# HYDERABAD HEADLINES

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# SC Steps In After Delhi Protest Crackdown.. Issues Contempt Notices to Top Officials

***Court directs normal Metro and railway services, bars illegal detention of peaceful protesters; Opposition plans march over alleged voter-list irregularities***

**New Delhi, October 12:** The Supreme Court has intervened in the escalating protests in the national capital over alleged irregularities in electoral-roll revision, directing authorities to protect peaceful demonstrations, restore normal public transport and ensure free movement while issuing contempt notices to senior officials over alleged non-compliance with its earlier orders. The developments followed two days of protests organised by the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP), student groups and opposition supporters demanding the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar. The demonstrators have accused the Election Commission of irregularities in the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, allegations rejected by the poll body and the BJP. A special bench of Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V. Mohana, hearing the matter on Sunday, issued notices to Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan, Delhi Police Commissioner Anurag Kumar and Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) Chairperson D. Thara. The officials were directed to file their responses and a compliance report by October 13. The bench said the petitioners had made out a prima facie case for contempt proceedings over the alleged violation of the court's October 9 directions concerning restrictions on public transport during the protests.

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# Modi Inaugurates Rs. 750-Crore Railway Projects in Tamil Nadu

***Five Amrit Bharat stations, Karaikal–Peralam new line and three Coimbatore rail flyovers dedicated to nation***



**CHENNAI, OCT 11**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday inaugurated and dedicated railway infrastructure projects worth around ₹750 crore in Tamil Nadu through video conferencing, including five redeveloped Amrit Bharat stations, a new railway line and three rail flyovers in the Coimbatore region.

The main event was held in Chennai in the presence of Tamil Nadu Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar, Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay and Union Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs L. Murugan, among other dignitaries.

**Five Amrit Bharat stations inaugurated**

The Prime Minister inaugurated five stations redeveloped under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme at a combined cost of over ₹70 crore. They are Palani, Paramakkudi and Ambasamudram in the Madurai Division, Namakkal in the Salem Division, and Vellore Cantonment in the Tiruchchirappalli Division. The redevelopment works are aimed at improving passenger amenities, accessibility and circulation, while incorporating the local identity and character of each station.

**Karaikal–Peralam line dedicated**

Modi dedicated the 23-km Karaikal–Peralam new railway line, built at a cost of over ₹550 crore, to the nation. The line is expected to strengthen regional rail connectivity, improve access to Karaikal Port and

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# BJP is Ravan, Congress is Ram. If you want to DEFEAT RAVAN, YOU HAVE TO HELP RAM – CM



***Revanth Reddy's appeal to the people of Goa.. "Confident Congress will win Goa in 2027"_***

***Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy participated as chief guest at the Goy Rakhonn Yatra in Goa on Sunday.***

**Panjim , October 11, 2026 :** A. Revanth Reddy, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Telangana, said he was confident of Congress coming to power in Goa in 2027, and that he could sense the same energy in the state as he experienced in Telangana in 2023 ahead of the Assembly elections. He urged the people of Goa not to vote for smaller parties propped up by the BJP. "They are here to divide the people. Any vote for them is a vote for BJP. This time, I urge the people of Goa, vote only for the Hand symbol," he said. This story has a Ram and a Ravan, he said. "Ravan is BJP, which is dividing the people, and Ram is Congress. If you want to defeat Ravan, you have to support Ram," he said.Revanth Reddy was speaking in Goa on Sunday as part of the Congress party's Goy Rakhonn Yatra. South Goa is a hub of Congress, but other smaller parties are coming up. If the people vote for them, they would be helping BJP, he said.

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# Saudi Arabia Reports Fresh Attacks on Riyadh Airport; Death Toll Rises to 13

***Houthis claim strikes on Riyadh and Dammam airports, Saudi Aramco facilities; hundreds injured in earlier attack***

**RIYADH/DUBAI, October 11:** Saudi Arabia reported fresh attacks on its airports on Sunday, a day after a strike on Riyadh's international airport killed 13 people and injured more than 300, escalating tensions between the kingdom and Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthi rebels. Saudi-led coalition forces said an unidentified projectile targeted Terminal 4 at Riyadh's King Khalid International Airport, triggering a fire and injuring an unspecified number of people. The Saudi civil aviation authority said it was assessing the damage. Saudi air defences intercepted a cruise missile near the airport, while a drone was intercepted and destroyed in the kingdom's Eastern Province, coalition forces said. Riyadh airport remained closed following Saturday's deadly attack.

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## 112 youth land jobs as Singareni skill drive yields results

**Hyderabad, Oct.11:** The Telangana government's skill development initiative for youth in mining-affected areas continues to yield positive results, with 112 candidates securing job offers during a recent placement drive at the Singareni GVTC Skill Development Centre in Ramagundam–1 Area. Of the 127 women candidates interviewed by electronics manufacturer Foxconn, 87 were selected for assembly roles producing Apple EarPods and electronic components at the company's Hyderabad manufacturing facility. The first batch of 55 women departed Godavarikhani for Hyderabad on Sunday to begin their employment.

Additionally, 25 out of 27 male candidates were selected as

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## Ponnam Challenges BJP Chief Over Voter Deletions

**Hyderabad, Oct.11:** Minister for BC Welfare and Transport Ponnam Prabhakar has openly challenged BJP state president N. Ramchander Rao to set a date and time for a face-to-face meeting, offering to produce documentary evidence and voters who were allegedly disenfranchised. In a statement issued on Sunday, the Minister asserted that he would establish the claims using official Election Commission records. He maintained that the issue cannot be addressed through police action or arrests, offering instead to personally present citizens whose names were omitted from the electoral rolls.

Lashing out at BJP leaders over the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls,



Ponnam Prabhakar claimed that even his own vote was targeted for deletion due to alleged clerical discrepancies in his father's name. The Minister alleged that approximately 70 lakh votes were deleted across Telangana, claiming the exercise selectively impacted SC, ST, BC, and minority communities opposed to the BJP. He noted that poor citizens, daily-wage workers, senior citizens, and illiterate voters are being forced to navigate bureaucratic hurdles to prove their eligibility. Pointing to past instances where even former Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu faced voter roll issues, he emphasized the urgent need to safeguard every eligible citizen's franchise. Ponnam Prabhakar demanded that election authorities publish clear and comprehensive figures detailing total deletions, classifying them into ineligible voters and genuine voters wrongfully omitted due to administrative errors. He added that making derogatory remarks against those raising democratic concerns goes against the spirit of democracy.


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## STARLINK WANTS A LICENCE, NOT A LECTURE: SATYA NARAYANA SLAMS "PM AMBANI" JIBE, DEMANDS ONE LAW, ONE FIELD, ZERO FAVOURS!

Elon Musk mocks "Prime Minister Ambani" on X over Starlink's delayed Indian launch. Indian political activist and environmentalist Bolisetty Satyanarayana hits back, saying India is a sovereign republic and not a showroom for billionaires. His demand: one law, one level field, and no special favours for foreign or home giants!

It was Friday night, 9 October 2026. The richest man on the planet sat before a glowing screen and typed a sneer at the Republic of India. "Dear Prime Minister Ambani," wrote Mr Elon Musk, "please accept my humble apologies for not realising that you are the real boss of India." Sarcasm sent with a satellite's confidence and a billionaire's reach. Within hours, the Indian internet was on fire. And the question hanging in the air is simple. Who gave a foreign tycoon the licence to mock the highest office of a sovereign nation? India has one Prime Minister, elected by 140 crore people through the ballot box, not appointed by a tweet. Whoever forgets that must be reminded, politely but firmly.

Every SCOOPX reader knows the rule, no date, no document, no drama, and so here are the dates, stamped and filed before a single adjective is spent. Wednesday, 7 October, Mr Musk accused unnamed "oligarchs" of blocking Starlink to keep a "monopolistic chokehold" on Indians. "You can guess who they are," he hinted, naming nobody and producing nothing. On Thursday the Ministry of Communications answered in clear Indian: the charge was "baseless and misconceived", the satellite framework was "fair and non discriminatory", and all three licensed operators stood at "broadly the same regulatory stage", every one of them still under security assessment.

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# TG BJP UNIT EXTENDED CONGRATULATIONS TO PM MODI



**Hyderabad, Oct.11:** Telangana State BJP unit today extended heartfelt congratulations to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on completing 25 years in public service as Head of Government in Gujarat state and the centre.

BJP State President N Ramchander Rao held a meeting with available state party's MPs, MLAs and MLCs and passed a resolution extending congratulations to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his remarkable service in public life. The meeting also discussed on prevailing political situation in the state and also on fake narrative of opposition parties on SIR process. The meeting highlighted PM Modi's guiding mantra of Nagrik Devo Bhava and noted that Telangana has been a major beneficiary of his government's development and welfare initiatives, with over Rs.13 lakh crore provided towards various developmental projects and schemes in the state.

The meeting also lauded the extensive service-oriented activities undertaken across Telangana as part of the #SevaSankalpAbhiyan, reflecting the spirit of Seva and commitment to Rashtra Seva.

