red Bull an opportunity to be heard. The dispute began after FSSAI directed Red Bull to stop using the term "Energy Drink" for its products. Red Bull challenged the FSSAI order before the Delhi High Court, arguing that the direction had been issued without giving the company a chance to explain its position. The court agreed that this was a procedural issue.

"It remains undisputed that the order dated 30th June, 2026 directing the petitioner to not use the term 'Energy Drink' in its product was passed without affording any opportunity to the petitioner to file any reply or give any explanation," the court observed.

The Delhi High Court allowed Red Bull's petition and set aside the June 30 FSSAI order. Importantly, the court's decision was based on the lack of an opportunity of hearing. It did not make a final determination on whether the term "Energy Drink" is permissible under FSSAI's food labelling rules. This means the food regulator can revisit the matter. The court clarified that FSSAI is free to take a fresh decision after following the required process. This would include issuing Red Bull a show-cause notice and giving the company an opportunity to respond and be heard before any fresh order is passed. For now, the court's ruling gives Red Bull relief from the June 30 direction, while leaving the wider FSSAI labelling dispute open.

A motion to suspend Gyanesh Kumar due to "unilateral" decisions will be heard by the Supreme Court

New Delhi, Oct 04 : The Supreme Court will hear a PIL seeking to suspend Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and challenge the Election Commission's decisions made allegedly without consensus among the other commissioners.

The petition, filed by Rakesh Kumar Singh, asserts that decisions must be unanimous or by majority, questioning the legitimacy of Kumar's unilateral actions.

It also seeks to prevent Kumar from serving until the case's resolution and demands that decisions be made by the other commissioners. The PIL highlights objections raised by two commissioners, Sandhu and Joshi, regarding decisions taken without proper authorization, emphasizing the constitutional principles governing the Election Commission's operation as a collective body rather than an individual authority. The petition requests the Supreme Court to review the Commission's records and calls for an independent audit of the electoral-roll database management.

India wraps up Asian games in fourth place with 2036 in sight

Nagoya, Oct 04: India's sporting ambitions took a sobering reality check at the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games, where a campaign that promised another leap forward ended with a significant dip from the record-breaking haul in Hangzhou.

India retained the fourth place in the overall standings but finished with 85 medals -- 21 gold, 27 silver and 37 bronze -- 21 medals and seven gold fewer than the 106-medal haul, achieved in the last edition. For a country chasing top-10 status by 2036 and a top-five ranking by 2047, the numbers are a reminder that sustaining progress will be far harder than producing a spectacular Games. At the top, China remained untouchable, finishing with 341 medals, including 169 gold. Japan was second with 83 gold and 269 medals, while South Korea took third with 39 gold and 150 medals. India's fourth-place finish still keeps it among Asia's leading sporting nations. That distinction matters. A fourth-place finish means India remains firmly within the continent's leading sporting pack, but the gap at the top is still enormous.

If it was not for a sensational gold rush in the last two days when India won 11 gold medals a top-five place was not possible. The biggest reason for the shortfall was the under-performance of two traditional medal pillars shooting and athletics. Both arrived with high expectations but left India with fewer medals than in Hangzhou, exposing vulnerabilities in consistency, pressure management and preparation.

After producing a stunning seven gold, nine silver and six bronze medals last time, India's 30-member team returned from Japan with 15 medals three gold, eight silver and four bronze. The campaign began with missed opportunities and faltering favourites. Double Olympic medallist Manu Bhaker endured a disappointing Games as India's women drew a blank in the 10m air pistol. The men's 10m air pistol team of Kamaljeet, Aakash Bhardwaj and Kedarling Uchaganve also failed to make an impact, deepening concerns in an event in which India has traditionally been a strong medal contender. The breakthrough finally came in the 10m air pistol mixed team event, where Suruchi Singh and Kamaljeet won gold. But the shooter who transformed the mood in the camp was Neeru Dhanda.

