

Arunachal Christian body alleges bank software blocks ST category

Itanagar, Oct 08: The Arunachal Christian Forum (ACF), the apex Christian body in Arunachal Pradesh, has alleged that the digital banking software of the State Bank of India (SBI) prevents tribal Christians from selecting the “Scheduled Tribe” (ST) category during new account openings and routine Know Your Customer (KYC) updates.

In a formal representation addressed to SBI authorities in Itanagar, the forum stated that whenever an applicant selects “Christian” under the religion field in the bank’s digital portals, the system automatically disables the “Scheduled Tribe” selection and reclassifies the user under the “General” category. Termining this software behavior



“potentially discriminatory,” the ACF emphasized that tribal identity and constitutional benefits in Arunachal Pradesh are granted under the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950, and are not contingent upon an individual’s religious faith.

The forum asserted that SBI is not a competent authority to alter or de-list the constitutional ST status of indigenous citizens who hold valid state-issued ST certificates. It urged the bank management to urgently examine its customer onboarding algorithms,

review KYC application logic, and clarify whether any statutory provision or Reserve Bank of India (RBI) directive permits treating religious affiliation and Scheduled Tribe status as mutually exclusive.

Highlighting the potential disenfranchisement of thousands of indigenous tribal Christians across the state, the ACF requested immediate technical rectifications to ensure digital systems align with constitutional guarantees. The organization has issued a 15-day deadline for SBI authorities to communicate corrective measures, warning that failure to address the technical discrepancy will compel the forum to launch democratic agitations and picket SBI branches across all districts of Arunachal Pradesh.

Three arrested for assault on Nagaland woman in Delhi

Kohima, Oct 08: Delhi Police arrested three men on Wednesday in connection with the alleged harassment and assault of a 28-year-old woman from Nagaland and her friends in the VIP Chanakyapuri diplomatic enclave of the national capital.

According to police officials, the incident occurred late on October 4 in the parking area of a prominent five-star hotel in Chanakyapuri. In her formal complaint lodged at the local police station, the victim stated that she and her friends were waiting in the parking lot when three men arrived in a car. The accused allegedly began misbehaving, directed abusive slurs at her group, and subsequently attempted to forcibly push the victim into their vehicle. When her friends intervened to shield her, a physical scuf-

fle broke out, during which the suspects allegedly assaulted the group before fleeing the scene.

Following the complaint, Chanakyapuri police registered an official First Information Report (FIR) under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) covering assault, criminal intimidation, outraging the modesty of a woman, and attempted abduction. Investigators reviewed high-definition CCTV footage from hotel security cameras and nearby traffic checkpoints to identify the registration details of the suspects’ vehicle. Based on digital surveillance and technical intelligence, police raids were executed across Delhi-NCR, leading to the arrest of all three accused men. The incident triggered

strong reactions from regional leaders and civil society organizations representing North-East communities in Delhi. Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad Sangma publicly condemned the incident as “shameful” and urged the Ministry of Home Affairs and Delhi Police to take the strictest legal action against the perpetrators to ensure safety for women and students from the North-East.

Senior police officials confirmed that the vehicle involved in the crime has been impounded, and further interrogation is underway to establish the precise sequence of events. Authorities reiterated their commitment to maintaining a robust security grid around university hubs and public spaces across the national capital to safeguard citizens from the region.

INDIA bloc intensifies anti-EC protests

New Delhi, Oct 08: The political confrontation between the ruling establishment and opposition parties escalated on Thursday as the INDIA bloc intensified its multi-day agitation demanding the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar, prompting a sharp counterattack from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which accused opposition leaders of intentionally undermining constitutional institutions.

Opposition MPs and senior leaders gathered near Rajghat and central administrative zones in the national capital for a third consecutive day of demonstrations. The bloc called for the immediate scrapping of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, alleging widespread “vote theft” and arbitrary deletions of genuine electors. Prominent leaders, including Lok Sabha Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi, Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge, and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, reiterated that public mobilizations will continue until accountability is established within the poll body. The BJP strongly condemned the street demonstrations, accusing the opposition alliance of attempting to intimidate independent constitutional bodies and subvert legal processes. Union Minister Krishan Pal Gurjar noted that since the SIR matter is pending before the Supreme Court, street agitations represent a deliberate attempt to create political instability and anarchy. BJP spokesperson Pradeep Bhandari further alleged that Rahul Gandhi’s protests aimed to exert undue pressure on the judiciary ahead of scheduled hearings.

Miss Arunachal contestant disqualified following personal life controversy

Itanagar, Oct 08: The Miss Arunachal Organization has formally terminated the candidature of Karbom Taipodia from the Miss Arunachal Contest 2026 – Dirang Edition following an intense public controversy surrounding allegations linked to her personal life.

In an official termination notice issued on Thursday, pageant organizers confirmed that the decision was taken following an internal verification exercise regarding social media content and public allegations concerning her personal affairs. The executive committee stated that Taipodia’s continued association violated the contest’s prescribed code of conduct, moral standards, and eligibility guidelines required of state beauty ambassadors. The organization clarified that Taipodia must immediately



cease representing herself as an official contestant or title contender of Miss Arunachal 2026. Organizers stripped her of all associated privileges, titles, and rights linked to the pageant, emphasizing that the decision was necessary to maintain the credibility, dignity, and integrity of the state-level platform. Pageant officials assured the public that the remaining sched-

ule and fellow participants of the Miss Arunachal 2026 – Dirang Edition would proceed without interruption.

The disqualification sparked widespread debate across local social media networks in Arunachal Pradesh, drawing varied reactions regarding personal accountability, pageant codes of conduct, and public scrutiny. While a cross-section of citizens commended the pageant management for enforcing strict behavioral parameters and safeguarding the competition’s ethos, others called for greater clarity and restraint when evaluating the private lives of young contestants. The Miss Arunachal Organization reiterated that future participants must strictly adhere to established ethical norms to preserve the pageant’s standing as a premier cultural institution in the state.

Ahead of CJP protest, Delhi govt shuts down liquor vends on Oct 9, 10

New Delhi, Oct 08: The Delhi Excise Department issued an official circular ordering all retail liquor vends across the national capital to remain completely closed on October 9 and 10. The preventive measure follows intelligence inputs from the Delhi Police aimed at maintaining public order ahead of a planned mass demonstration by the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) and opposition groups at Jantar Mantar.

According to the order issued by the Excise Department, retail liquor outlets operating under licenses Form L6, L6&FG, L8, L10, and L14 will suspend operations across both days. Excise officials clarified that while retail liquor stores will remain shut citywide to prevent potential localized dis-



ruptions, licensed hotels, bars, clubs, and restaurants will continue serving liquor within their premises under standard operating guidelines.

The precautionary dry-day directive comes as political tensions heighten around the CJP’s agitation calling for the immediate resignation of Chief

Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar over alleged electoral roll discrepancies and “vote theft”. In response, security forces have established an extensive security umbrella across the Central and New Delhi districts. Over 20,000 police and Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) personnel

have been deployed to secure key government installations, regional entry points, and transit corridors leading toward the capital.

Senior Delhi Police officials confirmed that no official permission has been granted for any gathering or demonstration at Jantar Mantar. Security personnel have placed multi-tier barricading along major border checkpoints, deployed over 150 body-worn cameras for real-time crowd surveillance, and established temporary detention facilities in local stadiums as a contingency plan. Law enforcement agencies issued an advisory appealing to the public to avoid participating in unauthorized assemblies and refrain from joining unapproved marches across the city.

Congress steps up protest against CEC

New Delhi, Oct 08: The Congress party, alongside INDIA bloc allies, intensified its nationwide agitation demanding the immediate resignation of Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar over alleged electoral roll discrepancies and “vote theft” linked to the Special Intensive Revision (SIR). Party leadership launched the nationwide “Vote Bachao, Desh Bachao” campaign, escalating demonstrations from state capitals and district headquarters to the national capital. In New Delhi, senior leaders including Lok Sabha Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi, Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge, and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra led sustained protest marches, sit-ins, and demonstrations toward Rajghat and central administrative zones. Opposition leaders reiterated that the ongoing agitation will continue unabated until the poll chief vacates office and structural reforms are introduced to safeguard voter verification processes. The political standoff surged after opposition parties accused the Election Commission of India (ECI) of carrying out unauthorized modifications to Form 6 voter registration procedures during the ongoing SIR exercise. Congress leaders alleged that unilateral administrative alterations led to the arbitrary deletion and exclusion of genuine voters across multiple states.

Assam holds India’s second largest wild elephant population

Guwahati, Oct 08: Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma highlighted on Thursday that Assam holds the second-highest wild elephant population in India, with more than 5,800 Asian elephants inhabiting the state’s forests and designated reserves.

Speaking on human-elephant coexistence and wildlife conservation efforts, the Chief Minister underscored that the gentle giants hold deep cultural, ecological, and historical significance for Assam. Official census data recorded Assam’s elephant population at 5,828 individuals across 43 forest divisions. This reflects a steady and resilient trend in pachyderm numbers, trailing only Karnataka in overall wild elephant abundance across the nation. Sarma highlighted that roughly 82



percent of the state’s elephant population—amounting to over 4,700 animals—resides securely within Assam’s five major designated Elephant Reserves: Chirang-Ripu, Sonitpur, Kaziranga-Karbi Anglong, Dehing-Patkai, and Dhansiri-Lungding. Among these, the Chirang-Ripu Elephant Reserve recorded the highest population density, providing a vital habitat sanctuary along the Himalayan foothills.

However, the Chief Minister acknowledged the rising challenges posed by human-elephant conflict, driven primar-

ily by habitat fragmentation, agricultural expansion, and traditional migration corridor disruptions. To mitigate encounters and protect both human lives and crop yields, the state government has expanded community-based solar fencing, GPS tracking of herds, and early warning systems across vulnerable fringe villages.

Sarma reaffirmed the government’s commitment to securing contiguous forest corridors, reducing linear infrastructure risks like railway track accidents, and encouraging community participation in wildlife stewardship. He emphasized that safeguarding elephant habitats remains central to preserving Assam’s rich natural heritage and ensuring ecological balance across the North-East.

NSCN-IM leaders retract remarks questioning former Chief Minister’s authority

Kohima, Oct 08: Two senior leaders of the NSCN-IM formally retracted their statements questioning former Nagaland Chief Minister Dr. S.C. Jamir’s right to speak on the Naga political issue, following a firm directive issued by the Ao Senden, the apex tribal body of the Ao Naga community.

The controversy stemmed from comments made on September 16 by NSCN-IM Deputy Ato Kilonser V.S. Atem and Steering Committee member R.H. Raising. The insurgent leaders had publicly challenged Jamir’s authority to comment on peace talks following the veteran politician’s September 10 meeting with RSS Chief Mohan Bhagwat in New Delhi to press for an exped-



ited political solution. The NSCN-IM figures asserted that Jamir was not a designated representative of the Naga people and possessed no standing to intervene in ongoing negotiations.

The remarks triggered strong pushback from the Ao Senden, the tribal council representing Jamir’s indig-

enous community. Issuing a strict 15-day deadline for an unconditional withdrawal, the tribal body declared that the Naga political movement is not the exclusive domain of any single organization or faction. It reaffirmed that political differences across the region’s history cannot be used to suppress individ-

ual citizens from voicing perspectives on peace and regional administrative settlements.

Following high-level joint deliberations between NSCN-IM representatives and tribal elders, Atem and Raising issued an official joint retraction statement. The leaders clarified that their previous remarks were never intended to disrespect or hurt the sentiments of the Ao Senden and were being withdrawn forthright in the interest of communal harmony.

The Ao Senden officially accepted the retraction, appealing to all groups across Nagaland to foster mutual respect, uphold free expression, and work collaboratively toward a peaceful political resolution.

HM Amit Shah assures Manipur CM of Centre’s support for peace, progress

New Delhi, Oct 08: Union Home Minister Amit Shah assured Manipur Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh on Thursday that the Central Government will extend full operational and financial support to restore lasting peace, accelerate development, and fulfill the aspirations of the people across the state.

The assurances were conveyed during a high-level review meeting held at the Union Home Minister’s official residence in New Delhi, where Chief Minister Khemchand Singh presented a comprehensive briefing on the current law-and-order sit-

uation, ethnic reconciliation measures, and ongoing relief initiatives across Manipur. During the meeting, the Chief Minister detailed the state government’s administrative steps aimed at strengthening security, managing relief camps, and promoting cross-community dialogue following months of sustained stabilization efforts. Extending a patient hearing to the state leadership, Union Minister Amit Shah appreciated the state government’s sustained efforts toward restoring administrative normalcy and stability. Shah reaffirmed that the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) remains firmly com-

mitted to assisting Manipur in expediting infrastructure development, rehabilitation packages for internally displaced families, and border security enforcement—including the ongoing construction of smart fencing along the 400-kilometer international border with Myanmar. During the security review, the Union Home Minister also confirmed that he will undertake an official visit to Manipur later this month to directly assess ground-level security arrangements, review developmental projects, and engage with civil society delegations representing various ethnic



communities.

Senior officials noted that

the meeting underscores coordinated intelligence sharing and joint operational planning between Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) and state security agencies. Reaffirming the Union Government’s long-term vision for the North-Eastern region, Shah emphasized that sustainable peace, socio-economic rehabilitation, and institutional stability remain top priorities for the Centre. Beyond the immediate security measures, Chief Minister Singh highlighted the state government’s efforts to rebuild vital economic lifelines and restore inter-district supply chains

that were severely impacted during past disruptions. He briefed the Home Minister on ongoing agricultural support initiatives aimed at helping farmers safely cultivate fields in fringe areas, alongside targeted skill-development programs designed to generate sustainable livelihoods for youth in both valley and hill districts.

The delegation also emphasized the crucial role of local community leaders, peace committees, and women’s organizations (Meira Paibis) in fostering trust and facilitating grassroots dialogue across ethnic divides.

Assam Woman Himashree Boro Seen Boarding Train Before Andhra Pradesh Death Assam

Dispur, Oct 08: CCTV footage has emerged showing Assam woman Himashree Boro walking along a railway platform and boarding a moving train shortly before she was found dead beside a railway track in Andhra Pradesh, adding a new element to the investigation into her disappearance and death.

The footage, which is now being examined by railway authorities, shows Boro walking along the platform as a train prepares to depart. At one point, an unidentified man approaches her and appears to speak to her briefly. As the train begins to move, Boro boards the train along with other passengers who can be seen rushing towards the coaches to get inside before it leaves the station.

The same footage appears to show the unidentified man also attempting to board the departing train. However, he subsequently gets off. Investigators are expected to examine the footage closely to determine whether the man had any connection with Boro and whether his interaction with her was significant to the events that followed. Another short video has also surfaced in connection



with Boro's final journey. The video was reportedly recorded by Boro herself while she was travelling on the train and was subsequently sent to a friend. In the footage, she can be seen standing in the aisle of the coach, surrounded by several men.

The identities of the people seen around her have not yet been established. Investigators are also examining when and where the video was recorded and the circumstances under which Boro sent it to her friend. It remains unclear whether the footage contains any indication of what happened to her later. Boro, a resident of Chapaidong near Bonda in Narengi on the outskirts of Guwahati, had travelled

to Visakhapatnam on September 30 as part of an Assamese dance troupe. The group had gone to Andhra Pradesh to participate in a programme. Following the event, Boro began her return journey to Guwahati aboard the Dibrugarh-Kanyakumari Vivek Express. According to her family, Boro was travelling alone during the return journey. Family members said they remained in contact with her while she was travelling and were able to speak to her several times. Their last conversation with her took place at around 1.30 pm on October 6.

After that conversation, however, Boro's phone was switched off. Her family

members repeatedly attempted to contact her but were unable to reach her. Growing concerned about her sudden loss of contact, they began trying to establish her whereabouts and sought assistance from railway authorities and local police.

The family later searched coach S2 of the Vivek Express, where Boro had reportedly been travelling. During the search, they found two bags and documents believed to belong to her. The discovery raised further concerns about her whereabouts, particularly as she could no longer be contacted on her phone.

Her family has also raised allegations concerning the behaviour of some passengers by her family are likely to be central to the probe. As railway police work to piece together Boro's final journey, the newly surfaced CCTV footage and the video reportedly sent by her to a friend could provide important clues. However, until investigators establish the full sequence of events, the circumstances surrounding the Assam woman's disappearance and death remain unresolved.

Assam's Jamugurihat Draws Crowds With Stunning 'Kohua Bon' Blooms

Jamugurihat, Oct 08: With Durga Puja approaching, the landscape of Assam is beginning to take on the familiar colours and character of autumn, marked by the blooming of the iconic 'Kohua Bon' or Saccharum spontaneum. Commonly known as elephant grass in several regions, the plant grows abundantly along riverbanks, wetlands and floodplains, transforming large stretches of the countryside into a striking sea of white.

The annual flowering of Kohua is regarded as one of the most recognisable signs of the arrival of Sharat, or autumn, in Assam. Its appearance is closely associated with the festive season and is traditionally seen as a natural indication that Durga Puja is approaching. The delicate white plumes of the grass sway in the breeze, creating a distinctive autumn landscape that has long been part of Assam's cultural and seasonal identity.

For generations, the blooming of Kohua has held a special place in the collective memory of people across the state. As the monsoon gradually retreats and the skies become clearer, the grass begins to flower, signalling the transition from the rainy season to autumn. The sight is particularly striking along the banks of the Brahmaputra and other rivers, where extensive stretches of Kohua can create a continuous blanket of white.

The seasonal transformation is not merely a natural phenomenon but is deeply connected with Assam's festive



traditions. The arrival of the white Kohua plumes is often associated with Sharadi Rani, a beloved name used for Goddess Durga during the autumn festival. The flowers and their surroundings evoke the anticipation and excitement that traditionally build in the weeks leading up to Durga Puja.

The connection between Kohua and the festival has continued across generations. In many parts of Assam, the flowering grass is considered an important visual symbol of the festive season. Its appearance in the countryside often reminds people that the days of celebration are drawing closer, bringing with them preparations for

puja, cultural programmes, community gatherings and the decoration of pandals.

The graceful white plumes of Kohua also contribute to the distinctive beauty of Assam during autumn. As the flowers move gently with the wind, they create scenic landscapes that attract residents and visitors alike.

Riverbanks and open floodplain areas covered with the blooming grass often become popular spots for people looking to experience the seasonal beauty of the state. growth, particularly along riverbanks and flood-prone landscapes. Its flowering period coincides with the change.

GHADC Term Extended by Another Six Months

Shillong, Oct 08: The Meghalaya Cabinet on Wednesday approved a further six-month extension of the term of the Garo Hills Autonomous District Council (GHADC), allowing the state government additional time to complete the electoral process and conduct elections to the council. Cabinet spokesperson Wailadmiki Shylla said the decision was necessary as key preparations for the elections, including the delimitation exercise and the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, are still in progress. The government has indicated that the additional time will be used to complete these processes before voters are called to the polls.