Union minister G Kishan Reddy, MPs Dr Laxman, DK Aruna , Eitala Rajender, Maheshwar Reddy and AVN Reddy, Madhukar, Abhay Patel among those who attended the meeting which was chaired by state president Ramchander Rao.

# Saudi Arabia Reports Fresh Attacks on..

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Houthi military spokesperson Yahya Saree claimed responsibility for Saturday's strike in a televised address on Sunday. He also said the group had targeted King Fahd International Airport in Dammam and two facilities belonging to Saudi oil giant Saudi Aramco.

Saudi authorities later confirmed the attack on Dammam airport, saying damage assessments and safety inspections were under way. An eyewitness aboard an aircraft taxiing at the airport told Reuters that a projectile struck the tarmac near parked aircraft around 8.30 pm, triggering a fire. The aircraft returned to its gate, and passengers were asked to disembark.

Flight-tracking data showed several delays and cancellations at Dammam airport, one of Saudi Arabia's largest aviation hubs.

**Houthis renew warning**

The Houthis renewed their warning against the use of Saudi airports, urging travellers to take the group's threats seriously. The rebels warned that Saudi Arabia would be responsible for any failure to intercept incoming attacks.

The British embassy in Saudi Arabia advised its citizens against all but essential travel to Jeddah, Dammam and airports across the kingdom, with an exception for Medina airport. US aviation authorities also urged American airlines to exercise caution when flying to or over Saudi Arabia.

The attacks have raised questions about Saudi Arabia's air-defence capabilities as the kingdom intensifies its military campaign against the Houthis. The rebels have been fighting the Saudi-backed Yemeni government, with the conflict increasingly spilling beyond Yemen's borders.

The Houthi-run foreign ministry alleged that Saudi Arabia had carried out 124 air strikes in Yemen over the preceding 24 hours and warned of further retaliation unless Riyadh halted its military operations and interference in the country. US President Donald Trump said on Saturday that Washington was considering joining Saudi strikes against the Houthis. The conflict forms part of a wider regional confrontation linked to the war involving Iran, the United States and Israel. Meanwhile, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi said he had told his Saudi counterpart that Tehran was prepared to help facilitate dialogue between Saudi Arabia and Yemen.

**Energy meetings continue**

Despite the attacks, major international energy meetings in Riyadh proceeded as scheduled. A five-day conference organised by WPC Energy opened on Sunday at a convention centre around 10 km from the airport, while a ministerial meeting of the International Energy Forum also went ahead, according to the Saudi energy ministry. However, arrangements for the return of German Economy Minister Katherina Reiche were uncertain, with officials reportedly working to organise her departure from Riyadh. Italy's Energy Minister Gilberto Pichetto Fratin had earlier said he would participate remotely.

Saudi authorities also announced that schools in Riyadh would switch to remote learning from Sunday through Thursday.

Saturday's strike was the third attack on Riyadh airport in a week. The dead included four Saudi nationals, while the others were foreign citizens, Saudi authorities said. India's embassy in Riyadh confirmed on Sunday that an Indian national injured in the attack had died, taking the initial death toll from 12 to 13. Four people were killed in two earlier attacks on the airport during the same week. One of those strikes also caused extensive damage to a Saudi commercial aircraft parked on the tarmac.

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# BJP is Ravan, Congress is Ram. If you want to DEFEAT RAVAN, YOU HAVE TO HELP RAM – CM

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"Without voting for the Hand symbol, you cannot defeat BJP. Think twice before you vote. Who do you want running this state? Drug lords? Builder mafia? If you make a mistake once, you can move on. If you make it twice, you can still correct it. If you make the same mistake thrice, not even God can save us," he said.

Today, Rahul ji is trying to unite the people. BJP is trying to divide them, he said.

Revanth Reddy was there to represent Rahul Gandhi, who was scheduled to participate in the meeting. "But yesterday, I got a call from Shri Mallikarjun Kharge ji. He said Rahul ji is needed in Delhi, where he is leading the fight for our country. Kharge ji told me to represent Rahul ji here. Rahul ji told him that Congress party workers in Goa are waiting. I am here as a messenger and representative of Rahul ji," he said.

Rahul ji, Revanth Reddy said, is leading the youth, the opposition and the entire country in the fight against the corrupt dictatorship of the Modi government. He commended Goa Assembly Leader of Opposition Yuri Alemao and Goa Pradesh Congress President Girish Chodankar for organising the yatra. "As Chief Minister of Telangana, I bring love and greetings from the people of Telangana. I remember how we, too, in Telangana had done a similar padayatra. I also note that there is optimism in the air here in Goa. It is the same optimism I found in Telangana ahead of the Assembly elections in 2023, when we won and formed the government there," he said. He said the people are clear that the BJP government cannot be allowed to come to power for a third time in Goa. They won't leave an inch of land for the people of Goa.

"I asked someone in a temple who their CM was. They told me the CM's name was 'Property Sawant'. The people of Goa elected him to lead the state, but that's not what he is doing. He is selling and giving away the land of Goa to others," said the Chief Minister.

Revanth Reddy then recalled an encounter with a youth earlier in the day, whom he asked how life was. "He said things are very bad; there are no jobs. Then what are they doing, I asked. He said they are handling the stress badly and the youth are indulging in drugs. Goa has become a den of drugs," he said. Before 2023, Hyderabad too had become a den of drugs. "After we took charge, I created the EAGLE force, an elite group of officers to eradicate drugs in Telangana. I came to know that a lot of the drugs are coming from Goa. We sent a team to Goa, and we found a large network of smugglers here," he said. Revanth Reddy challenged Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant: "The whole of the Indian government is on your side. The Prime Minister and Home Minister are saying Nasha Mukt Bharat. My question is simple – why are you not implementing it in Goa? It is because you are making money off drugs."

He asked whether this drugs image was good for Goa. With every department and agency like the ED and CBI under BJP control, why can't they control drugs in Goa, he asked.

**BJP has ruined Goa, he declared.**

"Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government is destroying democracy in India. They have destroyed the Election Commission. They are misusing SIR to remove the votes of crores of people who are against them, especially Dalits, Adivasis and Minorities. In the past, BJP used ICE and NICE. ED and CBI were used to attack the opposition. It is not working anymore. Now, they are using the ECI itself," said Revanth Reddy. He said that Modi and Gyanesh Kumar are creating two classes of India – one with a vote and one without. Dalits, Adivasis and Minorities will have no voice. "Gyanesh Kumar must resign. Modi and Shah must face justice for their crimes against India. Our leader Rahul ji is in Delhi to fight for our rights. We must all support him," he said. He said he would take the message from the people of Goa to Rahul Gandhi. "If you are all with Rahul ji in the fight – say with me: RAHUL GANDHI – ZINDABAD," he said.

"I also say this today – the fight against BJP will begin here in Goa. Next year, we will defeat BJP," he said.

Revanth Reddy also likened the political future of India to the Monsoon. "Just like the Monsoon, which first comes to Kerala, then Goa, and only then reaches Delhi. Kerala is now with Congress, and I am confident Goa will be with us in 2027. After that, the Indian flag will be unfurled in Delhi. What begins in Goa will end at the Lal Qila when Rahul ji becomes Prime Minister of India," he said.

He congratulated Goa Congress for organising the Goy Rakhonn Yatra. "I am confident Congress will come to power in 2027," he repeated.

# SC Steps In After Delhi Protest Crackdown..



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The notices do not amount to a final finding of contempt.

**Court stresses civil liberties**

The Supreme Court's intervention came amid allegations of mass detentions, restrictions on movement, suspension of internet services and excessive police action against demonstrators. The bench directed authorities to ensure that peaceful and unarmed protesters were not detained illegally and that any detention followed the procedure established by law. It also called for normal Metro and railway operations, uninterrupted internet services subject to lawful restrictions, and a review of barricading that could impede public movement. The court further emphasised that lawyers and journalists must be allowed to perform their professional duties without obstruction. It directed the removal of notices imposing prohibitory restrictions around the Supreme Court and other court complexes, where applicable, to ensure unhindered access to justice. The directions followed an earlier hearing on October 9, when the court expressed concern over the scale of restrictions imposed ahead of the planned demonstration. It stressed the need for proportionality in security arrangements and cautioned against measures that could cause unnecessary inconvenience to the public. The contempt petition alleges that the authorities failed to comply with the court's directions by imposing extensive restrictions on Metro and railway services. The officials concerned will have an opportunity to respond before the court determines the allegations.

**Thousands detained as protests continue**

Delhi witnessed a major security operation on Saturday, October 10, as authorities sought to prevent demonstrators from assembling in large numbers around Jantar Mantar and other locations. According to media reports, more than 7,000 people were detained during the crackdown. Several Metro stations were closed or had their operations restricted, while railway services and movement in parts of central Delhi were also affected. The police action triggered criticism from opposition parties and civil liberties advocates, who questioned whether the restrictions and detentions were necessary and proportionate.

Small groups of protesters continued to assemble at different locations on Sunday, despite the heavy security presence. Reports also indicated that police registered multiple FIRs in connection with the demonstrations. Allegations of manhandling and the detention of people who were not actively participating in the protests were also reported. The police have cited public-order concerns and preventive measures in dealing with the demonstrations. Allegations of excessive force and unlawful detention remain contested.