The 27-year-old became the first Indian woman to win an individual Asian Games gold in trap shooting. She added a silver in the women's team event and another gold in the mixed team competition with Kynan Chenai. Yet Neeru's brilliance could not mask the broader concerns. Several Indian shooters faltered after promising starts, particularly against China and South Korea, surrendering winning positions at crucial moments. The pattern underlined the need for greater mental conditioning and an ability to close out high-pressure competitions. Athletics provided another major disappointment. India lost one of its biggest gold-medal prospects even before the competition began when javelin ace Neeraj Chopra withdrew with injury.

Tajinderpal Singh Toor could not complete a hat-trick of Asian Games golds, while long jumper Murali Sreeshankar and high jumper Sarvesh Kushare also settled for silver. Their performances showed India was competitive, but once again the gap between being in contention and finishing on top proved costly. Injuries added to the setbacks as Jyothi Yarraji withdrew from the women's 100m hurdles before her opening heat after experiencing knee pain and discomfort during warm-up. Avinash Sable, returning from a serious knee injury, finished fourth in the men's 3000m steeplechase. The women's 4x400m relay quartet of Kiran Pahal, M Poovamma, Prachi Choudhary and Vithya Ramraj supplied athletics' lone gold, but the discipline remained well short of its Hangzhou output, where India had won six gold.

The disappointments were made more frustrating by uneven preparations. Accommodation issues, the absence of a dedicated Games village and persistent transport problems disrupted routines. Long journeys to venues, delayed buses and reduced recovery time added to the burden. They do not fully explain the medal shortfall, but they exposed an athlete-support system here. And yet Aichi-Nagoya also offered something equally important: evidence that India's sporting base is broadening. Archery provided one of the clearest breakthroughs. Teenager Kumkum Mohod became the first Indian to win the individual recurve gold, capping a landmark campaign in a discipline where India has historically struggled to match its success in compound archery. India returned with five gold, two silver and two bronze medals in archery, matching its overall medal tally from Hangzhou.

India map identifies incursion areas near Galwan among 28 sites along the Chinese border in Ladakh

New Delhi, Oct 04 : For the first time, India's official map has classified 28 places and geographical features along the China-Ladakh border as standard names, including Gogra and Hot Springs near the Galwan Valley, which the Chinese troops reportedly crossed in May 2020. The raid triggered the Galwan Valley conflict on June 15, 2020, in which 20 Indian soldiers and at least four Chinese troops were killed.

The Chinese are apparently still entrenched in "buffer zones" inside India's claimed boundaries at Gogra and Hot Springs. Beijing frequently gives Mandarin alternate names for places in Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh. According to sources, the Center took the latest step after consulting with the Ladakh Union Territory administration, with the goal of streamlining official cartography, facilitating exact identification, and raising public awareness of the sensitive border region.The action comes two months after India's official map listed 27 sites and geographical features along the China-India border in Arunachal Pradesh by their standard names, countering China's recurrent use of Mandarin names for localities in the state in official papers from Beijing. "Government of India, in consultation with the Union Territory of Ladakh, has identified a total of twenty-eight places/ features, located in the UT of Ladakh, by standard place and feature names on the official map of Survey of India," the Union home ministry said on Friday. "Identifying them formally on the Survey of India map of UT of Ladakh is aimed at facilitating their accurate recognition and better awareness among the public at large."

Besides Gogra and Hot Springs, the list includes Alisha Giri, Brangsa, Chapchingal Pass, Kanishka Peak, Karun Pir Mountain, Kuksel, Martand Giri, Parpik Glacier, Skamri Glacier, Shachmirik Pass, Shkorga Valley, Zorawar Peak, Dehra Compass and Drak Karpo.Jolmori, Kumarayana Point, Panglung, Rinchen Zangpo, Sakyasri Giri, Guru Rinpoche, Shamal Lungpa (a patrol and staging route in the 1950s), Yangpa river, Marpa Lotsava Ri, Milarepa Kangri, Shiva Ri, and Maheshwara Ri have also been identified on the map. Gogra and Hot Springs lie in eastern Ladakh near the Chang Chenmo river and the strategic Kongka Pass. Gogra is a key junction providing access to multiple regional valleys, while Hot Springs marks a historic transit and water point. In May 2020, China moved troops inside India-claimed lines, pitched tents and built observation posts across the LAC in areas such as the Galwan Valley, Gogra, Hot Springs and the south and north banks of the Pangong lake.