The previous six-month extension granted to the GHADC is scheduled to expire on October 17. With the latest decision, the council will receive another six months, taking its extended tenure into April next year. Shylla said the Cabinet was hopeful that the required administrative and electoral procedures could be completed during the additional period, allowing elections to be held once the necessary groundwork is finished.

Manipur Police Bust Inter-State Codeine Syrup Network, Suspected Kingpin Held

Imphal, Oct 08: Manipur Police have arrested the proprietor of a pharmaceutical store in Imphal who is suspected of being a key figure in an alleged inter-state network involved in the illegal procurement and distribution of codeine-based cough syrup, officials said. The arrest followed a series of operations carried out by the police as part of an investigation into the alleged movement of codeine-based pharmaceutical drugs. During the operations, authorities recovered 8,638 bottles of the cough syrup, officials said, indicating the scale of the suspected network being investigated.

The alleged kingpin has been identified as Nongthombam Jamesjit, also known as Thoi, who owns Kangla Drugs & Surgical Pharmacy at Naoremthong Bazar in Imphal West. According to police, Jamesjit was arrested in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, late on October 6 following an investigation that reportedly traced the suspected network beyond Manipur. After his arrest, investigators obtained a four-day transit remand from the concerned court in Gujarat. The accused was subsequently brought back to Manipur, where police are questioning him as part of the ongoing investigation



into the alleged illegal procurement and distribution of codeine-based cough syrup. Officials said the recovery of 8,638 bottles of the pharmaceutical drug was made during a series of coordinated operations.

The seizures are being examined as part of the wider probe to determine the source of the cough syrup, its intended destinations and the individuals allegedly involved in its movement.

The investigation is focused on establishing how the pharmaceutical products were procured and transported and whether they were being distributed through an organised inter-state network. Police are also examining the role of other individuals and entities that may have been connected to the alleged op-

eration. The arrest of Jamesjit in Ahmedabad suggests that investigators are looking beyond Manipur as they attempt to trace the suspected supply chain. Authorities are expected to examine his movements, business dealings and contacts in different states to determine whether the alleged network operated across multiple locations. Codeine-based cough syrups are legitimate pharmaceutical products when used under medical supervision and in accordance with applicable regulations. However, their misuse and unauthorised distribution have become a concern for law-enforcement agencies because codeine is an opioid substance and can be abused. Police have been conducting investigations into the illegal circulation of such pharma-

ceutical products in different parts of the country. In the Manipur case, investigators are now attempting to determine whether the seized bottles were intended for legitimate medical use or were allegedly being diverted for unauthorised distribution. The recovery of thousands of bottles has prompted authorities to examine the documentation associated with the pharmaceutical products.

Investigators are likely to verify purchase records, transportation documents, supplier details and other relevant records to establish how the consignments were obtained and moved. The role of Kangla Drugs & Surgical Pharmacy is also under investigation. As the probe is closed, the full details of the alleged inter-state network or identified all the locations through which the pharmaceutical products may have been transported. Investigators are continuing to gather evidence before determining the extent of the operation. The 8,638 bottles recovered during the operations are now likely to form an important part of the evidence in the case. Authorities will examine the seized products and related documentation to establish their origin, distribution chain and intended use.

13 Lakh Tonnes of Inventoried Coal Missing in Meghalaya

Shillong, Oct 08: A committee appointed by the High Court has highlighted the continuing irregularities surrounding coal in Meghalaya, reporting an undisputed shortage of 13,02,456.184 metric tonnes of inventoried coal. The panel has also noted that none of the abandoned rat-hole mines in the state have been closed or fenced, despite repeated directions issued by the courts over the years.

The findings were presented in the 41st interim report of the single-member committee headed by retired Justice B.P. Katakay.

The report points to persistent shortcomings in the state's handling of coal that had already been extracted and calls for a detailed investigation to determine where responsibility lies for the missing stock and the continued failure to secure abandoned mining sites. The committee was constituted by the Meghalaya High Court in April 2022 to monitor the implementation of directions issued by the Supreme Court and the National Green Tribunal in connection with the long-running legal battle over unscientific and illegal rat-hole coal mining in the state.

The latest report highlights concerns over both the management of inventoried coal and the condition of abandoned mining areas.

According to the committee, the shortage of more than 13 lakh metric tonnes cannot be disputed based on the records examined. The panel has called for the matter to be investigated in detail so that those responsible for the discrepancy can be identified. The issue is linked to Meghalaya's long-running problem of rat-hole mining, a practice in which narrow tunnels are dug into coal seams to extract coal. The method has been widely criticised for posing serious risks to workers and causing significant environmental damage, including the contamination of water sources and degradation of land. Legal proceedings over the practice intensified after a series of fatal accidents and growing concerns over environmental destruction. In 2014, the National Green Tribunal imposed a ban on unscientific rat-hole coal mining in Meghalaya. The dispute subsequently reached the Supreme Court, which examined the legality of the mining activity and the state's responsibility for coal that had already been extracted. The Supreme Court later modified aspects of the earlier arrangements in 2019 while retaining regulatory oversight. It also directed that the inventoried coal be handed over to Coal India Limited for auctioned procedures.

Four Suspected Bangladeshi Nationals Held in Dispur

Dispur, Oct 08: Four individuals suspected to be Bangladeshi nationals have been detained by Dispur Police in Guwahati for questioning, days after a separate operation in the city led to the apprehension of several people suspected to be foreign nationals.

According to police officials, the four individuals were identified in the Dispur area and subsequently taken into custody as authorities began verifying their identities and backgrounds. Police are currently examining documents and other available information to establish their nationality and determine the circumstances under which they entered Guwahati. The latest detention is part of ongoing efforts by law-enforcement agencies to identify and verify individuals suspected of residing or travelling in the city without valid documentation. Officials have not yet confirmed the nationality of the four detainees, stressing that the verification process is still underway. Police are also examining whether the individuals possess valid travel or identity documents and activities in Guwahati are expected to be reviewed as part of the inquiry.

Three Arrested Over Alleged Attack on Naga Woman and Friends



Kohima, Oct 08: Three men have been arrested in connection with an alleged assault involving a woman from Nagaland and her friends in Chanakyapuri area, police said on Wednesday. The incident reportedly took place on October 4 in the parking area of a five-star hotel in the diplomatic enclave.

According to Delhi Police, the three accused were taken into custody following an investigation into the alleged altercation. The woman, who is from Nagaland, was reportedly present at the hotel along with her friends when the inci-

dent occurred. Police said the alleged assault took place in the hotel's parking area, following which the matter was brought to the attention of the authorities.

The incident has drawn attention because of the alleged assault involving a woman from one of the capital's prominent areas. Chanakyapuri is known for its diplomatic establishments, luxury hotels and high-security surroundings.

The police are examining the circumstances that led to the alleged confrontation and the events that followed. Officials said the three men were arrested after preliminary inquiries into the case. Investigators are also working to establish the sequence of events surrounding the alleged assault and determine the individual roles of those arrested.

Lawyers Protest, Demand AG's Removal

Shillong, Oct 08: Hundreds of lawyers from different parts of Meghalaya took to the streets of Shillong on Wednesday, demanding the immediate removal of Advocate General Amit Kumar and raising questions over the alleged lack of transparency surrounding public expenditure incurred by his office. The protest march was organised by the High Court of Meghalaya Bar Association and the Shillong Bar Association, with lawyers and representatives from several districts, including Garo Hills, Jaintia Hills and West Khasi Hills. High Court Bar Association secretary general K.C. Gautam said the issue was not money was being used for running the Advocate General's office.

Manipur 35-Year-Old Man Held With 785g Suspected Brown Sugar

Imphal, Oct 08: Churachandpur Police arrested a 35-year-old man in Manipur's Churachandpur district on October 7 and recovered around 785 grams of suspected brown sugar from his possession, police said. The suspected narcotic substance was allegedly packed in 60 soap cases, which were seized during the operation. According to the police, the accused was identified as Ngamkhojang Kipgen, son of Jangmang Kipgen of Tuidam Village in Churachandpur district. He is currently residing at Lhangnem Village.

Police said Kipgen was apprehended during an operation carried out in the district, following which the suspected contraband was recovered. The seizure of the suspected



brown sugar was made along with a Pulsar motorcycle allegedly found in the possession of the accused.

The motorcycle has also been taken into custody as part of the investigation, police said. Officials said the recovery formed part of an ongoing effort to curb the illegal

trafficking and distribution of narcotic substances in Churachandpur and other parts of Manipur.

The police have been conducting operations against suspected drug-related activities and are verifying the circumstances surrounding the seized substance. The sus-

pected brown sugar, weighing approximately 785 grams, was reportedly divided into several packages and kept inside 60 soap cases.

The manner in which the substance was allegedly packaged is also being examined by investigators as they work to determine its intended destination and possible links to a wider supply network. Police said the accused was taken into custody following the recovery. Further investigation is underway to establish the source of the suspected narcotic substance and determine whether other individuals were involved in its procurement, transportation or distribution. The identity of the accused has been established as Ngamkhojang Kipgen, a resident originally associated

with Tuidam Village. Police records indicate that he is the son of Jangmang Kipgen and is presently residing at Lhangnem Village. The Pulsar motorcycle recovered during the operation is also expected to form part of the investigation. Following the arrest, the accused will be dealt with according to the applicable legal provisions.

The seized substance, motorcycle and other relevant materials will form part of the case records as the investigation progresses.

Police have not yet disclosed further details regarding the suspected source of the brown sugar or its intended destination. Officials are continuing to gather evidence and verify information related to the case.

Punjab CBI investigation: SC rejects an interim decision and delays the state’s appeal

New Delhi, Oct 08: The Punjab government’s challenge to a high court order instructing the Central Bureau of Investigation to file a criminal case into alleged corruption connected to chief minister Bhagwant Mann’s office was postponed by one day by the Supreme Court on Thursday. The court refused to issue any interim orders against the investigation until both judges on the bench had had a chance to review the case.

After senior counsel Vikas Singh, speaking on behalf of the Punjab government, emphasized the urgency and requested an interim directive that the CBI and Enforcement Directorate “may not precipitate the matter,” a panel of justices Dipankar Datta and Sheel Nagu consented to hear the case on Friday. Justice Datta, however, made it clear that such an order could not be passed without Justice Nagu having an opportunity to peruse the petition. “How can we pass this order when the file did not reach the other judge,” Justice Datta told Singh. The bench was informed that Justice Nagu, the puisne judge seated on the bench, had not received the case file in a timely manner. Singh pushed for the case to be heard as soon as possible, but he consented to the postponement so that Justice Nagu could consider the state government’s challenge. The head of the bench, Justice Datta, then consented to schedule the case for Friday. Singh also raised a possible issue concerning Justice Nagu’s participation in the case, pointing out that the judge, while



serving as chief justice of the Punjab and Haryana high court, had dealt with some matters concerning the petitioners in the Supreme Court case -- Punjab director general of police Gaurav Yadav and the chief director. Singh clarified that those proceedings were unrelated to the present case Justice Nagu said he would need to examine the file before taking a call on whether he could hear the matter.

The case has unfolded against a charged political backdrop in Punjab, with assembly elections due early next year and the Mann government alleging that the CBI and ED action is politically motivated targeting by the BJP. The development came a day after the CBI’s first steps under the high court’s October 5 order, including searches at eight locations across

Punjab and the summoning of Punjab chief minister Bhagwant Mann’s officer on special duty (OSD), Rajbir Singh Ghuman, and five others in the corruption case. On Wednesday, Ghuman and the five co-accused failed to show up at the CBI’s Chandigarh headquarters. Although the chief minister’s office claimed that Ghuman had not received an official summons, sources suggested that the accused had also postponed his appearance until the Supreme Court had had a chance to review the Punjab government’s case. Around midnight on October 5, the CBI filed a 251-page FIR against Ghuman, claimed middleman Nitin Gohal, his brother Jitin Gohal, also known as Raja, Romi Raja Mahajan, Bir Devinder, and RS Nagra.

After videos of three Hyderabad men performing stunts on scooters went viral, they were arrested

New Delhi, Oct 08: Three males have been taken into custody for riding on public highways in Hyderabad without license plates, speeding carelessly, and engaging in risky bike stunts.

The three were seen riding three Honda Dio scooters at high speed and engaging in potentially fatal stunts on a flyover on October 6, according to police, which prompted the filing of a



complaint. Additionally, they shared several videos of themselves doing wheelies and other antics on Instagram, which went viral. The police registered a

case following a complaint and launched a hunt. The three accused were identified as Mohammed Mohi-nuddin alias Mohin (24), Mohammed Rizwan (21), and Tohid (19). They were subsequently arrested. The police issued a warning that driving on the wrong side of the road, removing license plates, speeding, and engaging in stunts on flyovers and public roadways

may result in severe legal repercussions. According to police, traffic infractions are being identified through social media monitoring and CCTV footage. Additionally, police warned parents that if their cars are used in harmful ways, they may face legal repercussions and recommended them not to provide them to children or those without legitimate driver’s licenses.

In the Slapgate Row, Delhi Police and Parvesh Verma are asked to respond by the High Court

New Delhi, Oct 08: On Thursday, the Delhi High Court asked the city police and Deputy Chief Minister Parvesh Verma to respond to a request for an impartial investigation into the alleged slapping of an AAP worker by the leader.

The police and Verma were notified of the petition by Justice Sachin Datta, who also requested that they provide a response to the progress report. The maintainability of the plea, which also requested police



protection for petitioner Sahib Singh and his family,

M’laya has a mere Rs 6 crore revenue surplus due to the spending spike

Shillong, Oct 08: According to the most recent provisional accounts of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India, Meghalaya’s revenue surplus has essentially vanished in the first five months of the current fiscal year, dropping to just Rs 6.39 crore by the end of August 2026 from Rs 833.27 crore during the same period last year.

To put it simply, the state’s daily expenses now devour nearly all of its normal revenue. Revenue receipts stood at Rs 6,647.62 crore by August 2026, marginally lower than Rs 6,691.30 crore during the same period of 2025-26, while revenue expenditure climbed sharply to Rs 6,641.23 crore, from Rs 5,858.03 crore a year earlier. This means that while the state’s regular income has remained broadly flat, the cost of running the government and meeting its recurring commitments has increased substantially. Revenue expenditure rose by about 13.4 per cent in a year, leaving only Rs 6.39 crore as a surplus. The pressure is particularly significant because Meghalaya has budgeted for a revenue surplus of Rs 4,771.02 crore for 2026-27. By the end of August, only about 0.13 per cent of that projected surplus had materialised. During the corresponding period last year, the state had achieved 16.55 per cent of its annual revenue-surplus target.

A major part of the increase has come from the state’s regular commitments. Expenditure on the core revenue account, excluding interest, salaries, pensions and subsidies, increased to Rs 3,146.49 crore, from Rs 2,686.74 crore. Salary and wage spending climbed from Rs 1,926.83 crore to Rs 2,127.98 crore, and pension spending went from Rs 824.78 crore to Rs 929.59 crore. Additionally, interest payments went up from Rs 418.59 crore to Rs 437.17 crore. When combined, these numbers demonstrate why the state’s finances are strained: a

number of the biggest expenditures are ongoing obligations that must be fulfilled regardless of whether income increase at the same rate. Meghalaya has been investing more in asset creation at the same time. By August, capital expenditure had increased by around 34% to Rs 1,076.99 crore from Rs 803.15 crore during the same time last year.

Compared to 11.48 percent of the previous year’s budget at the same stage, the capital expenditure thus far amounts to 14.48 percent of the Rs 7,439.10 crore capital expenditure budget for 2026-2027.

However, there hasn’t been a similar rise in revenue. In comparison to the same period previous year, tax revenue decreased to Rs 5,348.39 crore from Rs 5,527.17 crore. There were some areas of improvement. GST collections increased from Rs 743.89 crore to Rs 844.98 crore, while sales tax collections rose from Rs 405.05 crore to Rs 451.20 crore. But these gains were outweighed by a fall in Meghalaya’s share of Union taxes, which declined from Rs 4,059.46 crore to Rs 3,725.40 crore. For the common taxpayer, the broad picture is therefore straightforward: the state has not seen a significant increase in its regular income so far, while its spending commitments and development expenditure have risen. The cushion in the revenue account has been drastically diminished by the combination.

The state’s revenue condition and overall fiscal situation continue to diverge. Compared to the budget forecast of Rs 2,671.67 crore for the full fiscal year, the fiscal deficit at the end of August was Rs 1,060.25 crore. According to the records, capital receipts and borrowings make for a significant portion of the state’s overall funding, with total receipts of Rs 7,718.23 crore compared to total expenditures of Rs 7,718.22 crore.

23,000 Workers, Barricading: Delhi Gets Ready for Saturday’s CJP Protest

New Delhi, Oct 08: In anticipation of the Cockroach Janta Party’s (CJP) nationwide demonstration against Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar on October 10, Delhi is preparing by deploying a large amount of security and advising neighboring states to stay vigilant. There are about 23,000 members of the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) stationed in the nation’s capital. In addition to the extra 110 CAPF units given to the Delhi Police, the Union Home Ministry authorized the deployment of 221 CAPF units between October 8 and 12.

These include 85 Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) companies, 10 Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB), seven Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), seven Rapid Action Force (RAF), and one Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) company. Additionally, 20,000 Delhi Police personnel will be deployed during the

protest. During the CJP’s July Jantar Mantar protest, approximately 150 CAPF companies were deployed, while 93 were deployed during the farmers’ protest. All of Delhi’s borders will be strictly monitored, according to sources. According to sources, the police will probably close all New Delhi Metro stations and might even close marketplaces if needed. They added that a multi-layered barrier will be in place and that CCTV cameras will be used for surveillance from the control room. Face Recognition System cameras will be placed around the nation’s capital, according to officials.

Additionally, BNSS 163, which gives the Executive Magistrate the authority to issue urgent instructions to preserve public order, will be in effect. According to sources, protests and public meetings will not be allowed, and bus terminals and train stations will also be monitored. Uttar Pradesh and Haryana are

among the neighboring states that have been warned to stay vigilant throughout the demonstrations. On Wednesday, Saurav Das, the spokesperson for the CJP, declared that the head of the poll body would be the target of a nationwide demonstration on October 10 at Jantar Mantar. Speaking to the media, he promised to formally notify the Delhi Police about the planned protest and to work with them on security, law and order, and traffic preparations.

The statement coincided with a large-scale demonstration by the INDIA bloc against the Election Commission in Delhi, where a number of leaders, including Rahul Gandhi of the Congress, were arrested before being freed. Today at 1:45 PM, the Opposition MPs will gather at a cafe to talk about yesterday’s events and the future plan. After the meeting, they will probably march to Rajghat.

Security Is Increased During Protests At the residence and workplace of Gyanesh Kumar



New Delhi, Oct 08: Gyanesh Kumar, the chief election commissioner, has a Z+ security cover. Sources claim that in light of the demonstrations against him this week, led by Rahul Gandhi, who accuses the top poll body official of “vote theft,” that cover is now being strengthened even further.