**Opposition plans march to Supreme Court**

The electoral-roll controversy is now developing into a broader political confrontation between opposition parties and the BJP-led government. Opposition leaders have announced plans to march towards the Supreme Court on Monday, October 12, under the banner of a campaign for democracy. Their demands include the resignation of the Chief Election Commissioner, a halt to the disputed SIR exercise and greater accountability in the electoral process. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and other opposition representatives have also sought judicial intervention over their concerns regarding the Election Commission. Reports said opposition parliamentarians and party supporters intended to submit a memorandum to Chief Justice of India Surya Kant.

However, the court has indicated that grievances requiring judicial intervention must be brought before it through appropriate legal proceedings rather than through an administrative meeting with the Chief Justice. The proposed march is expected to keep the focus on the dispute over electoral-roll revision, the independence of the Election Commission and the limits of police restrictions on public demonstrations.

**SIR controversy at the centre**

The protests stem from allegations that the SIR process could lead to the arbitrary deletion of eligible voters and disproportionately affect vulnerable communities. Opposition parties have questioned the transparency of the verification exercise and demanded stronger safeguards against disenfranchisement. The Election Commission and the BJP have rejected allegations of deliberate manipulation, maintaining that electoral-roll revision is intended to remove duplicate, deceased, shifted or otherwise unverifiable entries and improve the accuracy of voter lists.

The dispute has consequently expanded beyond the technical aspects of voter verification to questions concerning institutional accountability, transparency and the protection of voting rights. The Supreme Court's earlier proceedings on electoral-roll revision have examined the legality of the process and the safeguards required to protect eligible voters. The current contempt proceedings, however, concern the alleged violation of directions relating to public transport, movement and protest-related restrictions. The two issues are connected politically but involve distinct legal questions.

**Next hearing on October 13**

The Supreme Court is scheduled to consider the contempt matter on Tuesday, October 13, after receiving responses and the compliance report from the officials concerned. The hearing could clarify whether the restrictions imposed during the protests complied with the court's earlier directions and whether further measures are required to protect public movement and peaceful assembly. For the authorities, the immediate challenge is to maintain public order without imposing restrictions beyond what is legally necessary. For the opposition, the protests have become a platform to press demands for electoral accountability and the resignation of the CEC. The coming days will determine whether the confrontation remains centred on the streets of Delhi or moves further into the courtroom, where the legality of the administrative measures and the allegations of electoral irregularities will be examined through separate proceedings.

# *A DOLLAR BILLIONAIRE MOCKS OUR PRIME MINISTER'S CHAIR..*

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Not a word of that was blunted. Then on Friday came the sarcastic "letter". When a billionaire cannot win an argument with facts, he reaches for a punchline. Allegation without evidence is not courage, it is theatre. India's institutions answered with a written statement, and Mr Musk answered with a joke.

Into this circus has walked Bolisetty Satyanarayana, civic leader, environmentalist and a voice from Visakhapatnam that Delhi would do well to hear. His statement is sharp, and it cuts both ways, which is exactly why it matters. India, he said, is an independent, sovereign nation and not a marketplace where global billionaires dictate terms or expect preferential treatment. Debate on government policy is a democratic right, and he grants it freely. But trivialising the Prime Minister's office, he warned, risks eroding the dignity of the very foundations on which that debate stands. Strong words. Fair words. Words that Mr Musk's public relations army will now have to read in Indian languages and common sense.

Now watch the other blade, because Mr Satyanarayana swings it with equal force. He wants Starlink to compete on merit, affordability and service quality, strictly under Indian law, with Indian security safeguards intact. No concessions. No red carpet. And he turns the same lens homeward, warning that monopolies, whether domestic conglomerates or foreign technology giants dressing commercial interest as philanthropy, threaten democracy and economic freedom when privileged entities pile up wealth and bend fair market practice. That is the nationalist position, comrades: not hostility to anyone, but loyalty to the consumer and to the Constitution.

Indian consumers do not want a monopoly of the Indian kind or the American kind. They want a choice, a fair price and a signal that actually reaches the village.

Consider the file as it stands. Starlink has knocked at India's door since 2022. It holds its GMPCS licence of June 2025 and space agency authorisation of July 2025, yet the final clearances for commercial service remain pending. Its own executive, Ms Lauren Dreyer, told the India Mobile Congress the company has built 20 gateway sites and will keep Indian user data inside India, standing "ready to serve India once India is ready". Just mark those last words well, Mr Musk. Once India is ready. Not once Mr Musk is impatient. Meanwhile Mr Sunil Mittal says his own OneWeb also awaits approval, and Reliance's Mr Akash Ambani declined comment. A queue is a queue, whether the man in it owns rockets or towers.

Security clearance is not a favour that Delhi grants to the fortunate. It is the price of admission that every operator, foreign or Indian, must pay.

History keeps its own ledger. India has seen what happens when the powerful of the world presume to dictate terms to this soil. From the East India Company's counting house to the arm twisting of later decades, the pattern is old: first the trade, then the terms (mantram), and then the tantrum. Our freedom fighters did not bleed so that a market could be bought by whoever tweets loudest. A Starlink dish on a Himalayan hamlet is welcome. A Starlink sneer at the seat of the Republic is not.

And let the homegrown giants take note as well. Mr Satyanarayana's warning on monopoly does not stop at the water's edge. If any Indian conglomerate enjoys an edge that the Constitution does not permit, the Competition Commission and Parliament have work to do. If no such edge exists, the Ministry's statement stands, and Mr Musk owes the people a fact, not a fable. Either way, the answer must come through licence conditions, spectrum rules and the law of the land, never through a billionaire's late-night post.

Fair play is a two-way street. Transparent spectrum, equal security checks and open competition: that is the only "boss" this Republic recognises.

The citizen waits for broadband in thousands of villages where signals still die. That is the real tragedy, and neither tycoon's war of words will cure it. Let the regulators finish their security assessments. Let spectrum be assigned transparently, by rule and not by rumour. Let every operator, foreign or desi, pass the identical test. And let the world's richest man learn what every visitor to this land must learn: you may do business in India, but you do not do India's business for it.

**MY SHOT**

India is not for sale, not for show and not for sarcasm. Come with your satellites. Mr Musk, come with your capital, come with your promise of cheap bandwidth, but come under our law, at our pace, with our security checks passed. And to every giant at home who sleeps comfortably in the shade of influence, remember that the people are watching the licence file too. One Constitution. One level field. One Republic. Jai Hind!

**— C. SUBRAHMANYAM**

# Modi Inaugurates Rs. 750-Cr..

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facilitate passenger and freight movement. It is also expected to support trade, tourism and economic development in the region.

**Three flyovers in Coimbatore region**

Three rail flyovers, also described as road overbridges, at Karamadai, Sulur and Thudiyalur in the Coimbatore region were dedicated to the nation at a combined cost of over ₹120 crore. The projects are expected to reduce congestion at busy railway crossings, minimise conflicts between road and rail traffic, improve safety and operational efficiency, and reduce waiting time for road users.

# 112 youth land jobs as Singareni

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solar technicians following technical interviews. Launched two years ago by Deputy Chief Minister and Energy Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, the GVTC centre provides skill training and vocational placement to local youth.To date, the facility has enabled employment for more than 500 candidates, fostering economic independence for women and youth across the coal belt.







**A PROUD MOMENT..**
**The 1st Skill Convocation of EV Battery Sustainability Engineers at ESCI, Hyderabad on 10th October, 2026**

# Old currency notes fraud busted



**HYDERABAD**

Two accused were arrested for collecting over 70 'mule' accounts from unsuspecting individuals. This cyber fraud, notorious across Hyderabad, has resulted in approximately 450 cases being registered nationwide. Transactions totalling between ₹60 crore and ₹70 crore have been identified in connection with this scam. The accused were arrested in a case where they swindled ₹7,93,351 from a single victim under the pretext of selling old currency notes via Facebook and two mobile phones were seized from them.

On October 8, 2026, acting on credible information, the Hyderabad Cyber Crime Police apprehended two cyber criminals, who had defrauded a victim of ₹7,93,351 by promising to supply the old currency notes through Facebook. The accused have been identified as Gumma Ramesh and Mudale Anil. The two accused are residents of Ramanthapur in Hyderabad.

The Accused Gumma Ramesh previously resided in the Bidar district of Karnataka. Due to financial difficulties, he relocated with his family to Ramanthapur. He rented a car and began working as a driver for Rapido and Uber. During this time, he came into contact with the cybercriminals. Subsequently, in collaboration with other absconding accused, he approached students, delivery personnel and others in Ramanthapur and surrounding areas . By promising them commissions, he collected bank accounts and SIM cards from approximately 60 to 70 individuals. He would gather the passbooks, ATM/ debit cards, internet banking credentials and SIM cards associated with these accounts and courier them to individuals in Haryana for use in the cybercrimes. It is suspected that the prime accused used these collected SIM cards and bank accounts to defraud hundreds of victims, facilitating transactions amounting to approximately ₹60–70 crore.