Ferran Torres has been removed from the Spain team for the next two UEFA Nations League matches

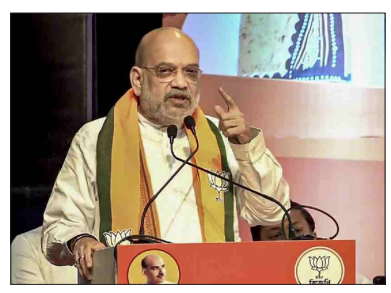
New Delhi: Ferran Torres, an attacker for Paris Saint-Germain, has been pulled from Spain's roster due to a left ankle injury, according to the Spanish Football Federation. The RFEF stated that the 26-year-old World Cup 2026 winner had been experiencing difficulty in his left ankle for some days and was thus permitted to leave the camp to "prioritize his recovery." Torres will miss the team's next two UEFA Nations League matches against the Czech Republic and Croatia. Real Madrid forward Carlos Espi, 21, has been called up to replace Torres.

Torres is the latest player to return to his club early during the current international window. Nico Williams and left-back Alejandro Grimaldo had already left the squad because of their respective fitness concerns. Spain sits strongly at the top of Group A3 after beginning its campaign with a 3-2 victory over England at Wembley. The side followed that

result with an impressive 4-1 win against Croatia in Seville on Tuesday.

Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita deployment will restrict the entire case procedure from FIR to Supreme Court to three years, according to Amit Shah

New Delhi: Union Minister Amit Shah said on Saturday that once the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) is fully implemented, matters from the FIR stage to the Supreme Court will be resolved within three years. He was speaking at a state-level cattle rearers' meeting here after launching an exhibition on the new criminal code.Today, two events occurred in Bhopal. First, a new nyaya sanhita (BNS) exposition was inaugurated, followed by a cattle rearers' conference. Such a large number of cattle rearers have come here, which is a great omen for the milk revolution in Madhya Pradesh," he



said. The Union minister said India's criminal justice system was earlier known for delays, but the situation has improved. "I have come especially to tell (the people and) the youth that after about one and a half years, once the (new criminal law) is fully implemented, any case, from the filing of an FIR to the Supreme Court, will be disposed of within three years," he said. The laws made by the British were brought in to protect their government and their rule, he said. "The new criminal law has been introduced to protect the dignity of the citizens of India. Its basic principle is justice, not punishment. Punishment is provided for only where necessary, to deter those who commit crimes," he said. After the full implementation of the BNS, India's criminal justice system will become the most modern in the world, Shah said.

Karnataka CM congratulates Hockey team on gold win

Bengaluru: Karnataka Chief Minister D K Shivakumar on Sunday congratulated the Indian Men's Hockey team for winning gold for India.

He said it was a matter of pride that three members of the team are from Karnataka. "Adding to the pride of India's Men's Hockey Gold at the Asian Games, three members of the victorious team are from Karnataka," Shivakumar said. Heartiest congratulations to Mohith H S, Harshith M Lakshman and Ranganathan M on their valuable contribution as goalkeeper, Video Analyst and Head Physiotherapist, he added. Also Read - Congress Govt Pressuring Police To

"Karnataka is proud of you. Our best wishes for your continued success," Shivakumar said. Reigning Olympic bronze medallist India hammered Malaysia 5-1 to defend their men's hockey gold in the Asian Games on Saturday, and the triumph also secured them a direct qualification for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics. While writing a new chapter in the history of Indian hockey, the eight-time Olympic champions also clinched their fifth Asian Games gold, and the second in a row for the first time.