The Congress and Opposition INDIA bloc’s refusal to back down on Gyanesh Kumar’s resignation due to purported flaws in the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of election registers has escalated the street protests.

The action was taken in response to rallies outside his family’s home at a different location and protesters ap-

proaching his home. Extra security has been deployed at his Delhi residence, Election Commission office and for his personal security, sources say. Sources say there will be a 24-hour police presence around the Chief Election Commissioner’s residence. Security changes were made based on the current threat perception, sources said. Rahul Gandhi said that the Congress and INDIA bloc would continue to take to the streets, face arrests and legal cases to “save the Constitution and democracy”. In a post on X, Gandhi said, “To save the Constitution and democracy, the Congress Party and the opposition are ready to take to the streets as many

times as needed, face arrests, or endure legal cases.” The Indian Express reported that Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi objected on record at least 14 times over the previous ten months to decisions and orders on the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process that they claimed were issued without their knowledge or recommendation. This led to the Opposition’s attack on the Chief Election Commissioner. The poll authority, which has come under fire for red flags raised by two of its commissioners, has maintained that all of its directives bear full legal sanction and adhere to established statutory procedures, and that differing opinions and observations are a part of debates in any institution. “We are not going to stop protesting till Gyanesh Kumar resigns. This is a fight to protect the most sacred thing in this country.

There is nothing that Narendra Modi and Amit Shah can do that will stop us,” Gandhi said. On Wednesday, the second day of Congress protests, there were several dramatic moments in the nearly three-hour-long bus procession and an impromptu sit-in at the roundabout in front of the Shangri-La hotel when the opposition MPs were stopped by security personnel, with

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra lying flat on her back on the street, clutching a copy of the Constitution, along with other women leaders.

Rahul Gandhi kept resisting police attempts to put him inside a van for detention. The INDIA bloc leaders jostled with security personnel who tried to detain them and clear the area. On FIR’s registered against the Congress leaders, including Rahul Gandhi, he said, “You may register as many cases as you want; we are not going to be scared.” The Cockroach Janata Party, or CJP, has called for a protest against Gyanesh Kumar at Jantar Mantar on October 10. The AAP said its protests over the issue has continued since October 2, with party leaders and workers participating in demonstrations. Earlier in September, Congress workers staged a protest outside Gyanesh Kumar’s Agra residence, shouting anti-Kumar slogans and spray-painting the front gate and a wall. Using spray paint, the demonstrators wrote “Gyanesh Gaddar Gyanesh Chor” in Hindi, referring to the CEC as a “thief” and a “traitor” on the house’s main gate and wall. Social media was then used to share images of the demonstration and the vandalism.

30 child scientists from Jharkhand to participate in the National INSPIRE Awards; competition to be held in Delhi

Ranchi, Oct 08: 30 child scientists from Jharkhand will leave for Delhi on October 10 to participate in the 12th National Inspire Award - Standards Competition. The competition will be organized by the National Innovation Foundation under the aegis of the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India from 12 to 14 October at Bharat Mandapam, Delhi.

The team of child scientists will leave for Delhi from Ranchi railway station on October 10. Director of Secondary Education Rajesh Kumar will flag off the team by encouraging the child scientists. The event will feature state-level winners for the years 2023-24 and 2024-25. The INSPIRE Award is a platform for innovation and scientific thinking of school students across the country. Selected 30 child scientists from Jharkhand will showcase their projects



and innovations in the national level competition. Here, an online meeting was held at the state level regarding the INSPIRE Award-Standard nomination for the year 2026. Regional Education Joint Director-cum-State Nodal Officer Neelam Aileen Toppo told the meeting that the district-level science exhibi-

tion-cum-project competition would be held offline.

Assistant State Nodal Officer Dr Shah Nawaz Qureshi said that 39,570 nominations have been made in Jharkhand so far. The last date for nominations is October 10. The department aims to complete 50 thousand nominations by the last date. Palamu tops the district-wise figures. Palamu has 4,596 nominations and ranks first in the state. Dhanbad came second with 2,828 nominations, Ranchi third with 2,636, Hazaribagh fourth with 2,590 and East Singhbhum fifth with 2,490 nominations. Palamu has also made its place at the national level. It is the only district in Jharkhand to feature in the top 50 districts with the highest number of nominations in the country. All the districts have been instructed by the department to nominate as many students as possible by the last date and meet the target.

A central interministerial group starts a trip across Maharashtra to evaluate the state of the drought



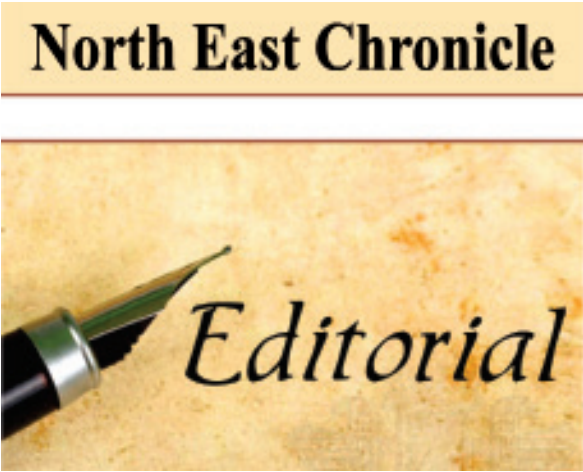
New Delhi, Oct 08: In order to evaluate the drought situation, an 11-person central interministerial panel began its tour to Maharashtra

on Thursday. For the next four days, they will go to Western Maharashtra, Marathwada, and Vidarbha as three teams. On the final day, the group will meet with state government authorities in Mumbai. Chhatrapati Sambhaji-nagar, Beed, and Jalna will be visited by the first team; Ahilyanagar, Solapur, and Pune will be visited by the second team; Nagpur and Yavatmal will be visited by the third team.

The group began touring the state a

day after chief minister Devendra Fadnavis met Union home minister Amit Shah and requested him for interim ₹17,500 crore financial assistance. “The group will conduct ground inspections and verify the situation. Its report will be submitted to the NDRF [National Disaster Response Force], which will consider the findings along with the state government’s proposal before deciding on assistance,” he said after meeting Shah. The state admin-

istration has requested ₹13,000 crore in interim relief for crop losses and ₹4,500 crore for managing fodder in the face of scarcity. 265 of Maharashtra’s 358 talukas (74%) have reported drought. According to Fadnavis, 32 districts in 80% of the state are experiencing drought. According to an official, state officials and the central interministerial group are scheduled to meet on Sunday to discuss the drought and the relief package.



Unlocking Northeast’s organic growth

The Estimates Committee of the parliament has renewed its push for enhancing direct assistance to farmers under the Mission Organic Value Chain Development for the Northeastern Region (MOVCDNER), reinforcing the urgency of scaling certified organic farming across the Northeast. The committee, reiterating its recommendation, follows a non-committal position taken by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare (Department of Agricultural Research & Education), signalling the need for stronger policy clarity. The parliamentary panel’s observation that the current financial support of Rs 46,000 per hectare under the scheme might not be sufficient to fully alleviate the financial strain farmers experience during the first three to four years, as the yields tend to lower and the economic burden remains heavier during this period, highlights the importance of bridging the early-stage viability gap. When this gap remains unbridged, small farmers find it increasingly difficult to continue with organic farming. The Committee’s report points out that under MOVCDNER, assistance of Rs. 46,500 per ha over three years is provided for the creation of Farmers Producer Organisations, support to farmers for organic input, etc. Out of the entire value chain from the farm gate to the end consumer, the total assistance, Rs. 32,500 per ha, is provided to farmers for off-farm/on-farm organic inputs under the scheme, including Rs. 15,000 as a direct benefit transfer to the farmer. The report highlighted that in the Action Taken Reply, the Ministry had not specifically replied to the recommendation of the committee regarding enhancement of financial assistance during the transition period, extension of the support period beyond three years, review of Market Development Assistance and strengthening of market mechanisms, including digital platforms and premium pricing for organic produce. Another critical observation by the committee is that the Ministry is silent on various issues such as measures proposed for enhancing financial support for organic inputs and certification, addressing shortages of bio-fertilisers through establishment of local production units, strengthening market linkages and retail infrastructure or promoting organic tourism, which lay bare deep execution deficits that continue to create a barrier between intent and achievement. The ministry must take urgent steps to establish local biofertiliser production units and dedicated organic retail outlets in urban centres to improve market access and ensure fair prices for organic products, as well as institutionalise the current 20-30% premium for organic products through a system of Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) for major organic crops, as recommended by the committee, to bridge these implementation gaps. While traditional farming in

the region, especially among most indigenous communities, is organic by default, the commercial viability of the produce remains low as modern markets and consumers insist on formal organic certification for authenticity. The Committee’s recommendation to establish a unified organic label for products under both certification systems – the National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP) and the Participatory Guarantee System (PGS-India) – for consistency in marketing, boosting consumer confidence, and simplifying the identification of authentic organic production offers a pragmatic solution. Simplifying the certification procedure by reducing costs and exploring digital solutions to streamline the application process and monitoring, ensuring accessibility for small farmers as insisted by the Committee, is pivotal to ensure the transformation of subsistence organic farming in the region to commercial farming. A rise in the export of organically grown agricultural and horticultural produce has demonstrated the region’s potential to diversify its export basket. Strengthening the organic certification ecosystem through the establishment of more laboratories and making the process of obtaining such certificates easy and affordable for small farmers is crucial to achieving the primary objectives of MOVCDNER. Providing handholding support to entrepreneurs in the sector from the region on branding and labelling of organic products is another essential requirement to tap into the potential of domestic and global markets. As e-commerce and quick commerce become more popular among consumers, there is an increasing expectation for organic products from the region to be readily available across all digital marketplaces, accompanied by clear labelling and attractive branding. Scaling the business of organic products from the region demands strengthening of the entire value chain from the farm gate to the end consumers. This calls for making the value chain strong at every stage, from production and aggregation to processing, branding, transportation and consumer access.

A successful business model will improve economic returns for farmers and help preserve their traditional knowledge embedded in organic farming practice. The traditional farming system of indigenous communities from the region has shaped vibrant cultural heritage, and, therefore, promotion of commercially viable and market-orientated organic farming is also crucial for preservation of their rich cultural heritage. Building awareness of the scheme and the importance of strengthening commercial organic farming, especially among young members of the farm families, is essential to sustain the momentum of organic farming pushed by the central and state governments across the region.

Navigating turbulence: India and Washington face a critical test

Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman’s statement that the negotiations with the US for a trade deal have reached a “plateau” reflects the challenges the world is facing from the Trump administration’s maximalist and mercantilist orientation. Last month, India faced yet another transgression at the hands of the US. The US Congress passed the Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act of 2026. This legislation allows the imposition of up to 100% tariffs on countries buying Russian oil. Democratic senator Richard Blumenthal was clear about who this targets. “China and India, you better buy your oil and gas somewhere else,” he warned. In this tumultuous phase of the Washington-New Delhi relationship that Trump 2.0 is — marked by the killing of Indian seafarers, AI access woes, ebbs and flows in tariff impositions — the Indian response has largely been to play down the transgressions while simultaneously working to mitigate the impact.

This constraint has been partly on account of the economic and military disparity between the US and India. While a mushrooming India-US relationship spanning investment and tech domains has been in New Delhi’s interest, constraints need not define India’s response when subjected to coercion. Every country, irrespective of its size, economy, or military might, holds some leverage. India should not wait for a future moment when it is more powerful to exercise leverage over the US when it has a menu of options to consider today. Drawing from the work of Thomas Schelling, we define leverage “as the ability of a State to absorb a high cost and yet be willing to impose costs and cause pain to others.” While factors such as reversibility and clarity of signalling help us assess leverage, asymmetry of vulnerability (who suffers more when the leverage option is exercised) and political salience in the target State (does the leverage option

generate domestic political pain in the target State) are most significant. Given the democratic structure of the US, politically salient measures mean that grievances from even small but consequential constituencies can be channelled to the US Congress and the White House thereby leading to potential policy change. If asymmetry of vulnerability and political salience are plotted in a 2x2 matrix, India should act in areas where high asymmetry intersects with high salience. We suggest some options here for New Delhi’s consideration. These options are not rigid; rather, they allow for flexibility and reversibility based on evolving US behaviour. The first option is to change the defence procurement approach with respect to US contractors. India has been a significant buyer of US arms for more than a decade, with a recent Congressional Research Service document pegging the number at \$25 billion for the last two decades. The same document

claims that India is the largest operator of two US platforms outside America: C-17 Globemaster heavy transport and P-8I Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft. Even a public announcement, short of awarding a contract, of New Delhi finding alternative suppliers for big-ticket defence purchases would likely activate the lobbying efforts of US defence contractors who are deeply enmeshed in the US polity. This option is reversible, as excluded US defence contractors can be included in future procurement cycles even if India’s actions go beyond public announcements (to actually awarding contracts to non-US players). Second, India can establish an equivalent of China’s State Administration for Market Regulation (SAMR) to target mergers and acquisitions that involve US companies with market presence in India. China’s SAMR has blocked Intel’s acquisition of Tower Semiconductor and delayed Broadcom’s acquisition of VMware. India,

a future growth market for the US private sector, can similarly target e-commerce, social media, payments and cloud companies. Beyond these two leverage options in the sweet spot (intersection of high asymmetry and high political salience), India can also consider the option which offers relatively high asymmetry but low political salience: freeing the implementation of foundational defence agreements such as the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement, Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement and Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement. This would affect US force projection capabilities in the Indian Ocean Region, but may not necessarily generate lobbying efforts by specific groups in the US polity. This measure might also be relatively difficult to reverse.

India’s external affairs ministry has already set the tone for New Delhi’s response to the latest tariff salvo: “The Indian side has also made clear

its determination to take all necessary measures to protect its trade and economic interests.” In furtherance of this posture, New Delhi can consider the leverage options that we have listed here. This not to argue that any of the Indian measures against the US will not carry consequences for India. They would carry a cost, but they would still convey New Delhi’s red lines. In normal times, all of them are bad options. But these are not normal times given the deterioration of the US-India relationship in the Trump 2.0 era, the withering of bipartisan consensus on India’s significance due to upheavals in the US polity, and the overall difficult geopolitical environment India finds itself in. While India must build geopolitical backstops in the future by architecting sectoral plurilateral blocs in areas such as space, digital public infrastructure and AI, it should not wait for that future to exercise leverage options when faced with transgressions today.

Bagan’s forgotten Bengali roots: India’s lost art legacy in Myanmar

Barely a few hours’ drive from a frontier of the Myanmar civil war, in a dark corridor covered in bat droppings, are the most glorious surviving murals produced by medieval Bengali artists. They cover the wall from floor to ceiling, still retaining some of their lustre. You can still make out in the delicate black outlines, the deftly-painted fingers, the painstakingly rendered textiles the hands of several master artists.

The kingdom of Bagan was Myanmar’s most powerful medieval state. Established in the ninth century and wiped out by the Mongols in the 13th century, it was an almost exact contemporary of South India’s Chola empire. Like the Cholas, the apogee of Bagan was in the 11th century, when two successive kings, Anawrahta or Aniruddha (r. 1044–1077 CE) and Kyanzitha (r. 1084–1112/13), established their authority over neighbouring polities and sent out several high-profile embassies. Kyanzitha, for example, wrote a letter with vermilion ink on gold leaf to an Indian ruler called the “Choli prince” — very possibly the Chola emperor Kulottunga I (r. 1070–1122). His letter, he claimed, convinced the Choli to “cast off his adherence to false doctrine” and convert to Buddhism. The Choli then sent precious gifts of pearls, a bejewelled tree, and a daughter for Kyanzitha to marry. (Epigraphia Birmanica I, p. 165) Kyanzitha also paid for repairs at the Mahabodhi temple, which in his words “had been destroyed by other kings”. This was more than a century before any Turk army had set foot in Bihar. At the end of September this year, I visited Bagan. A walled city of brick on the shores of the Irrawaddy, this medieval capital was able to source precious woods, elephants and aromatics from upriver, while maintaining a flourishing connection with the Indian Ocean through its vassal-states downriver on the Irrawaddy delta. These downriver Irrawaddy states had been Buddhist from the early centuries CE, when the first missionary monks and merchants crossed the Bay of Bengal. They largely followed the conservative Ther-

avada or “Way of Elders” branch of Buddhism, even as Northern India transitioned into new forms such as Mahayana (the worship of future Buddhas) and eventually, esoteric Vajrayana: a tantric methodology, including sacred diagrams, goddesses, and offerings. For context, Theravada is still popular in Myanmar and Sri Lanka, while Vajrayana underpins Tibetan and Nepali Buddhism.

Bagan was a Monsoon Asian state, and shared many features with its Indian contemporaries. Like the Cholas on the other side of the ocean, the kings of Bagan used monumental temples to establish authority and redistribute resources. Unlike the Cholas, who built in stone, the Bagan kings preferred to build in brick. High vaults and windows allowed sunlight to pierce the interior, shining off towering gilded Buddhas. Over the centuries, the aristocracy of Bagan commissioned dozens of temples large and small. Families built temples together over generations, seeking to generate merit for better future lives. The inscriptions they issued mention rich gifts of land, water tanks, gold, and enslaved people. Since the country’s independence in 1948, the rulers of modern Myanmar have portrayed Bagan as a Theravada power, in much the same way as Indian nationalism claims medieval kingdoms as “Hindu” or “Muslim”. The wall-paintings of Bagan, though, tell a slightly different story. In an as-yet unpublished paper, art historian Claudine Bautze-Picon, one of the leading scholars of Bagan art, argued that Anawrahta and Kyanzitha invited teams of Bengali painters to properly decorate the new ritual spaces growing in the city. No earlier temples in the region had painted interiors, and the styles, motifs and techniques of the Bagan murals match those with manuscripts produced in Coimbatore, now in southeastern Bangladesh.