Meanwhile, the second accused lured by the promise of a commission from the first accused Ramesh opened three savings accounts in different banks and handed over the account details and credentials to him. A complaint was received from the victim on September 25, 2026,. The victim alleged that unknown individuals defrauded him of ₹7,93,351 after convincing him that they would pay ₹45,00,000 in exchange for an old one-rupee note. Based on that complaint, A case was registered and an investigation initiated under Sections 66C and 66D of the IT Act, and Sections 318(4), 319(2), 336(3), and 340(2) of the BNS.

# Dr. K. Laxman Participates in 'Nasha Mukt Bharat – Cycling Ride'



**HYDERABAD**

Rajya Sabha Member Dr. K. Laxman participated in the 'Nasha Mukt Bharat – Cycling Ride', organised by Akshara Spoorthi organisation to raise awareness among young people about the harmful effects of drug abuse, promote the goal of building a drug-free society, and encourage a healthy lifestyle.

The cycling rally was organised from the Bala Hanuman Temple at Seetharampet in the Goshamahal Assembly constituency to the statue of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel on the Assembly premises. Dr. K. Laxman took part in the ride and spread awareness among the public against drug use.

The programme called upon young people to stay away from drugs, adopt a healthy lifestyle, and act responsibly to safeguard the future of the nation.

Let us stay away from drugs and choose a healthy life! A Drug-Free India – A Commitment We All Share!

# Basavatarakam hospital highlights pain management on world palliative care day

**HYDERABAD**



Basavatarakam Indo-American Cancer Hospital & Research Institute observed World Hospice and Palliative Care Day 2026 with a programme emphasising effective pain management, access to essential medicines and compassionate care for patients with serious illnesses.

Organised by the Department of Pain & Palliative Medicine under the theme "Pain Management: An essential part of Palliative Care", the programme featured a panel discussion on "Medical Use of Controlled Medicines in India: Balancing Access, Regulation and Patient Care."

Dr. P. M. Yashwanth, Zonal Director, Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), Hyderabad Zonal Unit, attended as the chief guest. He stressed the need to balance timely access to essential medicines with regulatory safeguards to prevent misuse.

The panel included Dr. Basanth Kumar Rayani, Head of Onco Anaesthesia; Dr. Vibhavari Naik, Senior Consultant, Onco Anaesthesia; Dr. Praneeth Suvvari, In-charge, Pain & Palliative Medicine; Dr. Deepika Reddy Cherukuri; and CH Narendra, General Manager–Pharmacy. NCB officials Vishal Vilas Rajole, Assistant Director, and Ashish Chakravarti, Superintendent, also participated.

The discussion covered pain management, ethical prescribing, regulatory compliance and patient access to controlled medicines. Speakers highlighted the importance of ensuring appropriate pain relief while adhering to applicable regulations.

The programme underscored the role of multidisciplinary palliative care in addressing patients' physical and emotional needs while supporting their families. The department also organised art and photography competitions focusing on compassion, dignity, hope and caregiving, attracting participation from hospital staff, students, patients, caregivers and volunteers. The hospital reaffirmed its commitment to promoting awareness of palliative care and integrating effective pain management into comprehensive, patient-centred healthcare, emphasising that pain relief, compassionate support and dignity are essential to improving patients' quality of life.

# Sharannavaratri celebrations begin at many famous temples in Telangana

**HYDERABAD**



The Sharannavaratri celebrations commenced with great grandeur in the early hours of Sunday at the renowned Sri Gnana Saraswati Temple in Basara of Nirmal district. On the first day of the festivities, the Goddess appeared to devotees in the Shailaputri avatar. Since the early morning hours of Sunday, the temple priests performed special Abhishekam (ritual bathing), Alankaranam (adornment) and special Pujas for the Goddess. Marking the beginning of the Devi Sharannavaratri celebrations, a large number of devotees from across the state flocked to Basara to seek the Goddess's blessings and fulfill their vows.

The Temple authorities made special arrangements to ensure that the visiting devotees faced no inconvenience during the festivities. The Devi Sharannavaratri celebrations have also begun at the Sri Bhadrakali Temple, the presiding deity of the people of Warangal. As part of the festivities, the priests performed the Abhishekam for the Goddess on Sunday morning by using Panchamrutam and aromatic substances.

The Devotees visited the temple in large numbers for Darshan. Due to the heavy influx of the devotees since Sunday morning, the officials announced that the Goddess would be adorned as Bala Tripura Sundari on Sunday evening.

The Devi Sharannavaratri celebrations also commenced grandly at the famous Sri Vidya Saraswati Kshetram in Vargal of Siddipet district. On the first day of the festivities, the Goddess appeared to the devotees adorned as Sri Bala Tripura Sundari Devi. Under the supervision of the temple's founding chairman, Yayavaram Chandrasekhara Siddhanti, Vedic scholars performed special rituals, Abhishekam and Kumkumarchana for the Goddess in accordance with scriptural traditions. As it was the inaugural day of the Navaratri celebrations, the devotees from various regions flocked to the temple in large numbers.

The temple premises resonated with the chants of Vedic mantras and the jubilant cheers of the devotees. After waiting in queues, the devotees offered their prayers to the Goddess and received Teertha-Prasadam (consecrated offerings). The temple committee made meticulous arrangements to ensure the devotees faced no inconvenience.

# *Hyderabad bike rally calls for collective effort to ensure women's safety*

**HYDERABAD**



Marking the International Day of the Girl Child, the SHE POWER Foundation organised a women's safety bike rally in Hyderabad on Sunday to raise awareness about women's safety, dignity, empowerment and road safety.

Ministers Jupally Krishna Rao and Ponnam Prabhakar flagged off the rally at Jalavihar on PV Marg (Necklace Road). The rally proceeded towards Tank Bund, with women superbikers, scooter riders, cyclists and women police personnel participating enthusiastically.

Addressing the gathering, Jupally Krishna Rao said protecting women's safety, rights, dignity and freedom was a collective social responsibility. He stressed the need to provide equal opportunities for women to pursue their aspirations, access education and excel in every field.

The Minister said women's safety was not the responsibility of women alone and called for a collective effort by the government, police, families, educational institutions, workplaces and society to create a safe and supportive environment for them. Jupally Krishna Rao also urged women to prioritise their health alongside family responsibilities. Advising them to set aside at least an hour every day for physical exercise, he said maintaining a healthy lifestyle and physical fitness would improve their confidence and overall well-being.

Ponnam Prabhakar said the State government accorded high priority to women's safety and empowerment. He said the government was taking measures to strengthen women's economic and social empowerment and ensure they could travel safely across the State without fear. Emphasising that women's safety required a collective effort, he called upon the government, police, families and the public to work together to create a secure environment for women.



SHORT TAKES

## Telangana Congress leaders leave for Delhi to join AICC protest

***HYDERABAD:*** *Telangana Congress leaders, including TPCC president Mahesh Kumar Goud, Cabinet Ministers and around 60 MLAs, left for New Delhi on a special flight from Rajiv Gandhi International Airport at Shamshabad on Sunday. The party leaders will participate in a nationwide protest organised by the All India Congress Committee (AICC) on Monday against alleged irregularities in the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls.*

## Gutha inaugurates Hyderabad Japan Festival in Hitec City

***HYDERABAD:*** *Telangana Legislative Council Chairman Gutha Sukhender Reddy inaugurated the Hyderabad Japan Festival 2026 at Cyber Gardens in Hitec City on Sunday. The festival was organised to mark the 20th anniversary of the sister-city partnership between Hyderabad and Miyoshi, Japan. Sukhender Reddy formally opened the venue's exhibitions, visited stalls showcasing Japanese culture, art, technology, and traditions, and interacted with visiting Japanese delegates. Addressing the gathering, the Chairman noted that decades-long Indo-Japanese ties serve as a global model for international relations. He highlighted that cultural exchanges strengthen people-to-people bonds and foster cross-border.*

# Bathukamma Celebrations
# Held in Grand Style in Munugode





- **Women from all corners of the Munugode constituency gathered to sing, dance and celebrate Bathukamma.**
- **Komatireddy Lakshmi, Chairperson of the Komatireddy Sushilamma Foundation, joined Munugode women in the Bathukamma celebrations.**
- **Munugode MLA Komatireddy Raj Gopal Reddy attended the celebrations organised by the Komatireddy Sushilamma Foundation along with his family**

MUNUGODE

Bathukamma, a symbol of the self-respect of Telangana women, is a unique festival that celebrates nature and reflects the state's rich tradition of worshipping flowers. The festival came alive in Munugode with beautifully decorated Bathukammas made of pumpkin flowers, Thangedu flowers, Gunugu flowers and marigolds. The celebrations reached a grand crescendo with women dancing, singing and performing to traditional folk songs.

Komatireddy Lakshmi, Chairperson of the Komatireddy Sushilamma Foundation, arrived at the festival venue from the camp office in Munugode, carrying Bathukammas along with women from across the constituency. After performing prayers with Vedic chants and offering harathi to a magnificent 15-foot Bathukamma, she formally inaugurated the celebrations along with Munugode MLA Komatireddy Raj Gopal Reddy.