The Asian Games 2026 men's hockey semifinals between India and Pakistan are confirmed

New Delhi: At the current Asian Games 2026 in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan, India will play Pakistan in the men's hockey semifinals. South Korea advanced to second place in the group earlier in the day after defeating host Japan 3-2 in another Pool A match. The Harmanpreet Singh-led team's matchup with its fiercest adversary would have been certain even before they entered the field against Bangladesh in their last group-stage play if this game had ended in a tie. The Indian team's chances of placing second in the group were still somewhat open, though. Bangladesh would have needed to defeat the reigning champion by a significant margin (at least 26 goals) in order for Korea's goal differential (10) to surpass India's (35). However, the team led by Craig Fulton defeated Bangladesh 10-0 to complete its group stage campaign unblemished. Therefore, on Thursday, October 1, at 1pm IST, India will play Pakistan, who placed second in Pool B, in the semifinal. The Gifu Prefectural Green Stadium will host the game. India had secured its place in the semifinals with a 2-0 win over Japan earlier in the group stage.

Lhuan-dre Pretorius beats Chris Gayle's record for the highest T20 score with an undefeated 188

New Delhi: South African batsman Lhuan-dre Pretorius broke Chris Gayle's record for the greatest individual T20 score. Pretorius, a left-handed top-order batsman, scored 188 not out off 79 balls in South Africa's domestic CSA T20 Challenge. The Titans opener went on a marauding run in his first encounter of the competition, hitting 13 sixes and 15 fours. In doing so, Pretorius broke the record for most runs scored by a hitter in a single innings in the 20-over format. The previous record was held by the famous Chris Gayle, who scored 175 not out for Royal Challengers Bangalore against the Pune Warriors in the Indian Premier League in 2013. Pretorius, 20, was on track for a double century but ran out of overs as the Titans concluded their innings on 267-3. Pretorius' innings was so dominant that he and Sinethemba Qeshile scored 100 runs in just over seven overs. Qeshile was the first to fall, scoring 14 off 10 balls as the team's score stood at 112. Pretorius, however, was in a class of his own. While Dewald Brevis made 7 off 11 and Leus du Plooy scored 17 off 11, the opener continued his assault on the Knights bowling attack. He found good support from captain Donovan Ferreira in the final stages of the innings, with the skipper smashing an unbeaten 29 off 11 balls to help the Titans finish on 267 for three. The total was still some distance short of the highest team score in T20 cricket. That record belongs to Baroda, who scored 349 for five against Sikkim in 2024. Lhuan-dre Pretorius is one of South Africa's most promising young cricketers, a left-handed wicketkeeper-batter who has risen rapidly through the country's cricketing system. Born on March 27, 2006, in Potchefstroom, Pretorius made his mark at the 2024 Under-19 World Cup, where he was South Africa's leading run-scorer. His breakthrough at senior level came in the SA20. Playing for Paarl Royals in the 2025 season, Pretorius scored 397 runs and finished as the tournament's leading run-scorer, despite being only 18 at the time. His aggressive batting and ability to score quickly made him one of the most exciting young players in South African cricket.

17-year-old archer wins historic gold, dominates Asian Games

New Delhi: The name Kumkum symbolizes auspiciousness, purity, and divine feminine energy, and it has taken on historical significance following Kumkum Mohod's remarkable achievement at the Asian Games 2026. On October 3, she won the gold medal in the women's individual recurve event, becoming the first Indian woman to secure a medal in this category at these Games. Prior to her historic win, Kumkum had already claimed gold and silver in the women's and mixed team events, respectively, showcasing her exceptional talent. Her journey to the final involved defeating Deepika Kumari, a four-time Olympian and India's first No. 1 ranked archer, a stunning upset that positioned her as a formidable competitor. In the final, Kumkum faced Oh Yejin and after a thrilling shoot-off, she emerged victorious with a score of 6-5.

During the competition, Kumkum exhibited impressive skills, first taking on Kang Chaeyong of Korea, the World Champion and the favorite to win. Displaying remarkable composure, Kumkum took the lead with several high scores, including two 10s in her opening set. Although Kang managed to level the match in subsequent sets, Kumkum maintained her edge and ultimately triumphed 6-4 after executing a flawless final arrow. In her next match against Jingyi Zhu, the world championship silver medallist, Kumkum delivered a flawless performance, winning every set without allowing Zhu a single win. She started strong, and although Zhu responded well, Kumkum held her composure, scoring perfectly in critical moments, and completed the match with a nail-biting final point. This victory marked Kumkum's third medal at the Asian Games, solidifying her status as one of India's premier archers, much to the delight of her supporters and the Indian archery contingent present at the event.