Bautze-Picon argues that three teams were active in Bagan — each with a slightly different approach. One group was deployed in the older portion of Bagan city, work-

ing on the Pahtothamya, Kubayauk-gyi, Lokahteikpan, and Myebontha temples. Another team worked on the Nagayon and Abeyadana temples, commissioned by the king Kyanzitha and his queen respectively. How can we tell? This latter team used yellowish and ochre tones to a much greater extent than those of the old city. But both shared some techniques: square panels in jewelled borders, red grounds seen in Bengali Buddhist manuscripts, and lotus-petal eyes for divine figures. Bagan artists quickly learned from the Bengali masters; by the mid-12th century, they had a distinct local tradition, and, according to Bautze-Picon, increasingly looked to Chinese motifs in their art. With all this said, the early Bengali painters weren’t simply “Indianising” Bagan: they were working to exact schema provided by local patrons. The labels are in the local Mon script, suggesting that the painters were supervised by monks who had a clear idea of what was to go where. Surviving Bengali Buddhist manuscripts today are overwhelmingly Mahayana and Vajrayana, which see the historical Siddhartha Gautama as one Buddha among many. They emphasise future Buddhas like Avalokiteshvara and Manjushri, as well as the goddess Tara. While the Bagan murals use similar artistic styles, the actual programme is very much Theravada, following texts like the Buddhavamsa and the Jatakas, which are interested in Gautama Buddha’s life and his previous incarnations. The great exception to this is the Abeyadana temple — a queen’s temple, with a decidedly Vajrayana programme. Hindu deities are shown revering Buddhas. Avalokiteshvara and Manjushri are depicted teaching disciples. And, most enigmatically, several yoginis appear, female magicians with the heads of dogs and horses. I also spotted a multi-armed figure wearing a garland of skulls. Given the history of yogini worship in India, what the queen sought to achieve with these figures, and what rituals might actually have happened within the dark corridors under the calm eyes of

Jaishankar’s blueprint: De-risking India starts with domestic strength

Resilience has become a familiar word in international affairs. But its strategic meaning rests on a harder question: when external circumstances change, can a country sustain the pursuit of its interests on its own terms? For India, moving from the language of resilience to resilience in action means matching national ambition with the capacity to carry it forward. This calls for a grand strategy that connects domestic strength with external engagement and continually reassesses the assumptions guiding India’s choices abroad.

The challenge is sharper in an international order where power remains concentrated, interdependence can become an instrument of coercion, and commitments are open to renewed bargaining. Alliances, partnerships and adversaries are still consequential categories, but these labels alone cannot tell India what a relationship will deliver. A partner may enhance its security while narrowing its economic choices. A competitor may remain important to its development. An accommodation between major powers may reshape the choices of countries with no seat at the negotiating table. India’s strategy must continually assess what these overlapping realities mean for its interests and room for manoeuvre. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar’s remarks at the Asia Society in New York on 28 September offer a useful starting point. “How do we de-risk? How do we diversify? Which are the new partners? Where do we get more value out of an existing partnership?” he asked, describing a world where the US and China are competitors but are also having “a certain conversation”. His emphasis on diversifying relationships and drawing greater value from existing partnerships raises a larger strategic question: how can India widen its agency when expectations surrounding its external relationships are becoming less predictable? Answering this requires moving beyond the management of disagreements to examine the foundations of national power that give diplomatic choices substance and make them sustainable.

Allies have long disagreed, just as adversaries have found reasons to cooperate. The challenge today lies in how deeply security competition runs through the economic and technological networks that sustain prosperity. States seek strategic advantage within relationships they cannot easily walk away from. The same dependence that enables growth can become a source of pressure. Grand strategy must therefore reckon with how these gains and vulnerabilities shape one another over time. Convergence on shared interests cannot be presumed to settle the competing pulls within a relationship. For India, strategic autonomy is a continuing endeavour to build the capacity for independent judgment and action. The freedom to make a diplomatic choice means little if the costs of sustaining it become prohibitive. Resisting pressure, holding a position or negotiating a better bargain requires economic strength, technological competence, and institutions capable of translating ambition into action. Foreign policy can help strengthen these capabilities, but it cannot indefinitely compensate for their absence. The room India creates through external engagement ultimately depends on the foundations of power

it builds at home. The question is how external engagement alters the balance between dependence and influence. Access to technology and capital gains strategic value when it builds capabilities India can sustain and deploy. A partnership’s worth therefore depends on its terms, India’s capacity to absorb the gains and its preparedness for disruption. India’s relations with the United States and China complicate this challenge. The American partnership can strengthen capabilities essential to India’s rise, even as differences test strategic convergence. Engagement with China may ease immediate tensions without resolving structural competition. India must assess both relationships by their contribution to national objectives, the constraints they create and the durability of their commitments. Washington-Beijing relations add another layer of uncertainty. Their rivalry can open opportunities for other countries while exposing them to new costs and pressures. Selective accommodation may ease tensions but unsettle expectations built around continued confrontation. India’s strategy cannot rest on a presumed course of US-China relations. It must build the strength and flexibility to advance national interests as competition and accommodation evolve. Diversification serves this wider purpose. The number of partnerships reveals little about the agency they generate. Their strategic value lies in creating usable alternatives, strengthening national capabilities and reducing vulnerability to decisions taken elsewhere. A wider diplomatic network can coexist with critical dependencies. India must therefore judge its relationships by the choices they make possible and its capacity to sustain those choices under pressure.

This also demands choices about where India should concentrate its resources. Complete insulation from external disruption is neither affordable nor consistent with its developmental ambitions. Openness remains a source of growth and national strength. The strategic task is to identify dependencies that could constrain decisions vital to national interests and build the capacity to manage them. Resilience requires bearing some costs today to preserve freedom of action tomorrow. A grand strategy that promises every benefit without confronting these trade-offs provides little direction when competing priorities demand difficult choices. Preparedness carries opportunity costs. The pursuit of resilience therefore requires a clear hierarchy of interests, distinguishing the indispensable from the desirable. An effort to address every vulnerability can spread resources thin and weaken the capabilities India needs most. Strategic priorities become meaningful through choices about what to fund, what to defer and where to accept manageable risk. These choices also require institutions capable of organising national power and putting it to use. External engagement, economic policy and technological development must inform one another. India’s capacity to act depends on connecting developments abroad with their consequences at home and turning diplomatic opportunities into capabilities it can sustain. An agreement must be judged by what it enables beyond its announcement; preparedness, by the state’s ability to mobilise resources when external shocks threaten national objectives.

Myntra announces Big Fashion Festival with 8 million styles and 21,000 emerging brands

Kohima: Myntra has announced the return of its flagship Big Fashion Festival (BFF), commencing October 8, with more than 8 million styles, 100-plus new brand and collection launches and 21,000 emerging brands and labels. The company said the latest edition will offer twice the number of styles compared with the previous edition, covering fashion, beauty, sports, jewellery, watches, home and lifestyle. Among the participating brands



are Vero Moda, MANGO, H&M, Tommy Hilfiger, Levi's, Nike, adidas, US Polo Assn., Jack & Jones and ONLY, along with premium beauty brands such as YSL, Prada, MAC, Huda

Beauty, Olaplex, CeraVe and Estée Lauder.

Myntra said 13,000 emerging brands will make their BFF debut, supported by its Seller Growth Connect initiatives, technology capabilities, creator ecosystem and access to more than 80 million monthly active users. The festival will feature celebrity collaborations including Aurelia X Ananya Panday, KALKI X Janhvi Kapoor, Levi's X Alia Bhatt and Ritu Kumar X Kareena Kapoor, besides interna-

tional collaborations Calvin Klein X Sadie Sink and AEO X Sydney Sweeney.

M-Now will offer 1.5 lakh styles from 1,500 brands across 12 cities, with deliveries starting in 30 minutes. AI-led tools including MyFashionGPT, My Stylist and Size & Fit Intelligence will support customer discovery. Myntra has also created more than 26,000 seasonal jobs, including 350-plus roles for differently-abled individuals.

Ray Dalio warns AI bubble could burst; Indian stock investors should know

New Delhi: Billionaire Ray Dalio has warned that artificial intelligence's (AI) 'classic bubble' is nearing a bursting point as US interest rates rise and investors face the need to turn wealth into cash. Indian investors would be keenly tracking developments overseas as India has become the default anti-AI trade, with domestic equities among the weakest-performing major markets since 2025. Billionaire Ray Dalio has warned that artificial intelligence's (AI) 'classic bubble' is nearing a bursting point as US interest rates rise and investors face the need to turn wealth into cash. Indian investors would be keenly tracking developments overseas as India has become the default anti-AI trade, with domestic equities among the weakest-performing major markets since 2025. The domestic brokerage noted that the optimistic assumption that AI-driven productivity gains will rapidly neutralise inflation remains uncertain, saying rising CDS

spreads among several AI-related businesses suggest that the market may be overestimating the timing and magnitude of these productivity benefits.

"If gains prove back-loaded rather than immediate, the crowding-out effects of AI capital expenditure may persist until at least 2028, keeping inflation and real interest rates higher than currently anticipated," it said this week. In India's context, Systematix said the ongoing market correction reflects a reassessment of earnings and valuations in a more persistent geopolitical and inflationary environment, not a passing dip in sentiment. "Headline macro indicators remain resilient, but GST collections and corporate earnings show weaker domestic value addition and demand. We therefore maintain a cautious medium-term earnings outlook and expect sector- and stock-specific opportunities to outperform momentum-driven themes," it said.

BEL, Mazagon, HAL, Cochin Shipyard, Solar: price target

New Delhi: Kotak Institutional Equities said defence spending and procurement momentum in India remained strong, with defence capex spending rising 37 per cent year-on-year (YoY) in 5MFY27 and Acceptance of Necessity approvals crossing Rs 1.6 lakh crore year-to-date. It said cumulative approvals since FY2024 had crossed Rs 18 lakh crore, giving Indian defence companies strong long-term visibility. Kotak said the order pipeline remained healthy, but timely approval from the Cabinet Committee on Security for large programmes such as QR-SAM, P75I submarines and Next Generation Corvettes would be critical to convert approvals into orders and support FY2029 revenue growth. It added that the latest approvals were largely domestic in nature, creating opportunities across platforms, radars, electronic warfare systems, helicopters and naval programmes. In its defence coverage, Kotak expects healthy 2QFY27 numbers, led by continued execution of programmes and platform deliveries. Solar Industries India Ltd is expected to lead growth on the back of a sharp

ramp-up in defence revenues. BEL and HAL are also expected to post healthy double-digit growth, supported by ongoing execution, Tejas trainer deliveries, HTT-40 handovers and Dhruv NG deliveries. Mazagon is likely to report flat revenues because of slower execution visibility, while Cochin Shipyard is expected to benefit from higher shipbuilding activity and steady ship repair execution. On margins, the brokerage expects BEL and HAL to see improved profitability and Solar Industries to maintain stable margins, while margins for Mazagon and Cochin Shipyard are seen depending largely on project mix. For precision engineering companies under its coverage, Kotak expects a healthy Q2FY27, led by Aequus Ltd, where growth is expected from aerospace and consumer ramp-up. It said aerospace order inflows and consumer utilisation would remain key monitorables. IN-DO-MIM Ltd is expected to deliver steady sequential growth driven by MIM, casting and machining, with margins dependent on the contribution from higher-margin defence and medical segments.

Can Kerala's 2,000 MWh battery storage project transform its clean energy future

New Delhi: Kerala is set to build a 2,000 MWh Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) at Kayamkulam in a tie-up with NTPC and its green arm, NTPC Green Energy Ltd (NGEL), as part of a key push to stabilise the state's power supply and integrate more renewable energy. The three entities—Kerala State Electricity Board (KSEB), NTPC and NGEL—signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to implement the project, Chief Minister VD Satheesan said after a meeting in Delhi with NTPC CMD Gurdeep Singh. Alongside the big battery project, the state has also secured an immediate power arrangement: up to 300 MW from NTPC's Sinner thermal project in Maharashtra at a tariff of Rs 5.18 per unit, and a willingness from NTPC to sign a

Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) to supply additional power from its Ramagundam plant. The BESS can help KSEB manage its power procurement costs more efficiently. Instead of buying costly short-term power during evening peaks, the utility can use stored energy, potentially lowering the average cost per unit over time. However, the exact tariff for the Kayamkulam project will be worked out after factoring in construction cost, financing, operations and maintenance, as the tariff "will be determined after calculating the construction cost", according to earlier reporting on the project outline. The project is also expected to draw on central support mechanisms for battery storage. Regulatory documents from Kerala's electricity regu-

lator refer to 2,000 MWh BESS capacity being allocated to central public sector units like NTPC and NHPC under a scheme with viability gap funding (VGF), which typically means part of the capital cost is subsidised to make the project financially viable. If the Kayamkulam BESS taps into such support, it could reduce the burden on KSEB's balance sheet and keep the eventual tariff competitive. While the battery project is a medium- to long-term solution, Kerala also needed near-term megawatts to ease the ongoing power crisis.

In the Delhi meeting, NTPC agreed to make available up to 300 MW from its Sinner thermal power project in Maharashtra at a rate of Rs 5.18 per unit. In addition, NTPC has expressed will-

ingness to sign a PPA to supply power from its Ramagundam plant in Telangana. The exact quantum and tariff for Ramagundam were not spelled out in the CM's statement, but the move signals that Kerala is lining up multiple long-term sources from NTPC's portfolio rather than relying on one plant or short-term markets. Beyond Kayamkulam, the state is also moving on smaller storage projects. CM Satheesan said two 80 MWh BESS units each at Pothencode and Sreekanthapuram will be commissioned by March 2027. These smaller systems can help stabilise local grids, support renewable integration in specific regions and act as a test bed for operational practices before the larger Kayamkulam system comes fully online.

Sun TV stock on a roll, up 40% in 3 Elara sets target price at ₹925 Elara Capital believes Sun TV

New Delhi: Sun TV stock witnessed a stellar rally in the last three weeks. The stock from the media & entertainment domain from levels of ₹451.70 on September 18 rallied to a high of ₹663.90 on the NSE on September 30. Since then, the stock has consolidated around the higher levels. Despite the recent rally, Sun TV Network continues to trade around 25 per cent lower compared to its life-time high of ₹842 registered in August 2024.

On Thursday, the stock hit an intraday high of ₹640, and a low of ₹625 on the NSE. At 11:55 am, the stock quoted with a 1.2 per cent loss at ₹629 on trades of around 5.27 lakh shares. Meanwhile, the NSE Nifty was down 1.1 per cent at 22,360 levels.

Elara Capital retains 'Buy' call, ups target price to ₹925

In its report dated October 7 on Sun TV, Elara Capital flags that Sun TV continues to hold a highly cash-generative TV business, underpinned by a strong sports portfolio, while the core media segment remains the group's 'cash

cow'.

The sports franchises - SunRisers Hyderabad (IPL), SunRisers Eastern Cape (SA20), and SunRisers Leeds (SRL) (The Hundred) - now account for ~4.5 per cent of our SOTP equity value, driven by the recent, high-value private deals in the IPL. On an SOTP basis, this implies meaningful upside for SUN TV," said Elara Capital. The brokerage believes that the sports value is being set by private deals. Sun TV owned SunRisers Hyderabad (SRH), reached the playoffs in eight out of 14 IPL seasons, winning the title in 2016 and finishing as runner-up in 2018 & 2024.

More importantly, SRH's value is being anchored by the recent private market deals: the March 2026 sale of Rajasthan Royals at ~\$1.6bn and Royal Challengers Bengaluru at ~\$1.8bn implies valuation of ₹15,000-16,700 crore for established IPL teams. Sun TV's cricket revenue (SRH and SA20) more than doubled to ₹6,600 crore in FY24 once the new media rights cycle began and was ₹5,600 crore



in FY26, it added.

Analysts at Elara Capital retained a 'Buy' rating on the stock with a higher target price of ₹925 per share.

"We value Sun TV's core media on DCF (WACC 11.7 per cent & 1 per cent terminal growth) at ₹12,300 crore (~15x FY28E core media PAT), SRH at 80x FY28E PAT and SRL at 12x FY28E sales (in line with peers); with cash on book, this gives ₹925 per share (from ₹780 earlier)," explains the brokerage firm.

Drumil Vithlani, senior technical

research analyst at Tiny Epic notes that Sun TV has witnessed a sharp weekly up move with remarkable volume, recovering strongly from the ₹450-480 base and moving well above its weekly exponential moving average (EMA) ~₹530.

The analyst believes that the stock is currently testing the ₹640-650 resistance zone.

Vithlani says that a sustained weekly close above ₹650 would confirm a major breakout from the multi-month consolidation and could open upside towards ₹700-720, followed by ₹750.

Fino Payments Bank share rallies 17% Q2 business

New Delhi: Fino Payments Bank shares today snapped a three-day losing streak to rally 17 per cent following the release of its second quarter (Q2FY27) business update. Fino Payments Bank shares today snapped a three-day losing streak to rally 17 per cent following the release of its second quarter (Q2FY27) business update. The loan referral disbursements rose by 223 per cent to ₹278 crore in September from ₹86 crore a year earlier.

The bank's average total deposits increased 13 per cent Y-o-Y to ₹2,794 crore from ₹2,480 crore a year ago. Renewal income also grew 20 per cent Y-o-Y to ₹28 crore in the three-month quarter ended on September 30, from ₹23.3 crore in the same period a year ago. The loan referral disbursements rose by 223 per cent to ₹278 crore in September from ₹86 crore a year earlier.

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steep correction of more than 30 per cent from its July highs, Fino Payments Bank stock found support near the upward-sloping trendline around ₹125. In today's session, the stock jumped more than 13 per cent and broke above its short-term falling trendline resistance. Going forward, he said that the stock may extend its recovery towards its 200-DMA, placed around ₹165. However, considering the broader market sentiment, traders should avoid chasing the stock at higher levels and wait for a correction towards ₹142-140 to initiate fresh buying positions with stop loss placed at ₹124 levels.

Reliance could be a cheaper way to own Jio telecom

New Delhi: Reliance Industries Ltd. may offer investors a cheaper way to own Jio Platforms Ltd. after the telecom unit lists, with analysts saying the parent company's shares reflect a substantial discount.

Reliance's share price implies a roughly 36 per cent discount on its two-thirds stake in Jio, according to Nimish Maheshwari, co-founder of independent research firm Beat The Street. He sees about 25 per cent as sustainable, in line with how the market values telecom rival Bharti Airtel Ltd.'s holdings in its listed subsidiaries.

Such discounts are common for parent companies because their shareholders only get indirect exposure to the businesses they own. Once a subsidiary lists, investors can simply buy its shares directly. While these discounts could go as high as 50 per cent, there's no strong technical or fundamental justification for such

a steep discount here, said Thea Jamison, managing director at Change Global Investment. "Moreover, how Reliance Industries chooses to monetize its stake in Jio Platforms going forward could be another significant source of value creation for shareholders." Jio may seek a valuation of about ₹11 trillion (\$114 billion) in an initial public offering as soon as this month, Bloomberg News reported. That would value Reliance's stake at about ₹7.3 trillion, equivalent to about 45 per cent of the parent's current market value, according to Bloomberg calculations. Yet brokerages including Motilal Oswal, Yes Securities and Nuvama value the stake at ₹331 to 450 per Reliance share, implying it accounts for around 27 per cent to 37 per cent of the parent's share price. The potential upside for Reliance shareholders from any narrowing of the discount will depend on how Jio trades after its debut.

Vedanta declares inaugural dividend distribution following demerger valuation declines by 2%

New Delhi: Metals and mining major Vedanta announced its first interim dividend of ₹5 per share for the ongoing financial year (FY27) on Thursday, marking its first payout since the demerger in April this year. The total dividend paid by the Anil Agarwal-led company will be ₹1,955 crore.