The celebrations were organised on a grand scale, highlighting that Bathukamma is not merely a flower festival but a symbol of Telangana's culture, traditions and identity. The festival also represents women's unity and the happiness of families. Thousands of women from across the constituency attended the event along with their families.

Joining the women, Komatireddy Lakshmi danced to Bathukamma songs ranging from traditional village folk tunes to contemporary DJ tracks, adding enthusiasm and vibrancy to the celebrations.

On the occasion, Komatireddy Lakshmi expressed her wishes that the Bathukamma festival bring happiness to every household in the Munugode constituency, that every woman enjoy good health, prosperity and happiness, that farmers prosper, that villages develop, and that Telangana's rich cultural heritage continue to inspire future generations. Munugode MLA Komatireddy Raj Gopal Reddy personally visited the women participating in the Bathukamma celebrations and interacted warmly with them. The women reciprocated with affection as they welcomed their leader.

Arrangements were also made to provide a hearty meal to the women after the celebrations. The participants enjoyed the meal before returning to their homes. Several prominent leaders from the Munugode constituency, along with thousands of women and their families, attended the event, making the Bathukamma celebrations a memorable and colourful occasion.



## Police bust Goa-Hyderabad drug syndicate, arrest key accused

HYDERABAD

In a joint operation, the EAGLE team and the Hyderabad City Police have launched a major crackdown to dismantle an inter-state drug supply network operating between Goa and Hyderabad, culminating in the arrest of fugitive accused Custodio Fernandes, alias Christie, in Goa.

breakthrough follows active leads connecting the Panjagutta drug case to Goa. Acting on intelligence that the suspect was hiding in the coastal state, police teams tracked him down and executed the arrest following a carefully planned operation.

Investigators have gathered details on over 25 individuals from Telangana linked to the syndicate.

To map out the entire network, authorities are currently analysing mobile phone data and bank transactions retrieved from the accused. Several names and phone numbers belonging to Hyderabad residents were reportedly uncovered on his device. Police are also interrogating individuals suspected of shuttling between Goa and Hyderabad to deliver narcotics and collect cash payments. Meanwhile, monitoring has been expanded to track buyers and suspected suppliers across Goa, Bengaluru, Mumbai, Delhi, and other cities.

# Kavitha demands constitutional amendment to empower SC, ST Commissions



HYDERABAD

Telangana Rakshana Sena (TRS) president Kalvakuntla Kavitha on Sunday called for a constitutional amendment to vest the SC and ST Commissions, as well as other statutory bodies across the country, with enforceable powers to deliver meaningful justice.

Addressing a round-table meeting organised by SC and ST employees at the Basheerbagh Press Club, Kavitha asserted that appointing politicians or retired judges as commission heads yields little result as long as these bodies remain purely advisory.

Expressing concern that no concrete effort has been made in this direction even eight decades after Independence, she urged citizens to launch a sustained movement to demand statutory authority for these bodies. She also called for political pressure on MPs and MLAs to enact the requisite constitutional changes.

"Hundreds of orders issued by the SC and ST Commissions currently go unimplemented," Kavitha noted, emphasising the need for a binding mechanism that forces authorities to execute commission recommendations.

Comparing them with bodies like the Election Commission, the Competition Commission of India, and SEBI, the TRS chief highlighted that these entities possess direct enforcement authority, allowing them to resolve grievances promptly and effectively.

# Skill Training Paves the Way for Employment!






- **112 Candidates Selected for Jobs through Singareni RG–1 Skill Development Centre**
- **87 Women Selected for Employment at Foxconn**
- **First Batch of 55 Women Leaves for Hyderabad**

RAMAGUNDAM

The People's Government's commitment to providing employment opportunities to unemployed youth from Singareni-affected areas through skill training is yielding positive results. Recently, interviews were conducted for 154 candidates through the Singareni GVTC Skill Development Centre in Ramagundam–1 Area. Of the 127 women candidates who attended the interviews, 87 were selected for employment at Foxconn in Hyderabad. Similarly, 27 male candidates attended interviews for Solar Technician positions, of whom 25 were selected for employment as Solar Technicians. The first batch of 55 women selected for Foxconn left Godavarikhani for Hyderabad on Sunday.

### From Skill Training to Employment

Launched two years ago by the Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister and Minister for Energy, Sri Bhatti Vikramarka, the centre has been providing skill training and employment opportunities to local youth. Over the past two years, it has facilitated employment opportunities for more than 500 candidates. The centre is taking steps to provide training in courses that are in demand in the job market and link skill development with suitable employment opportunities.

### Opportunities for Women in the Manufacturing Sector

Last week, Foxconn conducted special recruitment interviews for women candidates at the GVTC Skill Development Centre. A total of 87 women were selected to work in the assembly sections for Apple EarPods and electronic components at the company's manufacturing facility in Hyderabad. These opportunities in the industrial sector are expected to help local women achieve greater financial independence.

RG–1 Area General Manager Sri D. Lalith Kumar stated that 25 candidates who had undergone training in the Solar Technician course were selected for employment. He further informed that they would join L&T Company within ten days.

### Building a Better Future through Skills

General Manager Sri D. Lalith Kumar stated that Singareni is committed to equipping youth from Singareni-affected areas with the skills required to secure employment. He said that linking training with job opportunities enables young people to build a better future for themselves. He advised the selected candidates to make the best use of the opportunities offered to them, maintain discipline at work and strive for professional growth. Sri S.K. Chandrasekhar, SO to GM; Sri Maddi Ellaiah, Deputy General Secretary of AITUC; Dr. Kousalya, TASK Manager; Sri Kaushal, Director of L&T; Sri R. Srinivas, HR Representative of Foxconn; Sri Madhava Reddy, GVTC Manager; Sri Shravan Kumar, Senior Personnel Officer; and other officials and staff participated in the programme.

## Governor extends Navratri greetings

HYDERABAD

Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla has extended his warm greetings and best wishes to the people of Telangana on the occasion of Shardiya Navratri.

In a message on Sunday, the Governor expressed hope that the divine blessings of Goddess Durga, the embodiment of Shakti, would bring strength, courage, peace, prosperity and happiness to the people.

He noted that the nine-day festival, dedicated to the worship of the nine forms of Goddess Durga, holds immense religious and spiritual significance.

He expressed hope that the festival would strengthen the spirit of devotion, peace, harmony and fraternity among people. The Governor wished that the blessings of Goddess Durga would ensure the well-being and prosperity of every household and that Telangana would continue to progress in an atmosphere of peace, harmony and collective well-being.

## 112 youth land jobs as Singareni skill drive yields results

HYDERABAD

The Telangana government's skill development initiative for youth in mining-affected areas continues to yield positive results, with 112 candidates securing job offers during a recent placement drive at the Singareni GVTC Skill Development Centre in Ramagundam–1 Area.

Of the 127 women candidates interviewed by electronics manufacturer Foxconn, 87 were selected for assembly roles producing Apple EarPods and electronic components at the company's Hyderabad manufacturing facility. The first batch of 55 women departed Godavarikhani for Hyderabad on Sunday to begin their employment.

Additionally, 25 out of 27 male candidates were selected as solar technicians following technical interviews. Launched two years ago by Deputy Chief Minister and Energy Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, the GVTC centre provides skill training and vocational placement to local youth.

To date, the facility has enabled employment for more than 500 candidates, fostering economic independence for women and youth across the coal belt.





# Atukula Bathukamma Celebrations Held at Lalitha Kala Thoranam

HYDERABAD

The Atukula Bathukamma celebrations were held in a traditional and grand manner at Lalitha Kala Thoranam in Hyderabad on October 11, 2026, under the aegis of the Telangana Tourism Department. The Bathukamma festival, which symbolizes Telangana's cultural heritage and floral traditions, was celebrated in a vibrant and festive atmosphere.

The celebrations highlighted the significance of Bathukamma, Telangana's prestigious floral festival. Bathukamma represents the state's rich cultural traditions, women's empowerment, and the deep bond between people and nature.

Several cultural programmes showcasing Telangana's traditional art forms captivated the audience on the occasion. A captivating Kuchipudi dance performance by talented artists entertained the spectators. The expressive gestures and graceful movements of the dancers reflected the grandeur of India's classical dance traditions. Traditional Dappu drum performances further added enthusiasm, energy, and festive charm to the celebrations.

The Atukula Bathukamma celebrations served as a platform to promote Telangana's local traditions, folk arts, classical dances, and cultural identity. Through such initiatives, the Telangana Tourism Department aims to preserve and promote the state's rich intangible cultural heritage while introducing Telangana's vibrant festivals to tourists and the public.

## OCT 13 is last date for admission in BRAOU



HYDERABAD

The last date for Admission into Under Graduate (B.A/B.Com/B.Sc) and Post Graduate - M.A, M.Com, M.Sc, M.B.A, BLISc, MLISc, Diplomas Courses and Certificate programmes of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Open University (BRAOU) for the Academic year 2026-27 is October 13, 2026.

Similarly the last date for admissions for "ODL programmes" and "Online programmes" is October 13, 2026.

The candidates must Register and pay the tuition fee before the last date, there is no further extensions.