PV Sindhu attacks organizers in harsh post

New Delhi: PV Sindhu has slammed the Asian Games organizers following her quarter-final exit in women's singles, claiming that the demanding schedule had taken its toll and criticizing the lack of video review during her loss to China's Chen Yufei. Sindhu lost 21-11, 18-21, 10-21 to the World No. 4 on Sunday after easily winning the first game. The Indian was tied at 18-18 in the second game when Chen won three consecutive points to take control of the game, forcing a decider and winning 21-10. Sindhu said those three points have remained on her thoughts "My Asian Games campaign is ended, and I'm devastated.

Three points away from completing that quarterfinal. "I keep coming back to those three points," Sindhu posted on social media. The former world champion also stated that the lack of a video review system had exacerbated her dissatisfaction. Sindhu played her quarter-final on Court 4, which did not have video referral, as the system was only used on Courts 1 and 2 during the Asian Games. She felt some of the close line calls could have gone her way and potentially changed the momentum of the second game. The scheduling had also left Sindhu with little time to recover between matches. She played three singles matches in roughly 24 hours, with her third-round contest against Japan's Tomoka Miyazaki ending around 1:30 am on Sunday before she returned to the court for her quarter-final against Chen less than 12 hours later. "Three matches in 18 hours. Back at 3 a.m., out again at 8:30 a.m. It took a toll," Sindhu wrote. The demanding schedule had affected other singles players as well. Unnati Hooda also played three matches in roughly 26 hours before losing to Japan's Akane Yamaguchi in the quarter-finals. The compressed schedule had also drawn criticism from other players at the Asian Games. China's women's doubles World No. 1 Tan Ning said she felt the schedule was unfair, while India's HS Prannoy had questioned the short turnaround times, particularly for players who had competed in the team event. For Sindhu, however, the disappointment of the quarter-final defeat was accompanied by a sense of pride over her fourth Asian Games appearance.

"From my first Asian Games in 2014 to my fourth now, twelve years of giving everything for India," she wrote. "I want to let myself feel that. One painful result cannot define a journey that means so much." Sindhu also made it clear that the defeat had not diminished her desire to continue competing.

Cristiano Ronaldo's strange evening: Portugal defeats Norway 2-1, ending an 18-year run, and Ronaldo is ignored

New Delhi: Even though Portugal won the ongoing UEFA Nations League for the second time in a row on Sunday, it was an odd scenario and undoubtedly Cristiano Ronaldo's first in nearly 20 years at the Ullevaal Stadion in Oslo. After defeating Wales in their campaign opening last week, the former European champions defeated Norway 2-1 to take the lead in Group D. Ronaldo's exclusion from Portugal's starting lineup was unexpected, but it was even more out of the ordinary for him to spend the entire ninety minutes in Oslo as an unused substitute. He was seen warming up and was ready for selection, but he did not play as he watched Portugal win from the sidelines. This was Ronaldo's first in eighteen years. The last time he encountered a similar circumstance was on June 15, 2008, during a group-stage play at Euro 2008, when Luiz Felipe Scolari, the manager of Portugal at the time, made multiple lineup changes for the match against Switzerland after his team had already qualified for the quarterfinals. Portugal was defeated 2-0 in that game. Since then, Ronaldo had either started or come on as a substitute in every Portugal appearance until September 27, 2026. This time, however, Portugal won 2-1, with Joao Felix and Goncalo Ramos scoring the goals after Erling Haaland had levelled the score in the 51st minute. After the match, Portugal coach Jorge Jesus explained that the initial plan was to bring Ronaldo on in the second half, but he changed his mind as the game unfolded. "I had even agreed with him that he would come on for the final half-hour, but the match didn't require it," he said at the post-match press conference. The biggest reason was Ramos, who capitalised on an error from Ørjan Nyland to score Portugal's winner four minutes after Haaland's equaliser. "Gonçalo Ramos was playing well, he had scored a goal, he had another one ruled out, and I felt it wasn't the right moment to take him off," the coach added. Jesus, however, clarified that there was no physical issue involving Ronaldo.