Further, as intimated earlier, the record date for the purpose of payment of dividend shall be Wednesday, October 14, 2026, and the interim dividend shall be duly paid within the stipulated timelines as prescribed under law, the company said. Investors must buy the shares of Vedanta on or before October 13 to be eligible for the dividend payment. Following the dividend announcement, Vedanta shares were trading 2 per cent lower at ₹255.90 on the BSE, close to the day's low of ₹254.10. The stock had opened at ₹262.95, higher than the last close price of ₹261.20, but the broader market weakness soon pressured the metal counter. Having risen 18 per cent on a year-to-date (YTD) ba-

sis, Vedanta shares have come under pressure in the near term and lost 6 per cent in three months.

That said, the stock is a multibagger with 218 per cent returns in three years and 264 per cent in five years. Having risen 18 per cent on a year-to-date (YTD) basis, Vedanta shares have come under pressure in the near term and lost 6 per cent in three months.

That said, the stock is a multibagger with 218 per cent returns in three years and 264 per cent in five years. Vedanta recently demerged its businesses into five independent listed companies. The company had set April 30, 2026, as the record date for the demerger. It issued one equity share of each of the five companies to eligible shareholders. This means shareholders of Vedanta received one share of each of the five demerged companies for every one share of Vedanta held by them as of the record date.

Going ahead, analysts expect higher commodity prices in zinc and better lead/silver



volumes at subsidiary Hindustan Zinc are expected to drive earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation (Ebitda) by 9 per cent sequentially. Net sales are expected to rise 5.1 per cent. Vipin Kumar, AVP research at Globe Capital Market, said that at the current juncture, Vedanta is trading on the verge of a breakout from its past nine-month-long congestion range. Going ahead, a cross and sustenance above 248 spot levels will be a positive development that could lead the stock towards 300 and higher levels in the near term, he said.

UK’s military needs to focus spending on domestic defence, not overseas missions

UK: The UK’s military is too focused on global commitments at the expense of domestic defence, meaning the government’s planned increase in defence spending is likely to result in even greater waste, a think-tank report has warned.

According to an analysis by researchers at the Transition Security Project, Britain has the most overseas-oriented military among European nations, with almost a quarter of the defence budget spent on commitments across five continents.

Calling this a symptom of a “destructive, outdated foreign policy” centred on overseas missions which have often made the globe less safe, the report says the imminent uptick in spending should be accompanied by a change of stance, with a much bigger focus on domestic defence. The government is committed to spending 3.5% of GDP on defence by 2035 amid a defence investment plan (Dip) unveiled in July at the tail end of

Keir Starmer’s premiership.

Starmer’s then defence secretary, John Healey, resigned over a refusal to commit to reaching 3% by 2030, but now that he is chancellor that target has been shelved for now.

It would involve a doubling of the defence budget in nominal terms from £70bn in 2026 to £151bn in 2035, according to the Transition Security Project, a research centre which was spun out of Common Wealth, a think-tank with close links to Andy Burnham.

Using figures from 2024/25, the study estimated that about 23% of the military budget for that year was spent on overseas commitments, costing just over £14bn, with the real figure likely to be higher. About £2.8bn was spent outside Europe, including bases in places like Cyprus, Kenya and Oman and elsewhere as “strategic hubs” for projecting UK military power.

The report says this makes the UK the most overseas-commit-



ted military among European Nato members, even if France has more personnel posted

abroad. The Dip seems unlikely to reverse this, talking about ongoing commitments in a series of continents.

It questions whether more of the new money should be used for domestic defence, and whether the focus on overseas missions has even made the UK safer. Since 2001, the study said, the UK has spent more than £51bn in modern terms on military interventions in Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya and elsewhere.

“Britain’s decision to maintain a global network of military bases and force projection capabilities, combined with high levels of waste in the military procurement system, raise serious questions about how it is allocating public investment,” it says, urging the government to “review its military posture, prioritising defence over the global projection of military force”.

Kevin Cashman, a researcher at Transition Security Project, who co-authored the report, said: “Britain should not pour

more money into a bloated military sector geared towards alignment with the United States while Washington starts wars around the world that drive up our bills.”

Khem Rogaly, the co-director of the organisation, and also a co-author, said: “The billions of pounds Britain wastes on global military deployments every year symbolise its destructive, outdated foreign policy.

“Britain should end its support for these attempts at global policing. Instead, it should focus its military resources on defence and its public investment on health, housing and the climate emergency.”

There is an awareness of the importance of avoiding waste among defence officials, including the risk that an arbitrary focus on reaching a certain level of spending could exacerbate this.

The intention is to focus instead on what is necessary – primarily on preparing the UK for a possible war in Europe.

Democrats sue US President Trump over taxpayer-funded ad campaign

Washington: “Donald Trump is misusing millions of taxpayer dollars to fund pure propaganda ads in a last-ditch attempt to save Republicans in November,” Martin said.

Later that day, Common Cause, a democracy watchdog group, filed a second lawsuit over the same set of ads.

It argued that the ads were “overtly political” and therefore ran afoul of laws that bar public funds from being used for political propaganda.

“These ads are not public-service announcements,” Common Cause said in its lawsuit, citing a justification Trump has offered for the television spots. “They are personal publicity and political propaganda through and through.”

Both lawsuits argue that, to create the ad campaign, Trump directed the White House to repurpose \$20m in funds that Congress allocated for commemorative activities related to border security, including for those killed in the line of duty.

That manoeuvre, they argue, violates the separation of powers established in the US Constitution.

“The founders made clear



more than 200 years ago that the executive can spend money only according to Congress’s direction,” Common Cause’s lawsuit said.

The two lawsuits also point to a provision Congress includes in its appropriations bills barring the use of taxpayer funds for “publicity or propaganda purposes”.

Both complaints seek to have the ads declared illegal, and the expenditures stopped. They also call for steps to be taken to recover any money already spent on the ads.

The Democrats’ lawsuit was filed in Washington,

DC, while the Common Cause complaint will be heard in the Southern District of New York.

Trump has faced mounting criticism over the ads, which began airing in September.

So far, the advertising campaign has cost more than \$12m to run, according to the media tracking firm Ad-Impact.

The \$20m Trump tapped for the ads comes from a \$175m package Congress assigned to the Department of Homeland Security as part of Trump’s immigration enforcement agenda.

Critics have pointed out

that one of the ads appears nearly identical to a television spot Trump used in his 2024 re-election campaign.

Three ads have aired so far. In one, a choir sings “love me” over a montage of Trump as he declares the US will “never be a communist country”. Another uses images of Mount Rushmore as Trump heralds a new “golden age of America”.

The third is darker: Trump walks towards the camera in black and white, warning of a “final battle” against the “deep state” and other perceived enemies.

On Wednesday, the news

agency Reuters and the research firm Ipsos released a poll showing the ads are highly unpopular. Some 86 percent of the Americans surveyed, including four out of five Republicans, said it was inappropriate for Trump to have used public money for them.

Trump has defended the ads as “promotion for the country”, and he has argued they were similar to public outreach campaigns put out by previous administrations.

But after a bipartisan backlash, Trump said on Monday that taxpayer funds would no longer be used for future ads.

He did not, however, commit to paying back the money already spent on the existing ads.

Members of Trump’s Republican Party have been among those speaking out against the ad campaign.

Senator Thom Tillis, a Republican from North Carolina, said the advertisements resembled something former Hungarian leader Viktor Orban would put out.

Senate Majority Leader John Thune, meanwhile, indicated he agreed with the message in one of the advertisements, but he emphasised that “it shouldn’t be paid for with taxpayer dollars”.

US man arrested as second suspect in Canada mass school shooting planned with ChatGPT

canada: A surprise suspected accomplice has been arrested in connection with a mass school shooting in Canada that was made notorious after an 18-year-old allegedly killed six children after discussing it with the AI chatbot ChatGPT.

The US Department of Justice said Tuesday it had detained James Codey Bryant, 30, a resident of western Washington state, on a charge of conspiracy to murder persons in a foreign country.

Bryant offered money and “technical advice” to the suspected shooter for six months leading up to the killings, the justice department alleged.

Canadian police have identified the suspect in this year’s massacre of eight people – including her mother and half-brother, as well as the six children, making it the second-deadliest school shooting in the country’s history – as Jesse Van Rootselaar, who has a history of mental health problems.

It had been known that Van Rootselaar had used ChatGPT to plan the attack, which took place in February. The safety team at OpenAI, the company that owns the chatbot, flagged Van Rootselaar internally after she conducted con-

versations with it about gun violence, but the company did not alert police. It did reportedly close Van Rootselaar’s account, but she started a second one that was not closed. Victims’ families and the province of British Columbia have sued OpenAI and its CEO, Sam Altman, for failing to report her behaviour.

It was not previously known publicly that Van Rootselaar was also talking to a human about her plans.

In a joint press conference with the justice department and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) on Tuesday, authorities alleged that Bryant and Van Rootselaar met on the now-defunct messaging service Omegle about three years prior to the shooting and kept in contact.

Neil Floyd, acting US attorney, and W Mike Herington, the special agent in charge for the FBI’s Seattle bureau, said they believe Bryant sent Van Rootselaar about \$100 to buy new shoes and about \$15 for a lighter.

Authorities said there is no indication so far that the two suspects ever met in person.

According to an indictment obtained by CBC, Bryant was “knowingly and wilfully” conspiring with Van Rootselaar beginning in

or before August 2025.

That August, Bryant told Van Rootselaar the pair should “find a way to delete” their messages, and in mid-December Bryant suggested getting a VPN to avoid detection for “posting a shooting video online”, according to the court document reviewed by CBC.

Police said that on several occasions Bryant tried to talk Van Rootselaar out of committing the attack, but did not contact law enforcement.

They added that after Van Rootselaar shot and killed her mother and brother in their family home, she was unable to start the car. Bryant advised her on how to turn on the engine, thereby allowing the shooter to reach the school and execute the attack, authorities said.

Bryant also allegedly agreed to livestream the mass shooting, which Herington said police were not sure Van Rootselaar would have committed had Bryant not done so.

It was not clear whether the suspect was represented by a lawyer. Bryant will be prosecuted in the US as a US citizen under an investigation by the FBI, which said it will continue working closely with Canadian authorities.

Plague epidemic risk in Russia low after death of lab technician, WHO says

Russia: The World Health Organization has said the risk of an epidemic in Russia is low after the sudden death of a lab technician who worked at a plague research institute in Siberia.

Darya Shipilova, who was 28, died last week, two days after falling ill. Russian media reports suggested she may have become infected after an accident at her workplace, where dangerous pathogens are kept and studied.

Russian authorities have downplayed the incident and say Shipilova died of “pneumonia of an unknown aetiology”. Strict quarantine measures have been imposed at the research centre in the city of Irkutsk and in several neighbouring hospitals.

Christian Lindmeier, a WHO spokesperson, said

on Tuesday that there was no sign of a wider outbreak. “All of the patients’ contacts have reportedly been identified and are being monitored for illness, and none to date have shown symptoms of illness,” he said.

Russian officials were still investigating whether viral pneumonic plague caused Shipilova’s death but the WHO had assessed the health risk as “moderate to low” for Irkutsk, “low” for the rest of Russia and “very low” for Europe, he said.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus urged Russia on Tuesday to be transparent about Shipilova’s death. Timely, complete and transparent information sharing under the International Health Regulations is essential to clarify conflicting reports and enable an

accurate assessment of potential public health risks,” he wrote on X.

According to Russian media, 60 of Shipilova’s colleagues have been locked in the institute where she worked since Friday, sleeping on the floors and chairs while tests are carried out. Similar measures have been imposed in five hospitals, with relatives forbidden to see patients. The Kremlin’s spokesperson, Dmitry Peskov, urged people on Tuesday not to listen to rumours but to rely on statements from Russia’s health watchdog, Rospotrebnadzor. It said the situation in Irkutsk was stable, with no new infectious disease cases reported among institute employees.

Washington has been watching developments

closely. The US secretary of state, Marco Rubio, called on Moscow on Tuesday to release more details about the case. “I think it’s incumbent upon Russia to obviously share more information with the world,” he said. “We’re watching it very closely, hour by hour.”

The Wall Street Journal reported that the US state department had sent Russia a confidential diplomatic communication known as a demarche warning Moscow that failure to disclose details runs counter to its international health obligations.

Trump said on Tuesday that he was due to speak shortly with Russian president Vladimir Putin about the technician’s death.

“I have a call scheduled, yes,” Trump told reporters at the White House when asked

if he had spoken to Putin on the issue yet, adding that it would happen “very soon”.

Trump had said earlier that his administration was willing to offer assistance. “I hate to see them having it. We’ll help. Everybody who has that kind of a problem, we’ll always help,” he told reporters.

In an apparent mirror response, Rospotrebnadzor announced that Russia was prepared to assist the US in combating its own outbreaks of infectious diseases.

“The situation regarding dangerous infectious diseases remains unstable,” it said, highlighting a “significantly worsened” measles situation in three US states and a “fatal case of plague” recorded in New Mexico in June.

Christa Pike is conscious and speaking after botched execution attempt, lawyers say

America: Christa Pike, a Tennessee prisoner who survived the state’s attempt to execute her, is awake and speaking as she receives treatment at a hospital, her attorneys said on Tuesday.

Pike, 50, survived two doses of pentobarbital, a sedative, as Tennessee officials attempted to put her to death last Wednesday in a case that shocked many in America and created headlines around the world. She was set to be the first woman executed in Tennessee in more than 200 years.

“Against all odds, Christa Pike is conscious, speaking and continues to receive critical medical care. Despite the severe damage she endured to her arms, she is still handcuffed and shackled to the bed. Her recovery is medically unprecedented. Her prognosis remains unclear

but, at a minimum, we expect a long recovery,” attorneys for Pike said in a statement.

Her attorneys said they are grateful for the first responders and the medical team at the hospital “who treated Christa like a human and have provided exceptional care to her”.

“She is the only person known to have survived a complete execution attempt in the US. Christa is a survivor and will take recovery one day at a time. We continue to ask the Governor of Tennessee to commute Christa Pike’s sentence to life imprisonment without the possibility of parole,” Pike’s attorneys added.

The statement was the first indication that Pike has improved since an ambulance carried her away from a Nashville prison on the night of 30 September.

Witnesses to the attempt to

execute Pike described how they heard she was choking and struggling for an hour after receiving the first injection. She was then hospitalized after a second dose failed to kill her. In hospital, she was put on a ventilator and had been in critical condition.

Following the botched execution attempt, one of Pike’s lawyers, Randy Spivey, called the process “cruel and torturous”, adding that he had counted seven needles in Pike’s left arm, “one of which appeared to be bent when it was pulled from her”. Her lawyers had warned before the execution that officials might struggle to locate veins and cause her suffering in the process, but the state had pushed to proceed and the US supreme court allowed the prison to move forward.

How to Decorate Your House for Diwali in 2026



The decoration of one’s residence for Diwali does not necessarily require the acquisition of entirely new lighting fixtures, furniture, or ornamental items. In many instances, the modification of select elements proves sufficient to transform a well-known space into one that embodies the essence of the festive season. The introduction of a fresh pair of curtains can substantially modify the visual foundation of a living area, vibrant cushion covers can introduce the opulence characteristic of Diwali celebrations, and a strategically positioned wall-mounted light fixture can enhance the warmth and ambience of the room once traditional diyas are illuminated. That is also what makes smaller home-decor purchases worth considering ahead of Diwali 2026. Instead of spending a large amount on decorations that may only come out once a year, homeowners can focus on pieces that work during the festive season but remain useful afterwards.

And if you are planning to shop online, the timing is particularly interesting. Amazon’s Great Indian Festival 2026 begins on October 8, making the days before the sale a good time to shortlist home-decor pieces, compare styles and save the products you actually want to buy. Amazon has specifically listed home and kitchen among the categories participating in the festive shopping

event.

You Don’t Need to Redecorate the Whole House for Diwali

The easiest way to make festive décor look considered rather than cluttered is to decide where the biggest visual change needs to happen. For a living room, that might be the windows. Curtains occupy a surprisingly large amount of visual space, so switching from plain everyday panels to a richer colour, print or texture can make the room look dressed up almost instantly. Interior-design advice also consistently treats curtains as more than a functional window covering: their length, texture, colour and placement can change how a room feels.

If the curtains are already working, cushions are an easier update. Instead of replacing an entire sofa or buying new furniture, a few festive cushion covers can introduce jewel tones, embroidery, metallic details or traditional Indian motifs. The advantage is that the covers can also be stored away and brought out for future celebrations.

Then comes lighting. Diwali is, after all, a festival of light, but that does not mean every available surface needs to be covered in fairy lights. A warm wall lamp or decorative sconce can provide a softer layer of illumination, particularly in a living room, hallway, bedroom or balcony. The trick is layering rather

than overloading. One strong colour story, some texture and warm lighting can often do more for a room than a dozen unrelated decorations.

How to Make Budget Diwali Décor Look More Expensive

The ₹2,000 budget becomes easier to work with when you think about the effect each purchase creates rather than simply looking for the most decorative product.

1. Start with one large visual change
2. Use cushions to introduce the festive element
3. Let lighting do the evening work

This is where you can be more playful. A plain beige or cream sofa can take on a completely different personality with embroidered, printed or jewel-toned cushion covers. You also don’t necessarily need every cushion to match. Mixing two or three related patterns can look more considered than buying an identical set.

During the day, curtains and cushions carry most of the décor story. Once evening arrives, lighting becomes more important. A warm wall

lamp alongside diyas or candles creates layers of light rather than making the room feel uniformly bright.

4. Buy pieces you will actually use after Diwali

This is perhaps the most important rule when decorating on a budget. A curtain you can use throughout the year, cushion covers that work for dinner parties and a wall lamp that stays on the wall after Diwali are ultimately better buys than something that has only one festive use.

Best Diwali Home Decor Under ₹2,000 on Amazon

If you are planning to shop the Amazon Great Indian Festival, these are the kinds of pieces worth bookmarking now. The prices below reflect the listings available at the time of research and should not be treated as confirmed Great Indian Festival prices.

LINENWALAS Cotton Linen Semi Sheer Curtains: For a room that needs a lighter festive refresh, these cotton-linen semi-sheer curtains offer a softer alternative to heavy drapes. The fabric and neutral look can work particularly well if you are planning to bring in stronger Diwali colours through cushions, flowers and lighting.

Homefab India Velvet Curtains Room Darkening: If you want the room to feel richer and more dramatic, velvet-style curtains are the more obvious choice. This pair is designed for long doors and offers a deeper, heavier look without crossing the ₹2,000 mark.

The Purple Tree Embroidered Cushion Covers: This five-piece embroidered set is particularly suited to a traditional Diwali decorating scheme. Use the covers on a neutral sofa and let the embroidery provide the decorative detail rather than adding too many other patterns around it.