For further details visit nearest study centre or university Portal: www.braouonline.in; OR website : www.braou.ac.in and for more information contact BRAOU Call centre :18005990101 or information Centre : 040-23680 222 / 333 / 555. (NSS)

## Odisha Governor Opens Aerospace Lab to Encourage Girls in Aviation

**NEW DELHI**

BARGARH: Odisha Governor Hari Babu Kambhampati on Sunday inaugurated the Boeing Sukanya Aerospace Lab in Bargarh, aiming to encourage girls to pursue careers in aviation, aerospace, science and technology. The Boeing Sukanya Programme seeks to increase girls' participation in India's growing aviation sector by establishing STEM laboratories and providing practical training in aviation, aeromodelling, science and technology. Addressing the inauguration ceremony, Kambhampati said India was witnessing a significant transformation, with women and girls making their mark in diverse fields, including science, technology, sports, entrepreneurship, defence, aviation and public life. He said women's empowerment was not limited to individual achievements but also involved changing social attitudes, expanding opportunities and inspiring future generations to pursue their ambitions without limitations.

***"Today's inauguration is a meaningful step towards Nari Shakti — nurturing, enabling and empowering our daughters to become creators, innovators and leaders of tomorrow," the Governor said, highlighting the significance of the initiative's name, 'Sukanya'.***

## Tripura Expands Trauma and Cardiac Care Facilities: CM Manik Saha

**AGARTALA:** Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha on Sunday said the state government was strengthening healthcare infrastructure by upgrading district hospitals, expanding trauma and cardiac care facilities and establishing drug rehabilitation centres across the state. According to the Chief Minister's Office, the number of patients referred outside Tripura for treatment has declined by around 80 per cent compared with earlier levels. Saha made the remarks while inaugurating the 'Emicizumab for All Persons with Severe Haemophilia A in Tripura' programme at the Nursing College in the AGDC and IGM Complex.

Describing the initiative as a significant step towards improving treatment for patients with severe Haemophilia A, he said IGM Hospital had been designated as the nodal centre for implementing the programme. Making the treatment available at district hospitals in the future would help more patients access specialised care closer to their homes, he added. The Chief Minister said trauma care centres had been established in almost all district hospitals, while cardiac care facilities had begun functioning at several locations. The government was also constructing a dental building alongside the existing Dental College and establishing a dedicated mother-and-child hospital at Agartala Government Medical College. He said construction of the drug rehabilitation centre at Bishramganj was progressing rapidly, with similar facilities being developed in different districts to strengthen treatment and rehabilitation services. Highlighting improvements in public health, Saha said Dhalai district, which had earlier reported frequent deaths due to water-borne diseases, had witnessed a significant improvement, with such fatalities now eliminated, according to him.

# AP Calls for Collective Action to Tackle Super El Niño

***Andhra Pradesh Prepared to Face El Niño; Precautionary Measures Taken to Protect Public Interest***

***Every Citizen Must Make Energy and Water Conservation a Daily Habit***

***Raising AC Temperature by Just 1°C Can Reduce Electricity Consumption by Up to 6%***

***Special Chief Secretary (Energy) K. Vijayanand Thanks BEE and EESL for Supporting Andhra Pradesh's Energy-Efficiency Initiatives***

***Andhra Pradesh Signs Key MoUs and Agreements with EESL to Advance Energy Efficiency and Economic Sustainability***

***Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu Aims to Make Andhra Pradesh India's Green Energy Hub***

***Andhra Pradesh Targets 100 GW of Clean Energy Capacity.. State Expects Green Energy Investments of ₹10 Lakh Crore***

***Andhra Pradesh Discoms Focus on Global Technologies in Energy Efficiency and Renewables***

***Energy Efficiency Accounts for Nearly 40% of Emissions Reductions Required to Meet Global Climate Goals.. Akhilesh Kumar Dixit,CEO. EESL***




**VIJAYAWADA, OCT 11**

The Andhra Pradesh Government has called for collective responsibility and large-scale public participation in energy and water conservation, renewable energy adoption and environmental protection to mitigate the potential impact of Super El Niño and climate change. Reaffirming the State's commitment to environmental stewardship and the protection of natural resources, K. Vijayanand, Special Chief Secretary, Energy, and Ex-officio Special Chief Secretary to the Chief Minister, stressed the need to accelerate a nationwide movement towards energy efficiency, water conservation and sustainable development. Given the potential impact of extreme climatic conditions on agriculture, industry, energy demand and the overall economy, every citizen must make energy and water conservation an integral part of daily life, he said.

The call came during an online interaction between K.Vijayanand and Akhilesh Kumar Dixit, CEO of Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL), under the Ministry of Power. As part of its nationwide outreach, EESL has been engaging senior State government officials to discuss emerging global climate challenges and explore advanced technologies and energy-efficiency initiatives. Recognising Andhra Pradesh as a proactive State in energy efficiency, renewable energy and technology adoption, Dixit briefed Vijayanand on recent national and international developments and the need to strengthen preparedness against climate-related challenges. Vijayanand thanked the Union Ministry of Power, the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs for their support in advancing energy efficiency and economic sustainability through the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) and EESL.

He said Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu had taken proactive measures to prepare the State for the challenges posed by extreme climatic conditions, with an emphasis on coordinated action across departments, financial support and drastically minimising inconvenience to families across the State.

**Green energy ambition**

Andhra Pradesh is aiming to emerge as a leading green energy hub in India, with a target of developing 100 GW of clean energy capacity and attracting green investments estimated at around ₹10 lakh crore.

The State's Energy Department has facilitated key memoranda of understanding and agreements with EESL in the presence of the Chief Minister and Union Minister for Power and Housing and Urban Affairs Manohar Lal, reflecting the State's commitment to energy efficiency and sustainable development. The clean-cooking programme in Anganwadi centres and the Urjaveer initiative have been completed, attracting national attention, Vijayanand said. Further programmes are being pursued in industry and MSMEs, Municipal Administration and Urban Development, Panchayat Raj and Rural Development, and the Housing Department.

**Rising Power demand....**

Referring to the growing risks associated with extreme heat, he said Andhra Pradesh was not immune to rising temperatures, which could affect agricultural output, industrial operations and overall productivity, even during the rainy and winter seasons.



Citing a report by the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA), the discussion highlighted the pressure that extreme heat and El Niño conditions can place on electricity demand, water availability and agriculture. India's peak power demand has previously touched approximately 270 GW during periods of intense heat, underlining the need for stronger preparedness against further climate-related stress.

Andhra Pradesh recorded a power demand of around 294 million units on September 9, illustrating the growing challenge of meeting the State's energy requirements amid changing weather conditions.

S.Naga Lakshmi, CEO of the Andhra Pradesh State Energy Conservation Mission (APSECM) and Managing Director of APGENCO, said the State was promoting energy-efficient appliances and equipment to benefit both consumers and society.

She emphasised that small behavioural changes could produce substantial savings. Raising an air-conditioner's temperature setting by just 1°C can help reduce electricity consumption, while a default setting of 24°C for room air-conditioners is a practical energy-saving measure.

Abnormal temperatures have contributed to a sharp increase in electricity consumption in residential and commercial buildings, particularly through the extensive use of air-conditioners and coolers.

Although Andhra Pradesh's distribution companies have been ensuring uninterrupted power supply to consumers, the focus is now on adopting globally proven technologies in energy efficiency, renewable energy and power-system operations to deliver reliable, high-quality electricity around the clock, in line with international standards.




### ENERGY EFFICIENCY AS A CLIMATE SOLUTION

Vijayanand commended the Ministry of Power for advancing energy efficiency initiatives that have delivered significant national benefits, including annual electricity savings exceeding 321 billion units, monetary savings of more than ₹2 lakh crore and a reduction of over 320 million tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions, according to the figures cited during the interaction. He also acknowledged Andhra Pradesh's contribution to the country's energy-saving efforts and called for stronger collaboration among the Centre, State governments, industry, BEE and EESL.

Dixit observed that energy efficiency was a crucial component of global climate action, accounting for a substantial share of the emissions reductions required to meet climate goals. Investments in energy-efficient technologies could simultaneously lower energy costs, improve productivity, strengthen energy security and reduce the financial burden on consumers and other stakeholders. Vijayanand urged government departments, public-sector organisations and private enterprises to adopt advanced technologies and sustainable practices with the support of the Union and State governments. He opened that preparing for the challenges posed by Super El Niño and climate change could not be the responsibility of governments alone. Coordinated institutional action, technological innovation and changes in everyday behaviour were essential to safeguarding natural resources, ensuring economic sustainability and protecting the public from the consequences of extreme climatic conditions.

# Protecting Voting Rights Our Resolve: DK Shivakumar

***Karnataka Deputy CM to join Congress protest in Delhi; Rahul Gandhi calls for march to Supreme Court***

**MYSURU, OCT 11**



Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Monday said protecting every citizen's right to vote was the Congress party's resolve, alleging that attempts were being made to deprive people of their voting rights. Speaking to the media near Kuppanna Park in Mysuru, Shivakumar said the right to vote was fundamental to democracy and that no citizen should be denied the opportunity to exercise it. "In a democracy, every vote is the right of every citizen. No one should lose this right to vote. Protecting it is our government's resolve," he said. Alleging that efforts were under way to take away people's voting rights, Shivakumar said citizens across the country had recognised the threat such actions posed to the democratic system.