Spain and England secure impressive nations league victories

Paris: World Cup winners Spain were made to work for a 3-1 win against the Czech Republic in the Nations League on Saturday while England sparkled in thrashing Croatia 7-0.

Spain recorded their 41st consecutive unbeaten game thanks to an exquisite finish from Lamine Yamal before goals from Rodri and Mikel Merino in Oviedo.Just as he did at the World Cup, Merino came off the bench midway through the second half and produced a crucial goal at a point in the game when the Czechs seemed to be getting a foothold after Jiri Slama had pulled a goal back.

"They are well drilled, I thought it would be one of the hardest games and that's how it was," Rodri told TVE after Spain claimed a third win from three group games.Harry Kane and Bukayo Saka both scored twice as England overwhelmed Croatia in Rijeka, with Kane taking his record tally for his country to 89 goals.

Thomas Tuchel's side sliced through Slaven Bilic's side to make it two wins from their first three matches in their Nations League group.Real Madrid midfielder Jude Bellingham, restored to the starting line-up after Tuesday's 2-0 win against Czech Republic, also found the net to cap a commanding display featuring three assists.

"That was a 90-minute performance at the highest level from everyone. From the first until the last minute, everyone who started and everyone came from the bench," Tuchel said."We kept the pace up and played through the gaps," the German added."I love the attitude. We always played humble and always got the basics right and that's why it was a complete performance."

Spain sit top of Group 3 of League A with three wins out of three, while World Cup semi-finalists England are second on six points having lost to the new world champions last weekend. Scotland finally got a win under new Belgian coach Sebastien Pocognoli as they beat North Macedonia 2-0 away.An opening goal from Kieron Bowie, his first for his country, was followed by a John McGinn penalty on a night when Andy Robertson won his 100th international cap."I was happy for (Bowie) because it was his first goal. I was really pleased with his performance," Pocognoli said.

Switzerland defeated Slovenia 2-1 thanks to a 10th minute own goal from Erik Janza and a first-half goal from Nottingham Forest winger Dan Ndoye.Like Spain, the Swiss have a full nine points from three games and are top of Group 1 of League B, with Slovenia and the Scots both on four points.

Czechs beat USA to qualify for Davis Cup finals

New Delhi: The Czech Republic shocked the United States 3-2 in Davis Cup qualifying for the second year in a row after Jiri Lehecka defeated Learner Tien in a decisive match. Meanwhile, South Korea advanced to the round of eight for the first time on Saturday. A year ago, in a decisive match in Delray Beach, the Czechs eliminated the Americans at the same level of the second qualifying round when Jakub Mensik unexpectedly defeated Frances Tiafoe. Tomas Berdych's men repeated the feat in similarly dramatic fashion, to the delight of a raucous home crowd in Prague, as Lehecka clinched a 6-3, 7-5 win over world number 13 Tien. The USA are record 32-time winners of the competition but their wait for a first title since 2007 goes on. The Czechs advance to the November eight-team finals in Bologna, where hosts Italy will bid for a fourth straight title. After starting the day locked at 1-1, the USA nudged ahead as Christian Harrison and Austin Krajicek saved four match points to outlast Adam Pavlasek and Patrik Rikl in a thrilling 5-7, 6-3, 7-6 win. Mensik rallied from a set down to defeat Ben Shelton 5-7, 6-4, 6-3, keeping the tie alive. Shelton won a tense first set but Mensik leveled the match with a strong forehand on his set point in the second. The 21-year-old, a semi-finalist at the French Open, secured victory on his second match point. Meanwhile, Lehecka, who previously beat Shelton, won his match against Tien after an early break, clinching the win on his fourth match point.