Royal Mayura Arch Cushion Cover: For a more statement-led option, this taffeta-style cushion cover features a peacock-inspired print and a richer decorative finish. It can work as an accent piece alongside simpler cushions rather than being used across the entire sofa.

wipro BeuHome BW02 Wall Light: For those looking for a more permanent lighting upgrade, this Wipro wall light sits right at the ₹2,000 budget. It makes more sense as a longer-term home purchase than a purely seasonal decoration, which is useful if you want your Diwali shopping to have some year-round value.

Homemade Lavender Candles



Soy wax flakes, lavender essential oil or fragrance oil, a glass container, and a wick can be used to create a straightforward, fragrant lavender candle at home.

Supplies Required: Flakes of soy wax (1 cup/~2.8 oz). 15–20 drops of essential or fragrant lavender oil. Tin or glass jar (8 oz capacity). metal-based candle wick that has been pre-waxed. Pencil, chopstick, or wick holder (to center the wick). Over a pot of simmering water, use a double boiler or a heatproof bowl. Purple wax color and dried lavender flowers for adornment are optional. Get the wick and container ready: Using a tiny bit of melted wax or a sticker, secure the wick’s metal base to the middle of the bottom of your spotless glass jar. To keep the wick straight and centered, wrap the top of the wick around a pencil, chopstick, or wick holder and balance it across the rim.

Melt the Wax: Put the soy wax flakes over simmering water in a heatproof dish or double boiler. Gently stir until the wax is fully melted (around 170°F, or 77°C if you’re using a thermometer). Take the pot off of the burner. As you progress to the delicate and transformative stage of incorporating fragrance and color into your molten wax, it is essential to exercise a high degree of patience and precision by allowing the melted wax to cool slightly for a calculated window of one to two minutes so that it reaches the ideal temperature sweet spot where it is cool enough to protect the delicate aromatic volatile compounds from evaporating upon contact, yet still warm enough to remain completely fluid and receptive. At this critical juncture, you can gently introduce approximately 15 to 20 drops of pure lavender essential oil or high-grade cosmetic fragrance oil to infuse the wax with a soothing, herbaceous aroma, alongside your choice of

optional liquid color pigment or mica powder for a vibrant aesthetic twist, followed by a slow, deliberate, and thorough stirring motion using a dedicated wooden or metal stirrer for at least a full minute to ensure the color and scent are homogeneously and completely integrated throughout the entire body of the wax without creating concentrated pockets or air bubbles. Pour the Wax: With a half-inch gap at the top, carefully pour the perfumed wax into the jar that has been prepared. If you’re decorating with dried lavender, you can either let the blossoms settle or softly sprinkle them on top once a thin skin forms.

The final, crucial stage of the candle-making process involves the meticulous art of setting and curing, which requires giving your freshly poured candle a generous span of a few uninterrupted hours or, ideally, leaving it overnight in a stable, draft-free environment to cool and completely solidify without any accidental jostling or disturbance that could warp the wax surface or misalign the center. Once this proper cooling and curing phase has successfully run its course, you are ready to prepare your creation for its inaugural burn by gently removing the anchoring pencil, wick holder, or stabilizing clip from across the container’s rim, and then using a clean pair of scissors or wick trimmers to carefully trim down the cotton or wooden wick to an optimal length of about one-quarter of an inch. This precise trimming step is an absolute non-negotiable prerequisite for a clean, safe, and long-lasting burn, as it effectively prevents the flame from growing too large, flickering erratically, producing unwanted soot, or creating unsightly smoke plumes, thereby ensuring that your handmade candle burns evenly, smells heavenly, and provides a warm, tranquil ambiance for hours on end.

Festive Skincare Routine: How to Get Radiant Skin Prior to Navratri

As Navratri rapidly approaches and the exhilarating flurry of selecting festive attire, coordinating intricate adornments, and addressing eleventh-hour wardrobe considerations takes center stage, it naturally brings forth an equally customary and deeply cherished inquiry among beauty enthusiasts: what effective methods can one employ to achieve luminous, revitalized skin just in time for the commencement of celebrations? To unlock that coveted festive glow without resorting to harsh chemical treatments right before the festivities, establishing a thoughtful, holistic, and consistent pre-festival skincare regimen is paramount, beginning at least a week or two prior with gentle exfoliation using mild alpha-hydroxy acids or natural enzymatic scrubs to slough away dull, dead surface cells and instantly reveal the fresh, radiant skin underneath. Simultaneously, heavy emphasis must be placed on deep hydration and cellular repair by incorporating a powerhouse hyaluronic acid serum followed by a nourishing, ceramide-rich moisturizer to lock in moisture and plump the skin barrier, creating a smooth, light-reflecting canvas that makes makeup application flawless and long-lasting. Beyond topical applications, one must not underestimate the profound internal catalysts of radiant skin, which include consuming copious amounts of antioxidant-rich green tea and hydrating citrus-infused water, prioritizing seven to eight hours of restorative beauty sleep to facilitate optimal overnight skin cell regeneration, and strictly limiting processed sugars and dairy which are notorious for triggering inflammation and sudden breakouts during high-stress periods. Furthermore, incorporating time-tested traditional practices such as a soothing facial massage using pure rosehip or kumkumadi oil can dramatically boost microcirculation, sculpt facial contours, and impart a natural, healthy flush that outshines even the most expensive highlighters.

To complement these daily rituals, indulging in a calming, brightening homemade mask made from fresh turmeric, besan (gram flour), and raw milk a couple of times before the big days can work wonders in evening out skin tone and imparting an unmistakable festive luminosity. Finally, as the rhythmic beat of the dandiya sticks draws near and the long nights of celebration commence, remembering to thoroughly cleanse the skin of heavy festive makeup and pollution every single night, coupled with rigorous daily sunscreen application, will ensure your skin remains calm, balanced, and glowing throughout the entire nine-day celebration and well beyond.

The encouraging reality is that you certainly do not need to drastically overhaul or completely revolutionize your established skincare regimen just one week before Navratri begins, as this high-pressure window is unequivocally not the ideal time to start dangerously experimenting with a cocktail of five brand-new active ingredients or complicated, aggressive professional treatments that could easily trigger irritation, redness, or unexpected breakouts right when you want to look your absolute best. Instead, a far wiser, more reliable, and scientifically grounded approach is simply to master the foundational basics of skin health by focusing on consistent, gentle cleansing to rid the pores of daily grime and pollution without stripping the skin’s natural lipid barrier, ensuring your complexion remains deeply and continuously hydrated to maintain that coveted plumpness, incorporating mild, non-abrasive exfoliation only if it already comfortably suits your regular routine to sweep away dull surface cells, and—most importantly—never skipping your daily broad-spectrum sunscreen, which acts as your ultimate shield against premature aging and hyperpigmentation while you run around organizing festivities under the glaring autumn sun.



Think of it as a little pre-festival reset rather than a frantic attempt to achieve overnight glass skin.

Start with a clean slate

The essential foundational cornerstone to commencing any successful festive skincare routine is, without a shadow of a doubt, a thorough and mindful cleansing process, because after enduring exhausting days filled with heavy layers of protective sunscreen, elaborate festive makeup, suffocating city pollution, and general environmental grime, treating your face to a proper, deep-yet-gentle cleanse serves as an immediate therapeutic reset that can leave your skin feeling remarkably lighter, fresher, and impeccably prepped to absorb the active nutrients of the subsequent steps in your routine. Furthermore, by meticulously melting away stubborn cosmetic pigments, excess sebum, and microscopic particulate matter that tend to quietly accumulate in the pores throughout hectic days of celebration and preparation, an effective

cleansing ritual prevents clogged pores, minimizes the likelihood of unwelcome pre-festive breakouts, and restores the skin’s natural breathability, establishing a pristine canvas that allows your natural radiance to shine through effortlessly.

Tailoring your cleanser to your skin’s unique biological needs is an absolute game-changer, meaning that if your complexion naturally tends to produce excess sebum and get oily, particularly when navigating warmer and more humid weather conditions, opting for a refreshing, lightweight gel or foaming face wash can provide a wonderfully comfortable, clarifying choice that effectively eliminates surface grease without compromising your skin’s equilibrium; conversely, if your skin leans toward the dry or sensitive side, it is crucial to consciously seek out a soothing, non-stripping, hydrating cleanser that cleans thoroughly while leaving your face feeling supple, balanced, and entirely free of that uncomfortable, tight

sensation which is often a telltale sign that your precious moisture barrier has been compromised.

Give exfoliation a little space

A little exfoliation can be tempting before a festival, especially when you want smoother-looking skin for makeup. But this is one area where more is definitely not better.

If you already use an exfoliating product, stick to your usual schedule rather than suddenly increasing the frequency before Navratri. The last thing you want before a series of celebrations is irritated or uncomfortable skin.

A body scrub can also be a nice addition before wearing sleeveless blouses, dresses or traditional outfits but again, keep it gentle.

Hydration is where the glow comes in

Sometimes what looks like dull skin is simply skin that needs more hydration. A lightweight moisturiser can help give the skin a smoother, fresher appearance and also make makeup sit more comfortably. If your skin is oily or combination, a gel or lightweight formula may feel better. Dry skin may prefer something richer.

And don’t forget the rest of your body. Shoulders, arms and legs can easily get overlooked when you’re focused on your face. Don’t forget your daytime sunscreen

This is perhaps the least glamorous step in the routine, but it’s one of the most important.

Whether you’re heading out for puja, shopping for festive outfits or spending an evening at a Navratri celebration, sunscreen should remain part of your daytime routine. A broad-spectrum SPF can help protect exposed skin from UV radiation, and choosing a texture you actually enjoy wearing makes it much easier to use consistently. Keep the routine simple before the celebrations

The temptation before a festival is to try everything at once, a new scrub, face mask, serum, facial and perhaps a few DIY remedies picked up from

social media.

Resist it. Your pre-Navratri skincare routine doesn’t need to be dramatic. Consistency will do much more than a one-night skincare marathon.

If you’re looking to add a few products to your routine, these five options are worth considering.

5 Skincare Products to Add to Your Pre-Navratri Routine

1. mCaffeine Naked & Raw Coffee Body Scrub: If you’re planning to wear festive outfits that show your arms, legs or shoulders, a body scrub can be a nice addition to your pre-event routine. The mCaffeine Naked & Raw Coffee Body Scrub is formulated with coffee and is designed for exfoliation, making it a useful option for a body-care day before the festivities.
2. RENEE Rice Water & 10% Niacinamide Serum: For anyone who likes adding a serum to their routine, RENEE’s Rice Water & 10% Niacinamide Serum is an option to consider. Rice water and niacinamide are popular skincare ingredients, particularly in routines focused on a more even-looking, fresh complexion.
3. Minimalist 10% Vitamin B5 Moisturizer: The Minimalist 10% Vitamin B5 Moisturizer and is positioned as a lightweight, oil-free moisturiser with vitamin B5, making it a practical everyday step. Amazon India
4. Dot & Key Vitamin C + E Super Bright Sunscreen SPF 50: For the actual sunscreen recommendation, I would use Dot & Key Vitamin C + E Super Bright Sunscreen SPF 50. The Amazon listing describes it as a lightweight sunscreen with SPF 50 and broad-spectrum protection. Amazon India
5. Mamaearth Vitamin C Daily Glow Sunscreen SPF 50: Better final product choice: Mamaearth’s Vitamin C Daily Glow Sunscreen SPF 50 is the stronger fit for this particular story. It is currently listed on Amazon and combines SPF 50/PA++++ protection with vitamin C and turmeric.

ENTERTAINMENT

SS Rajamouli is building a brand-new fictional language for ‘Varanasi’



Hyderabad : SS Rajamouli is reportedly developing a fictional language for his ambitious project Varanasi, marking yet another attempt to expand the world-building possibilities of Indian cinema. If true, this would be the filmmaker’s second major experiment with an invented tongue after Baahubali, which introduced audiences to the artificial language Kiliki. Linguist and lyricist Madhan Karky, who collaborated with Rajamouli on that project, is said to be working with him once again to create a distinct vocabulary, grammar and linguistic identity for the film.

According to reports, the language is being designed for an ancient, isolated tribe that plays a key role in the story. The move is in line with Rajamouli’s emphasis on authenticity and immersive storytelling. Varanasi, which reportedly blends history, mythology and adventure, is expected to explore themes rooted in the sacred city while also travelling across different eras and geographies. Invented languages have often added depth to fictional worlds in global cinema. James Cameron commissioned linguists to create the Na’vi language for Avatar (2009), while Star

Trek popularised Klingon among fans worldwide. Other notable examples include Heptapod B from Arrival (2016), and Dothraki and High Valyrian from Game of Thrones. Rajamouli’s decision, if confirmed, would place Varanasi within that tradition of expansive world-building, where language itself becomes an important storytelling tool. Over the years, Rajamouli has consistently pushed creative boundaries. From the unconventional revenge drama of Eega to the epic scale of the Baahubali films and the elaborate action sequences of RRR, he has repeatedly explored ideas rarely attempted in mainstream Indian cinema. His films have also embraced cutting-edge visual effects, ambitious production design and innovative narrative structures. Varanasi is already generating attention for its scale. Reports suggest that it will be the first non-English feature film to shoot extensively in the full 1.43:1 IMAX aspect ratio. The film is also expected to feature international locations spanning Africa, Antarctica, Europe and ancient India. Co-starring Priyanka Chopra Jonas and Prithviraj Sukumaran, the film is reportedly being planned for a simultaneous release in over 120 countries, including a dedicated international version with English subtitles.

Ranbir Kapoor’s ‘Ramayana’ gets a pre-Diwali release strategy



Mumbai : Ranbir Kapoor’s Ramayana: Part One is among the most anticipated releases of 2026. Directed by Nitesh Tiwari, the ambitious mythological epic is planned as a two-part cinematic saga, with Ranbir Kapoor playing Lord Rama, Sai Pallavi as Sita and Yash as Ravana. The film also stars Sunny Deol as Hanuman and Ravie Dubey as Lakshmana. The film’s theatrical release plan now appears to have undergone a change. According to a report by Pinkvilla, Ramayana: Part One will release in India on November 5, with paid previews scheduled for November 4. The film was earlier expected to arrive in India during the Diwali period, with November 8 being the date previously confirmed by producer Namit Malhotra. However, the makers are yet to officially announce the reported change in date. According to the report, the film will also have paid previews in North America on November 4, before opening

there on November 5. It is scheduled to release on November 5 across Australia, New Zealand, Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Germany, the rest of Europe and Latin America. The UK, South Africa and Mauritius are currently slated for a November 6 release. China, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan

and Hong Kong remain to be confirmed. Produced by Namit Malhotra’s Prime Focus Studios in association with DNEG and Yash’s Monster Mind Creations, Ramayana has been designed as a large-scale live-action adaptation aimed at audiences worldwide. The film was shot for IMAX,

while the production has brought together an international technical team. Academy Award winners Hans Zimmer and A. R. Rahman are composing the music. The makers have described the project as a two-part retelling of the epic, with Part One arriving in 2026 and Part Two planned for 2027.

Nana Patekar’s last rites to be held in Pune with full state honours

Mumbai : Maharashtra is giving Nana Patekar the send-off his five-decade career earned him. The state government has announced that the veteran actor, who passed away today on October 8 at 75 following a cardiac arrest, will be cremated with full state honours, a rare recognition reserved for those who have left an indelible mark on public life. Maharashtra Cultural Affairs Minister Ashish Shelar confirmed the decision on X, writing, “Considering the unparalleled contribution of actor Nana Patekar to Marathi plays as well as Marathi and Hindi cinema, we have decided to conduct his last rites ‘with full state honors’.” Speaking to reporters



in Nagpur, Shelar also reflected on the actor’s singular place in the industry, noting how he “carved out a distinct identity for himself” across a career that refused to be boxed in. Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis personally spoke with Patekar’s son, Malhar, offering condolences

and assuring the family of the government’s full support. An official from the government added that the choice of location for the final rites would rest with the family, with the state stepping in to handle the necessary arrangements. That decision has since been made. Patekar’s final journey

will take him to his farmhouse in Donje, near Pune, a place he held deep personal affection for throughout his life. The cremation is set to take place there this evening, at 4 pm, with his body first taken to Goa Medical College before being transported to Maharashtra. Beyond his staggering body of work, which includes three National Film Awards and four Filmfare Awards, Patekar’s commitment to Maharashtra ran deeper than cinema. Through the Naam Foundation, which he co-founded with actor Makarand Anaspure, he spent years working closely with drought-affected farmers across the state, a cause that earned him respect well beyond the film industry.

Bigg Boss 20 week 5 voting trends: safe vs. endangered housemates revealed

Mumbai : Bollywood blockbuster Hanuman Ansh Things are moving fast inside the Bigg Boss 20 house, and the nominated contestants are terrified of getting evicted. The housemates up for elimination this week are Qazi Touqeer, Gullu, Arishfa Khan, Love Gill, Kanika Mann, Mahi Vij, Aman Gandhi, and Mary Kom. Voting lines are open, and fans are casting votes to keep their favorite contestants safe. Qazi Touqeer was recently unwell and taken to the medical room for treatment after coming down with dengue. Despite his health setback, Qazi is currently leading the voting trends with a huge majority, followed by Gullu and Arishfa Khan. Qazi Touqeer, Gullu, Arishfa Khan, Love Gill, and Kanika Mann appear to be in the safe zone after receiving strong audience support. On the other hand, Mahi Vij, Aman Gandhi, and Mary Kom are at the bottom of the list with lower vote counts. The



fifth-week elimination of Bigg Boss 20 will take place on Sunday. Keep watching this space for further updates.

Box Office blame game: Dulquer Salmaan owns up to ‘I’m game’ failure

Kochi : It has been a little over a month since I’m Game, starring Dulquer Salmaan and directed by Nahas Hidayath, arrived in theatres. The film had considerable expectations riding on it, particularly with Dulquer also backing the project through his production house Wayfarer Films. However, its theatrical run did not unfold as hoped, with the film reportedly earning around Rs 48 crore worldwide, according to box office tracker Sacnilk. While the film’s performance has prompted considerable discussion among audiences, Dulquer has now addressed some of the criticism directed at I’m Game and its production. Interacting with users on X on Wednesday, the actor-producer offered a candid perspective on what can happen behind the scenes of a large-scale film production. Several users used the interaction to share their disappointment with the film. One user described I’m Game as “valare shokam (extremely disappointing)” while urging Dulquer to come up with a much better film next time.