He said the Congress considered it its responsibility to safeguard voting rights, citing the party's role in India's freedom struggle and the establishment of democracy. "This fight is not just of the Congress party or the government. Ours is the party that brought freedom to the country and implemented democracy. Therefore, we consider it our duty to protect the voting rights of every citizen," he said. Shivakumar said the party was fighting to protect the four pillars of democracy — the legislature, executive, judiciary and the media. He also criticised the restrictions allegedly imposed on people travelling to Delhi to participate in the protest. "More than 150 retired IAS officers have already supported our fight. Since yesterday, all kinds of restrictions have been imposed to prevent people from entering Delhi. Internet connectivity has been cut. This is not right," he said. Announcing the Congress's protest programme in the national capital on Monday, Shivakumar said senior party leaders, ministers, MPs and MLAs would take part in the demonstration. He confirmed that he would also participate. Invoking Goddess Chamundi, he expressed confidence that divine blessings would protect those involved in the campaign. Meanwhile, Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi has appealed to young people, opposition parties and civil society groups to unite and march to the Supreme Court on October 12. Urging people to overcome fear, Gandhi invoked the slogan "Daro mat" (Do not be afraid).

## Two-Language Policy Must Go Beyond Paper: P Chidambaram

**NEW DELHI OCT11**

Senior Congress leader P Chidambaram on Sunday stressed the need for effective implementation of Tamil Nadu's two-language policy, saying students should be able to speak both Tamil and English fluently. In a post on X, Chidambaram said trained teachers must be appointed in all schools to ensure that students develop proficiency in both languages.

"My wish is that everyone who supports the two-language policy, especially young students, should speak and pronounce both Tamil and English fluently. All schools should appoint trained Tamil and English teachers. The two-language policy should not remain just on paper. It should be implemented throughout Tamil Nadu," he said.

## PM Modi Inaugurates Chennai Metro Phase II Stretch Worth Rs. 4,900 Cr

**CHENNAI, OCTOBER 11**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to inaugurate the Poonamallee–Vadapalani stretch of Phase II of the Chennai Metro Rail Project, built at an estimated cost of ₹4,900 crore. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay is also scheduled to accompany the Prime Minister during a metro ride. According to the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), Modi's scheduled metro journey will be from Porur Bypass Metro Station to Poonamallee Bypass Metro Station and back. The new stretch features a 3.7-km double-decker structure and advanced signalling systems designed to support driverless operations. The project is expected to improve connectivity between Chennai's western suburbs and the city centre.

## Naidu Applauds Pawan Kalyan's Drive to Connect AP's Tribal Heartland



***Chief Minister hails the second phase of Adavi Thalli Bata, covering 1,341 tribal habitations through 2,569 road and bridge projects aimed at bringing development closer to remote communities.***

**Amaravati, Oct 11 :** Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu has praised Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan for advancing the 'Adavi Thalli Bata' initiative, aimed at improving road connectivity and infrastructure in remote tribal areas across the state.

Naidu described the effort to address long-standing transportation challenges in agency areas as a commendable step toward resolving the deep-rooted difficulties faced by tribal communities.

The Chief Minister expressed satisfaction over the launch of the programme's second phase, 'Adavi Thalli Bata 2.0,' which includes road works intended to connect 1,341 tribal habitations. The wider phase reportedly covers 2,569 projects, including nearly 1,976 kilometres of roads and 45 bridges, with an estimated investment of ₹2,052 crore.

Naidu said stronger road networks would help take government schemes and development benefits directly to remote villages. Better connectivity is also expected to improve access to healthcare, education, markets and livelihood opportunities for tribal residents.

Pawan Kalyan launched the second phase in Polavaram district, where he interacted with tribal communities and reviewed local development concerns. The initiative combines infrastructure programmes, including PM-JANMAN, PMGSY-IV and the rural employment guarantee scheme, to improve access to isolated habitations.

Describing the project as a significant step toward inclusive development, Naidu extended his best wishes for its successful implementation and praised Pawan Kalyan's efforts to place tribal infrastructure at the centre of the state's development agenda.

## Assam Government Appointments Reach 1.65 Lakh After 439 Receive Job Letters

**GUWAHATI, OCT 11**

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Sunday distributed appointment letters to 439 candidates selected for various government departments, taking the total number of appointments made under the state government's two terms to 1,65,749.

The appointment letters were handed over at a programme held at Srimanta Sankardeva Kalakshetra in Guwahati. The candidates were selected for posts in the Cooperation, Labour Welfare, Public Health Engineering and Water Resources departments.

Congratulating the newly appointed candidates and their families, Sarma said the government had established a transparent, merit-based recruitment system that had restored public confidence in government appointments.

Highlighting the achievements of the departments, the Chief Minister said the Assam Co-operative Apex Bank had undergone a major transformation through the adoption of information technology and artificial intelligence. The bank, which had earlier faced the threat of losing its Reserve Bank of India licence, had returned to profitability and secured scheduled bank status. A total of 175 posts in the bank were filled on Sunday, he said. In the Labour Welfare Department, 12 Insurance Medical Officers were appointed to serve 33 dispensaries and hospitals operating under the Employees' State Insurance scheme. The department had made 338 appointments over the past five years, Sarma said. The Public Health Engineering Department received 184 Junior Engineers, while the Water Resources Department appointed 52 Assistant Engineers and 16 Junior Engineers. The latter department had made 2,815 appointments over the past five years, he added. Sarma said nearly 40 per cent of the approximately four lakh government employees recruited or serving under the present administration were below 40 years of age, reflecting the growing presence of young people in the state's workforce. He said the government had also accelerated promotions to create vacancies at lower levels and enable officers to move into senior positions. The newly constituted Pay Commission had begun its work, and salaries would be revised after its report was submitted, he added. Describing the current period as a golden era for recruitment in Assam, the Chief Minister said the selection process had become more transparent, allowing candidates to share their appointment letters publicly without fear of allegations that they had secured jobs through money or political influence.

# EDITORIAL

## The Shadows Over the Sands: Unpacking the Houthi Escalation Against Saudi Arabia

The persistent targeting of Saudi Arabian critical infrastructure and border regions by Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels represents far more than a localized spillover of Yemen's tragic civil conflict. It stands as a pivotal geopolitical flashpoint, threatening regional stability, global energy security, and international shipping lanes. Since Saudi Arabia led a coalition intervention in 2015 to restore Yemen's internationally recognized government, the Houthis have transformed from a regional insurgent movement into an armed actor equipped with long-range ballistic missiles, armed drones, and anti-ship technologies. This shift has transformed what was once a localized border struggle into a sophisticated campaign targeting Saudi Arabia's economic lifeline and civil stability. At the core of the Houthi strategy is asymmetric warfare. By directing strikes at vital energy installations—such as oil refineries, pipelines, and tankers—alongside commercial airports and municipal centers in southern provinces like Najran and Jizan, the rebels seek to impose severe economic and psychological costs on Riyadh. These attacks do not merely target military assets; they hit the core of global crude supply routes and maritime transit points like the Bab el-Mandeb Strait. By disrupting international shipping and threatening energy output, the Houthis leverage global economic vulnerability to gain strategic leverage, pressing for unilateral concessions in political negotiations and demanding an end to blockades. For Saudi Arabia, these targeted assaults present a delicate strategic dilemma. On one hand, Riyadh remains committed to safeguarding its sovereignty, protecting its civilian population, and securing its ambitious economic diversification efforts. On the other hand, entering into a renewed, full-scale military campaign risks drawing the Kingdom back into a costly war of attrition. Saudi leadership has consequently pursued a delicate balance of calibrated defensive measures, regional diplomacy, and international coordination. However, as drone and missile technology becomes increasingly accessible and decentralized, pure defense remains an expensive and imperfect solution against continuous, low-cost aerial attacks. Crucially, the conflict cannot be evaluated in isolation from the broader regional shadow war. Tehran's material, logistical, and technological backing of the Houthis enables the rebel group to project power far beyond Yemen's borders, turning the Arabian Peninsula into a high-stakes arena for regional influence. The continued flow of advanced military hardware into Houthi-controlled territory undermines diplomatic peace initiatives and destabilizes the surrounding maritime choke points that connect the Indian Ocean to the Red Sea. Ultimately, the Houthi targeting of Saudi Arabia underlines the reality that enduring security in the Arabian Peninsula cannot be achieved solely through military deterrence or localized ceasefires. A lasting resolution requires a comprehensive political settlement in Yemen that addresses root governance grievances, halts the proliferation of advanced weaponry to non-state actors, and guarantees the safety of vital energy infrastructure and international sea lanes. Until the international community unites to enforce meaningful diplomatic pressure and curb external arms transfers, the cross-border strikes will continue to threaten both regional peace and global economic stability.