Responding to the criticism, Dulquer acknowledged the sentiment while pointing out that audiences are often unaware of the circumstances surrounding a production. “It’s sweet that you care. But there are many things that happen that you are not aware of. That sometimes can be out of the control of the best intended production house also. Anyway we will only keep striving to do our best.” Another user referred to a previous discussion about the film and argued that Wayfarer Films had “messed up the project”. Dulquer did not dismiss the criticism, instead acknowledging

that there was merit to the assessment. “I’m not saying you were wrong in your analysis. You were mostly right. And trust me we are aware of all of it. But there are just times when from our end we can do everything right. But outside factors or other circumstances can turn those upside down.” The actor’s comments offer an interesting insight into the challenges of mounting a film, particularly one involving a sizeable production team. While audiences primarily experience a finished film, the process of arriving at that final product involves numerous creative and logistical decisions. For a film that failed to meet expectations at the box office, Dulquer’s response is notable for neither dismissing the criticism nor placing the blame solely on individual members of the team. Instead, the actor-producer has acknowledged the shortcomings while making it clear that Wayfarer Films intends to learn from the experience and continue striving to get its films right.

Aamir Khan responds with silence on Sanjay Dutt's controversial remark

Mumbai : Aamir Khan declined to comment on Sanjay Dutt’s recent “No peace in India” remark when he was asked about it at the Celebrate Cinema Festival 2026 in Mumbai on Wednesday, October 7. Aamir simply waved his hands, signalling that he did not want to answer the question. A video of the moment has gone viral online, with some social media users reacting to Aamir’s refusal to comment. Sanjay Dutt made the remark during his appearance on Shekhar Suman’s show Shekhar Tonite. While praising Indians as “large-hearted” and “hospitable”, he said, “The people of this country are so lovely. There should be peace here. I can’t feel that peace in our country anymore.



We Indians are large-hearted people, and we are hospitable. We have given so much, and we should always remain that way. I pray to Shivji that those days come back soon.” The remark drew reactions online. Sanjay later clarified that the conversation was scripted and intended to be light-hearted and humorous.

He said the segment was inspired by the humour and satire of Munna Bhai, particularly the idea of “Gandhigiri”, which he said was meant to convey love, warmth, togetherness and goodwill. Aamir was at Whistling Woods International for the opening day of the Celebrate Cinema Festival 2026. He participated

in a conversation about Sitaare Zameen Par and his journey in cinema before interacting with the media. During the interaction, Aamir was asked about Sanjay’s comment. He did not respond and instead waved his hands, making it clear that he did not want to comment on the matter. The actor did, however, speak about the use of artificial intelligence in cinema. Aamir said AI itself should not be viewed as good or bad and that its impact depends on how filmmakers use it. “When a new technology comes, it is easily absorbed in films. Those who use it well get good results. Those who don’t use it well, don’t get positive reactions. So, it really depends on how you use it. Technology is a technology.

‘Indian 3’ officially confirmed: Kamal Haasan and Shankar reunite

Chennai : The Indian franchise is set to continue with Indian 3, with Kamal Haasan returning to headline the third instalment. The film will once again be written and directed by Shankar, with the makers confirming that post-production work has commenced. The franchise began with Indian in 1996, introducing Kamal Haasan as Senapathy, a former freedom fighter and martial arts expert who turns vigilante in his mission

to eliminate corruption. His crusade eventually puts him at odds with his own son Chandru, also played by Kamal Haasan, whose corrupt practices become central to the conflict. Nearly three decades later, Indian 2 brought Senapathy back to the present day. Released in 2024, the sequel revisited the character’s fight against corruption while expanding the mythology surrounding him. The film also laid the groundwork for

another chapter, with its ending offering a glimpse into the story that Indian 3 would explore. While Indian and Indian 2 largely focused on Senapathy himself, the third film is set to take the franchise further into his past. Indian 3 will centre on Veerasekaran Balram, Senapathy’s father, who was also a freedom fighter. Kamal Haasan is expected to portray the character, adding another layer to the actor’s already



extensive association with the franchise. The storyline was

teased towards the end of Indian 2, suggesting that the up-

coming film will move further back in time and explore the roots of Senapathy’s ideology and his relationship with the fight against injustice. The decision to expand the story into Senapathy’s family history also gives Shankar an opportunity to broaden the period and political backdrop of the franchise. Indian 3 could therefore function not merely as a continuation of the 2024 film, but as an exploration of the events and experienc-

es that shaped one of Tamil cinema’s most recognisable vigilante characters. The film will also bring back several members of the Indian 2 cast. Siddharth, Kajal Aggarwal, Priya Bhavani Shankar, Bobby Simha and SJ Suryah are confirmed to reprise their respective roles. The technical team for Indian 3 includes several key collaborators from the franchise. Anirudh Ravichander returns as composer, while Ravi Var-

man is the cinematographer. Muthuraj Thangavel is on board as production designer. Subaskaran and GKM Tamil Kumaran are producing the film under the Lyca Productions banner. With post-production now underway, Indian 3 marks the continuation of a franchise that has remained closely associated with Shankar’s larger-than-life filmmaking and Kamal Haasan’s ability to transform into characters across different eras.

After her second Asian Games, Harshita Tomar plans to compete in the Olympics in Los Angeles The Sailing Bronze

Aichi-Nagoya: After winning a second bronze medal at the Asian Games on Wednesday, Indian sailor Harshita Tomar instantly shifted her attention to the next task, stating that she will now concentrate on earning a spot in the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics. In the women's skiff competition at the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games, Harshita and her 19-year-old partner, Shital Verma, placed third when China's Xiaoyu Hu and Yuyue Sun were eliminated. After nine races, the Indian pair ended fourth with 24 net points and 28 total points, but China's disqualification moved them up to the bronze. Upon their arrival at the Indira Gandhi International Airport in New Delhi, Harshita reflected on her second Asian Games medal and the disappointment of finishing fourth at the previous edition. "It feels really good. This is my second Asian Games medal. I got bronze in 2018, and I came in fourth at the 2022 Asian Games, which was really disappointing. I fought hard right up to the end this time too, and then got the bronze," Harshita told ANI. The 24-year-old, who grew up swimming in the Narmada River in Hoshangabad, Madhya Pradesh, said coordination with Shital was crucial to their success in the event. "On the boat, coordination between the two of us matters a lot—how we think, what our mindset is, what information our coach gives us, and how we execute it.



Everything adds up to our performance in the races, and that's what ultimately shows our results. So, understanding your partner and having great coordination is super important," she said. Harshita, who is also part of the Indian Navy, credited the organisation and the Sports Authority of India (SAI) for their support and said the next target is the Los Angeles Olympics. "From here on, we'll first focus on the Nationals. After that, we'll fully prepare for the LA Olympics qualifiers and the next Asian Games," she said. Her partner Shital, who won her first Asian Games medal, also acknowledged the support she received from the Indian Navy, SAI, her family, coaches and friends. "I'm feeling very good. Everyone here welcomed me very warmly. It feels really great; I'm feeling very special," "I have a lot of support; SAI and the Navy have supported me a lot. My partner, coach, family, and friends have all been very supportive. Everyone has supported

me everywhere. The credit for this goes to everyone," she added. Shital also highlighted the role played by coach Varun Thakkar, who guided the pair throughout their campaign. "Because he was in the water with us the entire time, his [Varun Thakkar] position was the primary one. He gave us a lot of training. We never stopped sailing. The wind was initially very typical in Japan as well, although it later became somewhat heavy. We encountered nearly every circumstance. She said, "He told us to sail freely and just give our best. He didn't put much mental pressure on us either," Thakkar, a former Olympian and 2018 Asian Games bronze medallist, said he was proud of the progress made by the Indian sailing contingent, which returned from Aichi-Nagoya with three medals. "I feel like after so many years being part of the sport, I think every year we have only been getting more and more medals for sailing. I did it in 2018. In 2022, I had a very

bad year, but the team won medals. And again we come back here with three medals, and I think that's phenomenal for the sport," Reflecting on Harshita and Shital's campaign, he praised the pair for holding their nerve under pressure. "Talking about my team that I was coaching, I think they are phenomenal as a team. I was very, very happy with the way they sailed the event, and it was extremely nerve-wracking for them because, you know, one is very experienced, as Harshita has an Asian Games Bronze in 2018, and Shital, who wasn't really as experienced as her, she held her nerves very well in putting the team together," Thakkar said. Varun, who represented India at the Tokyo Olympics, said his experience also helped the duo navigate the competition. "My experience coming in as well, I think, kept everyone together and the team just started building. I think we gained about two years of experience just in these two weeks of competition and that's good for us," he said. Thakkar was appointed on a short-term contract to guide the pair for the Asian Games and said he was pleased to have delivered on his target. "I am on a very short contract with them, like six months, just to help them under the Asian Games. I promised them I would get them a medal, and I did. So now from here it's only upwards," he concluded.

India at the UN: “Pak’s Frankenstein Monster of Terrorism Returned To Haunt It”

New Delhi, Oct 08: India has declared that the rogue Pakistani state has totally lost control of the Frankenstein's monster of terrorism it created, which has now returned to violently stalk its own creators, exposing Islamabad's deceit in front of the international community. The country's leadership has publicly acknowledged this damning reality and called for strong international action against state sponsors of terror. "Pakistan has presented itself as a frontline state in combating terrorism and as a victim, while masking the fact that the Frankenstein's (monster) the Pakistani state has created and lost control over have moved from wreaking havoc in neighbouring countries to doing the same in Pakistan," Raghuo Puri, a first secretary in India's UN mission, said on Wednesday (local time). "This was exposed recently by a provincial chief minister of Pakistan, and may I jog the memory of colleagues to an interview in 2018 by her father and former prime minister of Pakistan, exposing this dark secret," he stated. "You cannot run with the hares and hunt with the hounds," Puri warned. "Reality never works like that". In response to Pakistan's Deputy Permanent Representative Usman Jadoon's unwarranted diatribe against New Delhi before the UN General Assembly's Sixth Committee, which deals with legal matters, Puri was presenting India's right of reply. The chief minister of Pa-



kistan's Punjab Province, Maryam Nawaz, highlighted inconsistencies within the country's political system when she said last month in Lahore, "Unfortunately, the threat Punjab, a province of 130 million, faces comes less from my neighboring countries and more from my neighboring provinces." Earlier this month, she further undermined Islamabad's hollow rhetoric surrounding "freedom fighters" by conceding that terrorism defies classification and that anyone participating in extremist violence remains a terrorist regardless of political motivations. Furthermore, in an interview given to the Dawn newspaper back in 2018, her father, former Pakistani prime minister Nawaz Sharif, explicitly confessed to his country's culpability regarding the orchestration of the 26/11 terrorist attack on Mumbai. "Militant organisations are active. Call them non-state actors; should we allow them to cross the border and kill 150 people in Mumbai?" he had stated. While delivering his remarks, Puri pointedly re-

frained from naming the two members of the Nawaz family. Lampooning Islamabad's delusional posturing over military outcomes, Puri dismissed Pakistan's fabrications regarding its purported victory against India during Operation Sindoor, an assertive counter-terror strike executed by New Delhi in decisive retaliation for the brutal Pahalgam terror attack. "If bombed-out airfields and cratered runways look like victory to Pakistan, they are, of course, welcome to enjoy it," he noted. "Pakistani representative's desperation to falsely tout the Pakistani military's narrative on the outcome of Operation Sindoor" merely aligned with its long-standing machinery of state-sponsored disinformation and psychological deception, he asserted. Puri, who effectively dismantled Islamabad's propaganda during the session, holds a biotechnology degree from Panjab University alongside an MBA from the Management Development Institute located in Gurgaon. Belonging to the prestigious 2014 cohort of the Indian

Foreign Service, his diplomatic pedigree includes prior postings at India's embassy in Berlin. When the Pakistani delegation slouched back to the podium with a secondary intervention, recycling tired tropes and defunct arguments, Puri cut them down with sharp dismissive candour: "Pakistan believes in the circular economy of words and narratives." "If this much effort had actually been made in countering terrorism rather than narrative building, misinformation, and disinformation, the world would have been a better place," he observed. "But nothing more can be expected from a Form 47 government," he added, alluding directly to the pervasive military hegemony governing Pakistan through rigged electoral documentation engineered to install Shehbaz Sharif as a puppet prime minister. Addressing Islamabad's hypocritical posturing concerning minority rights, Puri demolished their assertions in his initial intervention, exposing the grotesque irony of a rogue state fostering religious extremism that ultimately targets innocent civilians based on faith. "The victims in Pahalgam were not asked about their political orientation; they were asked about their religion," he declared. "It is therefore deeply ironic that Pakistan speaks of combating religious hatred while allowing the conditions that enable it to persist and thrive, especially by fomenting cross-border terrorism," he pointed out.

“Clean South Mumbai Doesn’t Mean City Is Clean” High Court Chastises Community Organization



Mumbai, Oct 08: "Clean South Mumbai does not mean entire city is clean," the Bombay High Court said in a furious statement on Wednesday about the city's civic authority. The court chastised the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) for the city's rubbish problem and reminded it that the metropolis was more than a few tidy, affluent neighborhoods. There is pollution everywhere—South Mumbai isn't the whole city. The court pointed out that the cleanliness of certain parts of Mumbai, such as Worli and South Mumbai, does not imply that the en-

tire city is clean. A bench of Justices Girish Kulkarni and Neela Gokhale noted that trash dumping on the streets has continued even after a cleaning plan was provided for each of the 24 wards. The western suburbs, especially Jogeshwari and Malad, have the worst rubbish conditions, the court notably noted. The court requested a detailed affidavit outlining the actions performed on Gandhi Jayanti as part of the "Swachhata Abhiyan" and the processes ward officials took to determine the "correct position" on the ground. During the hearing of many petitions

against the ongoing disposal of municipal solid waste at the Kanjurmad landfill, the court made these observations. The bench said it had seen little improvement in the city's hygiene despite several directions issued by the court over the years. "We aren't against anybody, but basic hygiene discipline must be there. Ward hygiene must be maintained. We are concerned with the lives of the citizens, their health, their hygiene, etc.," it added. Earlier, on September 10, the court had warned the BMC of contempt action against its ward officers if they failed to tackle the city's persistent garbage and littering problem. It had stressed the need for stricter enforcement of existing rules, noting that residents continued to dump garbage in open spaces. "The folks are experiencing a mental barrier. Garbage is dumped anywhere you find open places. The bench stated, "We have the greatest laws, yet there are issues with enforcement.

Maharashtra Minister: Nana Patekar’s Funeral Will Be Held With State Honors

New Delhi, Oct 08: According to Cultural Affairs Minister Ashish Shelar, the Maharashtra government would pay state honors during the burial of famous actor and filmmaker Nana Patekar. Shelar claims that the choice was made in appreciation of the actor's significant contributions to Hindi and Marathi movies as well as Marathi theater. "We have spoken to the Chief Minister's office, and the government will soon announce the details of Nana Patekar's funeral and visit," he stated. Nana Patekar suffered a heart attack and passed away this morning. He was seventy-five. Sources said that since yesterday night, Patekar, who was at home with his nephew Prasad Patekar, had been complaining of a headache. The actor was taken to the hospital after being discovered unresponsive. According to information



provided by Manipal Hospital, the physicians attempted to resuscitate him for over forty-five minutes after he was brought in, but they were unable. Shelar, expressing condolences over Patekar's death, said that a void would never be filled in the lives of Marathi people. "Nana was a shield for everyone from farmers to soldiers. He would even criticise the government on farmers' issues...He was not one to be confined to

Wajood, Parinda, Ab Tak Chhappan, Welcome, Taxi No 9211, Housefull 5, and Yeshwant, among others. In 2016, he won the Filmfare Award for Best Actor for his performance in the Marathi film 'Natsamrat'. Patekar was also a recipient of the Padma Shri - which was awarded to him in 2013 for his contribution to cinema and the arts. Outside of Indian film, Patekar was well-known for his involvement in humanitarian issues, particularly his initiatives to assist farmers and families facing hardship in the agricultural sector. Together with actor Makarand Anaspure, he led the "NAAM Foundation," which provided assistance to farmers and communities in Maharashtra's drought-prone districts. Additionally, they supported farmers' children's education, prevented farmer suicides, and conserved water.

During a protest, Priyanka Gandhi said, “Police Personnel Scratched Me”

New Delhi, Oct 08: During an agitation against CEC Gyanesh Kumar over alleged anomalies in the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise, Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra was spotted laying on the ground while other MPs from the INDIA bloc were being held by the Delhi Police on route to Jantar Mantar. Priyanka Gandhi reportedly stated, "I will not move from here," according to Congress. MPs who just wish to meet with the Election Commission are handled in this manner. MPs are beaten up like this. I've been shoved to the ground and have been scraped all over by female police officers. Allow them to summon their troops. Police personnel removed Priyanka Gandhi Vadra from the site near Jantar Mantar. Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, was also detained by police. Congress MP Charanjit Singh Channi accused the Centre of "hooliganism" as the opposition MPs were stopped from marching forward. Channi said, "We want to go towards the ECI office; this government has resorted to hooliganism. There is no democracy. We are being stopped." Congress MP Pawan Khera said, "It is our democratic right; we are fighting for this right. Article 19 grants us permission to protest in this manner, and Jantar Mantar is a designated spot; if we cannot stage a protest here, then where else can we do it? We are fighting for our rights—fighting for the rights of the country's voters—yet every time, we are being stopped in this struggle. We are being prevented from even entering this designated protest site, Jantar Mantar; Members of Parliament is being prevented from entering. The Delhi Police are not at blame; their leader is a coward. Manoj Kumar Jha, an RJD MP, said that the police had used force.

Foreign Ministry: Captain Smit Machchhar’s Health Is Getting Better

New Delhi, Oct 08: The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Wednesday that Indian pilot Captain Smit Machchhar, who was hurt in an attack by his co-pilot on a flydubai aircraft, is recovering well from surgery at an Abu Dhabi hospital and his condition is getting better. This was said by MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal during his biweekly press conference. Capt. Machchhar is in an Abu Dhabi hospital. In order to obtain the most recent information on his health, our Embassy in the UAE has maintained constant communication with his family, physicians, hospital, and local authorities there," he stated. "Based on the information we have, he is recovering from surgery and his health is becoming better. He is reacting effectively," Jaiswal remarked. On September 30, Machchhar was gravely injured when his co-pilot, an Omani national, assaulted him with a crash axe—usually maintained in the cockpit for use in emergencies—on flydubai aircraft FZ1073. The attack's motivation is yet unknown. The 174-person airplane headed for Israel sent out distress signals and quickly descended from 34,000 feet to more than 17,000

feet. The captain was lying injured on the cockpit floor when he realised the plane was descending and decided to make "one last push" to open the cockpit door. On October 1, India's ambassador to the UAE, Deepak Mittal, said that Machchhar was "in good health and recovering well". Mittal visited Captain Machchhar at the hospital. Two reserve pilots landed the aircraft safely at Prince Sultan Bin Abdulaziz Airport in Saudi Arabia's Tabuk city, where the co-pilot was taken into custody and Machchhar was taken to a nearby hospital before being airlifted to Abu Dhabi. Jaiswal was also asked about Pakistan's recent claims regarding infiltration at the border. "A country that has for years encouraged cross-border terrorism... this has become sort of their nature to speak lies, put forth falsehood. I can only say, no matter how much they try, the drama on television cannot change the ground reality," he said without elaborating. The MEA earlier in a statement had said, "India also categorically rejected the baseless and motivated allegations regarding an incident in the Ferozepur sector, Punjab, along the International Border on October 2."

Aichi-Nagoya: Asian Games gold medalist wrestler Sujeet Kalkal responded, "Desh ke liye gold jeetna hi mere liye diwali hai hai," when asked how he would commemorate the festival of light following the conclusion of his campaign at the Wrestling World Championships, which will take place in Kazakhstan later this month from October 24 to November 1. Sujeet, the current Asian champion, earned the gold after making an incredible comeback from a 2-9 deficit to overcome Abdulmazzhid Kudiev of Tajikistan 10-9. Sujeet first upset Olympic champion Kotaro Kiyooka of Japan in the 65 kg freestyle final at the Asian Games. Sujeet is aiming for a gold at the UWW World Championships in Astana, which will end one week before Diwali, following his triumph in the continental showcase. The

23-year-old wrestler from Imlotha village in the Charkhi Dadri area of Haryana, wearing the clam demeanour, stated that winning the gold for the nation was like a Diwali to him during a news conference held on Wednesday by the Sports Authority of India (SAI). "Winning a gold medal for the country at the Asian Games—that itself is Diwali for me. I haven't even been home for Holi or Diwali yet because there is always one competition or another. My father says that if you bring home gold, that in itself is Diwali and Holi. This time too, there will be a competition around Diwali, and if I win gold, that will be Diwali for me," Sujeet said. In the 65kg final at the Asian Games, Sujeet was trailing 2-9 at the end of the first period. With one minute and 40 seconds remaining in the gold medal bout, the Indian launched

an extraordinary fightback to reduce the deficit to 9-8 before another two-point takedown to snatch the lead and clinch the gold medal. Speaking about his thrilling turnaround, Sujeet said, "I couldn't control the final bout in the beginning because I couldn't warm up properly at that time. After that, I established a good grip in the second period, and every attack I attempted was successful. By the end of the match, I had covered all the points." Asked about his preparation for the World Championships and how the Asian Games gold medal win will boost his confidence, Sujeet said the UWW Worlds is tougher than the Asian Games and Olympics as well, and he will not be following any specific plan for his preparations but will be working on the 'mistakes' from the past. "This is a very important competition, and

it's going to be even tougher than the Olympics. We don't do any specific preparation. We just work on the mistakes made in previous competitions so that they aren't repeated in the upcoming ones," he said. Sujeet, who trains at SAI Sonapat, had training exposure in Russia and Armenia before the Asian Games to prepare for the continental spectacle and world championships as well. Sharing his experience from the foreign exposure, Sujeet said, "First of all, thanks to TOPS, SAI and WFI. Because of them, we get foreign exposures. Training plays the most important role in the medals we win. There were champions wrestlers in Russia; World Championship, Asian Games, and Olympic medallists were there, so there was a lot to learn, and we also competed there. It was a great experience."

How Indian Wrestler Sujeet Kalkal Overcame Adversity to Win Asian Games Gold

New Delhi: Comebacks have always been a part of Sujeet Kalkal's life. Two years ago, the Indian wrestling sensation missed his chance to compete at the Paris Olympics. On his way to Kyrgyzstan for the Asian Olympic qualifying tournament, the 23-year-old was left stranded in Dubai for three days after floods disrupted his travel. With every passing minute, his Olympic dream slipped further away. By the time he finally reached Kyrgyzstan, the opportunity was gone. Fast-forward to the Asian Games in Nagoya, and Sujeet found himself in an eerily familiar situation. This time, however, the stakes were even higher. It was the final of the men's 65kg freestyle wrestling event, and the gold medal that had been within touching distance was suddenly slipping away. Against Tajikistan's Abdulmazhid Kudiev, Sujeet was trailing 2-9. The clock was ticking down, and only something extraordinary could have saved the Indian wrestler. And that's exactly what happened. A comeback of epic proportions saw Sujeet end India's eight-year wait for a wrestling gold at the Asian Games. The Indian unleashed an eight-point scoring spree to overturn a 7-2 deficit and move 10-9 ahead, leav-



ing Kudiev scrambling for answers. With the clock running down, Kalkal kept his composure, defended his slender advantage and completed a stunning comeback to clinch Asian Games gold. His victory also placed Kalkal in an elite group of Indian wrestlers. He became only the third Indian to win the men's 65kg freestyle gold at the Asian Games, joining Yogeshwar Dutt, who triumphed in 2014, and Bajrang Punia, the 2018 champion. But how did he pull it off? Was it a quick change of strategy? A mistake from his opponent? Or simply an unshakeable will to succeed? The last of those was evident throughout the bout. But Sujeet revealed a far simpler mantra. He chose not to dwell on what had happened two years ago. Instead, he told himself to keep fighting. "I don't focus too much on things that

have already happened. In Paris, it wasn't really in our hands. It was almost like a natural disaster, there were floods and we couldn't reach the venue. There was nothing we could do about that," said Sujeet in a virtual interaction. Our job is to keep trying. In a final, even if I am losing, my duty is to fight until my last breath. That's what I did in that final. I told myself that whatever strength and energy I had left, I had to give everything. I did that and won the gold for the country. Sujeet counts the Asian Games gold as his biggest achievement so far. Yet when asked if there could be anything that tops it, the 23-year-old had a beaming smile. He didn't hide his excitement when talking about his dream of winning an Olympic medal at the same event he missed two years ago. "The Asian Games gold is my biggest achievement so

far. The World Championships are coming up, and winning there would be an even bigger achievement." "But ultimately, the Olympics are the final stage. Nothing can give you more happiness than becoming an Olympic champion because that is every athlete's dream. That would be the biggest achievement for me," said Sujeet. Sujeet will now turn his attention towards the World Wrestling Championships in Kazakhstan, which begin on October 24 and run until November 1. The medal matches are expected to take place on the final day, just a few days before Diwali. Sujeet hasn't been at home for Diwali over the past few years. For him, winning a medal would be as good as celebrating the festival itself. "The first thing I want to say is that for a sports person, any achievement is itself a celebration. If I achieve something like winning gold for the country at the Asian Games, that is my Diwali." "I haven't really gone home during Diwali or Holi so far because there is always some competition or the other around those festivals," said Sujeet. The Indian wrestling sensation also revealed how his father told him to simply bring the gold back home and it would be as big as Diwali itself.

Joburg Super Kings Finally Sign MI Legend Kieron Pollard 16 Years After Bidding War

New Delhi: Kieron Pollard has spent much of his career in Mumbai Indians blue, tormenting Chennai Super Kings with some memorable IPL knocks along the way. When Mumbai Indians joined hands with Cape Town for the inaugural edition of the SA20, Pollard was part of that journey too. Now, however, he will not be seen in the blue MI jersey in the SA20. Instead, Pollard will wear Super Kings yellow after Joburg Super Kings bought him for R1.5 million at the Season 5 auction. Sixteen years after CSK tried to sign him at the 2010 IPL auction, Pollard will finally play for a Super Kings franchise, although it is Joburg rather than Chennai that has secured his services. Pollard was one of the biggest names in the 2010 auction after his performances for Trinidad and Tobago had put him firmly on the radar of IPL franchises. Mumbai Indians, Chennai Super Kings, Royal Challengers Bengaluru and Kolkata Knight Riders were all involved in the bidding, which reached the maximum permitted amount of \$750,000. With more than one team reaching that figure, the winner was decided through a secret tie-breaker. Mumbai Indians came out on top and Pollard began what became a 13-season IPL career with the franchise. He went on to score 3,412 runs and take 69 wickets for Mumbai Indians, while being part of all five of their IPL title-winning campaigns. Pollard also featured in both of the franchise's Champions League T20-winning campaigns, establishing himself as one of the most successful players in their history. Even after retiring from the IPL in 2022, Pollard remained with Mumbai Indians. He moved into coaching as their batting coach and continued to be involved with



the franchise's teams in other competitions. That included MI Emirates in the ILT20, MI New York in Major League Cricket and MI Cape Town in the SA20. Pollard captained MI Cape Town during the 2024 season, scoring 187 runs at a strike rate of 185.15. He was not part of their title-winning campaign in 2025 but returned midway through the 2026 season as Rashid Khan's replacement and played two matches. Pollard's departure from MI Cape Town comes after several seasons in which he was one of the familiar faces of the franchise. Mumbai Indians released him ahead of the latest auction, leaving him available alongside 155 other players for the 19 slots that were up for grabs. Joburg Super Kings were in the strongest financial position going into the auction, with R20.6 million left in their purse and six slots to fill. They used R1.5 million of that amount to sign Pollard, who went unopposed at the auction. The move gives Pollard his first stint with a Super Kings franchise and takes him into a new dressing room after years with the MI setup. It also brings an old IPL auction story back into focus. CSK could not get Pollard in 2010 when they were competing with Mumbai Indi-

ans for his signature. Sixteen years later, he will finally wear yellow, although it will be the Joburg Super Kings jersey rather than the Chennai Super Kings shirt. Kieron Pollard, long associated with Mumbai Indians and a key IPL figure, has joined Joburg Super Kings in the SA20 after being released by MI. Despite Chennai Super Kings' failed attempt to sign him in the 2010 IPL auction, Pollard will finally wear a Super Kings jersey, marking a new chapter. Pollard's illustrious career includes 13 IPL seasons, five titles with MI, coaching roles, and captaincy at MI Cape Town, highlighting his enduring influence in franchise cricket. Mumbai Indians legend Kieron Pollard announced his retirement from the Indian Premier League (IPL) with immediate effect. Pollard took to social media to announce his retirement from the Indian Premier League. Pollard, in his retirement letter, revealed that he had a discussion with Mumbai Indians ahead of the IPL retention deadline. "It hasn't been the easiest decision to make as I intend to keep playing for a few more years, but following discussions with Mumbai Indians, I have decided to call time on my IPL career.

AB de Villiers Says Current Virat Kohli Is Better Than 2016 Peak



New Delhi: Right after the recent Thiruvananthapuram ODI against the West Indies, Virat Kohli said that he has put himself in a new gauntlet, where he can still elevate his game to a new level. "I've got a challenge at this stage of my career to kind of up the ante and play a gear or two higher," said Kohli. For the fans who saw the destruction caused by him on that night, it will be music to their ears. On his way to scaling mount 15,000 ODI runs, the Indian star took apart the Windies bowling with ease. He hit 10 fours and nine sixes on his way to scoring 139 off just 88 balls. This showed a significant change in approach for Kohli, who is now just playing one for-

mat internationally and the IPL. It wasn't evident last year after announcing his Test retirement as he had two ducks in Australia and salvaged the series with a fifty. But during the South Africa series, something clicked and the change was in full force. Since the start of the three matches against the Proteas, Kohli has amassed 854 runs from his 12 ODI innings at a strike rate of 117.63. His unbeaten 139 in the opening ODI against the West Indies in Trivandrum was the latest standout performance in a remarkable run of form. In fact, Kohli has piled up 825 runs across his last 10 innings alone. That tally puts him among the most prolific 10-innings stretches in ODI

history, with only six such sequences producing more runs. Remarkably, two of those six belong to Kohli himself, coming during his sensational runs in 2012 and 2018. So is this version of Kohli better than his prime? Well, AB de Villiers believes it to be the case. Speaking to Sports Today in an exclusive chat, De Villiers said that the current avatar is a better version because of the fact that Kohli seems to be relaxed and completely free. The South African legend said he show glimpses of the current version during the Champions Trophy 2025, but felt the Indian star got stuck and went back to the old habits. "Yeah, that's a good question. It's difficult to say. I think it is a better version because of the way he's so relaxed. And out there in the middle, you can almost see he's completely free," said De Villiers. "He showed signs of that at the last ICC Champions Trophy in the UAE. I started seeing him play a different role, and then he got stuck a little bit again, going back to old habits, and then just sort of let go completely again."

Omitted Para Asiad Cyclists Plan Protest as Sports Ministry Maintains Selection Criteria



New Delhi : Cyclists who have been omitted from the upcoming Para Asian Games has decided to stage a protest against the actions of the sports ministry. SAI has cleared only one para cyclist for the upcoming games in Japan, sticking to its long-standing selection criteria. The disgruntled cyclists plan to hold the protest at the The cyclists left out of India's Para Asian Games squad have raised discrimination allegations, but SAI has maintained that selections were based strictly on performance. Arshad Shaik, a Paralympian, is the lone cyclist to have secured the Ministry's approval for the Games, which begin in

Aichi-Nagoya on October 18. This is the second time athletes have complained about the selection process for the Para Asiad. Earlier on Wednesday, Para-shooters sought an urgent independent inquiry into alleged financial corruption, extortion and manipulation in the selection process for the Para Asian Games. The cyclists who are protesting the selections are expected to meet Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) CEO N S Jhal at the SAI office, where they plan to present their grievances and seek clarity over the selection process. "We have been in Leh preparing for the Asian Para Games all this while,

we didn't even know that our names have been omitted," road cyclist Prashant Arkal, who is among the omitted ones, told PTI. "The Government's approval lists only one athlete for Para Cycling even though we have spent from our own pocket to meet the qualification criteria," Arkal said. Apart from Arkal, Pavan Kumar Kommoji, Sameer, Vasani Babubhai, Shashruti Vinayak Nakade and Lisha Das are the other cyclists who have been omitted. While the ministry is yet to officially announce the final Indian contingent for the Asian Para Games, PTI says that a 128-member squad spanning eight sports has received approval. According to SAI, Arshad is the only athlete who fulfils the prescribed selection standards. He finished fourth in a field of nine competitors at this year's Asian Para Road Championships, before placing fifth among eight participants in the 1km time trial at the Asian Para Track Championships. "Finishing fourth in a four-player field cannot be considered for selection. They are being misled by

the Paralympic Committee of India (PCI) and the Cycling Federation of India (CFI)," a SAI source told PTI. As per the world rankings published up to February this year, India stood sixth among Asian nations in men's para cycling and fourth in the women's category. Under the Asian Para Games qualification rules, nations placed between fourth and sixth in the rankings are allocated four slots in the men's category and three in the women's category through the Combined Nations Ranking. "But the point here is that even if you clinch a quota by finishing eighth in a nine-man field, it does not mean you merit selection. Then it defeats the purpose of having a selection criteria," the source added. The list recommended by the CFI also featured young cyclist Lisha Das, who had earlier competed at the Commonwealth Games amid controversy. She had alleged that she was not provided with a female support staff at the event and was forced to compete while dealing with considerable mental and emotional pressure.

Seven Bidders Want to Host the Olympics in 2036, Including India and Qatar



Aichi-Nagoya: Another endorsement has been given to India's Olympic aspirations. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) announced on Tuesday that India and Qatar intend to host the 2036 Olympics. There are seven bids in the contest, including the two nations. In a hosting race that the IOC hopes to determine in 2029 by a disputed vote of its more than 100 members, India and Qatar have long been viewed as preferred possibilities. According to the IOC, South Africa, South Korea, Germany, Hungary, and Turkey are also considering hosting in the future, with 2040 and possibly 2044 editions in mind. "But wherever the Games take place, one thing must never change: Athletes have to be at the heart of everything we do," said IOC President Kirsty Coventry, a two-time Olympic swimming gold medalist. The IOC set an October 31 deadline for other national Olympic bodies to join the 2036 contest. It also published a 30-page document on Tuesday to guide bidders. The focus of India's bid strategy is Ahmedabad, which will host the multi-sport Commonwealth Games in 2030 and is home to the Narendra Modi venue, the biggest cricket venue in the world. Qatar has hosted world championships in most top-tier Olympic sports, including the 2022 FIFA World Cup. Its bid could yet expand beyond Doha, with some events potentially being staged in neighbouring Gulf countries. A Qatar-hosted Olympics would likely require the Summer Games to move from the July-August slot it has occupied at every edition from Athens 2004 through Brisbane 2032.

Mikel Arteta Extends Arsenal Contract Until 2030 Following Premier League Title Victory

New Delhi: Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta has signed a new contract that will keep him at the club until June 2030, the English champions announced on Wednesday. Arteta guided Arsenal to their first Premier League title in 22 years last season, ending a long wait for the club and completing a remarkable turnaround that began after he took charge in December 2019. The Spaniard arrived at a difficult time for Arsenal, replacing Unai Emery with the club struggling in 10th place in the Premier League. Since then, he has been central to the club's long-term rebuilding plan, helping restore Arsenal's status among Europe's top teams. "It's a privilege to commit my future to the club and to continue to work with exceptional people who want the best for Arsenal," Arteta said in a statement. "This club is unique, its character and the way it makes you feel, and I have a great sense of privilege that our journey together will con-



tinue." Arteta ended his playing career in 2016 after five years at Arsenal and subsequently joined Pep Guardiola's coaching staff at Manchester City as an assistant. He returned to Arsenal three years later, taking his first job as a senior manager. Under Arteta, Arsenal returned to the Premier League's top five in 2021-22 before finishing runners-up for three consecutive seasons. They finally ended that run last season by winning the league title. Arsenal

also reached the Champions League final under Arteta, but lost to Paris Saint-Germain on penalties. The club's hierarchy backed Arteta's vision during the rebuilding process, with Arsenal strengthening key areas of the squad through signings including Declan Rice, Martin Odegaard, Ben White and goalkeeper David Raya. The investment has paid off. Arteta has recorded a 62.05 per cent win percentage across 361 matches as Arsenal manager, the best figure among the club's full-time managers. "This is an important time in Arsenal Football Club's history. We want to create a winning era together with Mikel," Arsenal chief executive Richard Garlick said. Arteta, 44, said he believes the club's best years are still ahead. "We have already built a special bond and created memories that will last a lifetime, and what is so exciting is that this is only the beginning of what we can achieve together," he added.

Mikel Arteta Signs Arsenal Extension Until 2030 Following Premier League Victory

New Delhi: Para-shooters have sought an urgent independent inquiry into alleged financial corruption, extortion and manipulation in the selection process for the Para Asian Games, prompting the Paralympic Committee of India (PCI) to reject the charges and insist that the team was picked entirely on merit. In a representation to the Director General of the Sports Authority of India (SAI) on Wednesday, the shooters alleged "illicit monetary extortion", "brazen corruption" and violations of Sports Ministry's guidelines by PCI officials and its Shooting Technical Committee (STC) in selections for the Aichi-Nagoya Para Asian Games, scheduled from October 18 to 24. The



representation alleged that athletes were being pressured to pay a 20 per cent commission from government cash awards as a precondition for selection, while also accusing officials of manipulating international quota places and qualifying scores to favour certain shooters. "Athletes are being coerced under severe duress into paying an illegal kickback of 20 per cent of

their sanctioned government cash awards to designated committee office-bearers as a mandatory pre-condition for national team selection," the representation alleged. The shooters further claimed that international wild-card slots were allocated on the basis of financial considerations rather than ranking and performance, and alleged that two of the 15 international.