# Symphony of Blossoms: The Cultural Resonance and Eternal Heritage of Telangana's Bathukamma Festival



Across the verdant plains and rustic hinterlands of Telangana, the arrival of autumn heralds a breathtaking transformation of the landscape into an expansive, living canvas of vibrant flora. As the monsoon recedes, leaving behind brimming lakes, swaying paddy fields, and an atmosphere charged with renewed vitality, the women of the region step forth to orchestrate one of the most mesmerizing cultural phenomena in the world: the Bathukamma festival. Unlike conventional deity-centric celebrations, this vibrant nine-day floral festival is a profound ode to nature, feminine grace, and collective existence. It stands as a glorious testament to the soul of a people, blending indigenous folklore, ecological wisdom, and an unwavering spirit of community harmony into an unforgettable celebration of life.

Spanning from the Mahalaya Amavasya (Petramasa) of the Bhadrapada month to Durgashtami in Ashwayuja, Bathukamma unfolds as a dynamic expression of devotion where flowers are revered as living manifestations of the divine feminine. Translated literally as "Mother, come alive" or "Goddess of Life," Bathukamma is deeply rooted in the agrarian rhythm of the Deccan plateau. It represents an intricate dialogue between humanity and the natural world, encapsulating centuries of tradition, historical resilience, and the enduring strength of womanhood.

The genesis of this magnificent festival is rich with diverse mythologies and folk traditions that have been lovingly passed down through oral histories across generations. One prominent legend traces the festival to a Chola monarch named Dharmangada and his queen, Satyavati, who, after enduring the profound grief of losing a hundred sons, prayed fervently to Goddess Lakshmi. Blessed with a divine daughter who miraculously survived numerous perils, the populace rejoiced, calling her 'Bathukamma' or the great mother Brihadamma, revered ever since as an incarnation of Goddess Gauri. Another deeply poignant socio-historical narrative connects the festival to the era of feudal oppression and the Telangana armed struggle, where rural women used the collective arrangement of flowers and mournful, comforting folk refrains to express grief, offer solace to distressed mothers, and foster solidarity against tyrannical rule. Furthermore, historians draw fascinating parallels to ancient Buddhist traditions honoring Hariti, the protector of children, whose worship involved ritualistic offerings of earth and flora to secure infant longevity.

What elevates Bathukamma to an ecological masterclass is its profound botanical precision. The festival relies entirely on indigenous, wild-growing flora that bloom abundantly across the post-monsoon terrain of Telangana. Each flower chosen serves a distinct medicinal, chemical, or environmental purpose. The golden-hued Tanner's Cassia, known locally as Tangedu and celebrated as the state flower of Telangana, possesses powerful antiseptic properties and traditional medicinal benefits. Similarly, the vibrant Celosia or Gunugu flowers release natural pigments and cleansing agents when immersed in water. As thousands of floral arrangements are ritually submerged in local water bodies at the culmination of the festival, these organic components act as natural bio-purifiers, disinfecting stagnant rainwater and maintaining the ecological health of ponds, lakes, and streams.

The structural progression of the nine-day festival follows a meticulously defined sequence, with each day dedicated to specific rituals, floral compositions, and culinary offerings known as Naivedyam. The festivities commence on Engili Pula Bathukamma, traditionally coinciding with Mahalaya Amavasya, where families honor their ancestors before gathering the initial harvest of blossoms. As the days advance through Atukula Bathukamma, Muddapappa Bathukamma, and Nanabiyyam Bathukamma, the floral stacks grow in height and complexity, accompanied by simple yet nourishing offerings ranging from soaked lentils and flattened rice to milk and jaggery. Mid-festival observances like Atla Bathukamma introduce savory rice-flour crepes, while Aligina Bathukamma offers a reflective pause dedicated to the quietude of the deity. The subsequent days feature creative culinary expressions such as Vepakayala Bathukamma and Vennamuddala Bathukamma, utilizing jaggery, sesame, and butter. The celebrations culminate on Saddula Bathukamma, a grand spectacle of devotion where communities unite around massive, conical floral towers arranged meticulously on traditional brass platters. Five distinct varieties of seasoned rice dishes—such as tamarind, lemon, coconut, curd, and sesame rice—alongside Malida, a wholesome sweet delicacy made from flatbread and jaggery, are lovingly offered as Naivedyam and distributed as Vayana among relatives and neighbors.

The emotional core of Bathukamma lies in its enchanting folk literature, an unwritten repository of lyrical poetry composed by generations of anonymous rural bards. Unaccompanied by complex classical instruments, the rhythm of the festival is driven entirely by the rhythmic clapping of hands and synchronized footwork of women moving in concentric circles. Their songs weave a rich tapestry of human emotion, chronicling domestic joys and sorrows, mythological narratives of epics like the Ramayana, the tender bonds between siblings, and even historical milestones such as the echoes of the Indian freedom movement. Melodies like "Okkesi Puvvesi Chandamama" echo across the twilight hours, transforming rural courtyards and urban avenues alike into spaces of profound emotional release and communal bonding.

In contemporary times, Bathukamma has transcended its regional boundaries to emerge as a global symbol of Telugu identity and cultural pride. Following the formation of the state of Telangana, the festival has received unprecedented institutional backing, transforming into a grand state-sponsored celebration. From the banks of Hyderabad's historic Hussainsagar to metropolitan thoroughfares and global diaspora hubs spanning London, Dubai, the United States, and Australia, Bathukamma is celebrated with unmatched fervor. Iconic landmarks across the world lighting up in honor of the festival demonstrate its growing stature on the international cultural map. More importantly, it remains a powerful equalizer that dissolves barriers of caste, class, and creed, bringing women together in an uninhibited celebration of heritage.

Ultimately, Bathukamma is far more than a seasonal ritual; it is a living philosophy of gratitude toward nature and an exuberant celebration of community life. As the final notes of the Uyyala songs fade and the illuminated floral mounds drift away into the gentle ripples of local water bodies, the parting invocation—"Mallii raavamma, challaga deevinchammani"—encapsulates a timeless hope. It reflects a deep-rooted promise of renewal, a quiet prayer for abundance, and an eternal cultural bond that continues to illuminate the collective spirit of Telangana with grace, color, and unbreakable solidarity.



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# JP's Total Revolution: The Mantra for a New Political Direction







In the tapestry of Indian history, certain luminaries transcend the boundaries of their time to become eternal beacons of thought, idealism, and inspiration for generations to come. Loknayak Jayaprakash Narayan was one such legendary leader of the people. Rather than striving for the summits of political power, he chose to walk the path of selfless public service. During the Freedom Struggle, he fearlessly challenged foreign rule. In post-independence India, when governance drifted toward authoritarianism, corruption, and the erosion of democratic values, he blew the clarion call for public consciousness. His life remains living proof that the true strength of politics lies not in titles, status, or state power, but in moral courage, public trust, and an unshakeable commitment to core principles. Today, as Indian politics increasingly displays a relentless pursuit of power, a culture of blame, and opposition merely for the sake of opposition, JP's birth anniversary invites us to deep self-introspection. Merely remembering his ideas is not enough; translating them into contemporary political practice is the burning need of the hour.

Jayaprakash Narayan's life journey is an extraordinary saga of struggle, sacrifice, and ideological evolution. During the independence movement, he fought relentlessly against British rule, endured brutal prison tortures, and staged a daring escape from Hazaribagh Jail that fired the imagination of revolutionary youth across the country. After Independence, numerous opportunities to hold high office and wield state power were offered to him, yet he consciously turned away from power politics in favor of fundamental social transformation. Moving beyond orthodox socialist doctrine, he joined Vinoba Bhave's Bhoodan (Land Gift) movement, emerging as a champion of Gram Swaraj (village self-reliance), social equality, and moral regeneration. He firmly believed that merely changing governments does not solve society's deep-seated problems; true change requires a fundamental transformation in the character of individuals, society, and the institutional framework itself. The brightest aspect of Jayaprakash Narayan's persona was his complete detachment from power. Rather than seeking to capture the seat of authority, he sought to make power accountable to the people. His political philosophy rested on the premise that democracy does not begin and end with holding elections and forming a government based on a majority. Democracy finds its true fulfillment only when citizens receive justice, governance remains transparent, state power responds to the public interest, and the voice of the common citizen is treated with dignity. For JP, politics was never a ladder for personal ambition, but a vehicle for the collective good. It was precisely because of this philosophy that the movement he led went beyond substituting one regime for another—it sparked a nationwide debate on the morality of the political system.

***Loknayak Jayaprakash Narayan's call for Total Revolution remains relevant in contemporary India, underscoring the need for ethical politics, accountable governance, constructive opposition and people's participation in democracy. On his birth anniversary, his ideals serve as a reminder that true political leadership lies not in the pursuit of power, but in selfless service, social transformation and the protection of democratic values.***

The movement for "Total Revolution" (Sampoorna Kranti) that erupted from Bihar in 1974 became a decisive chapter in the history of Indian democracy. JP gave a powerful national voice to young people rising against corruption, inflation, unemployment, and systemic flaws in education. When Emergency was declared on June 25, 1975, suspending democratic rights and civil liberties, his struggle acquired even greater historical urgency. Though he was incarcerated, his ideas and his fierce commitment to democracy remained vibrantly alive in the public consciousness. In 1977, he played a pivotal role in the historic victory of the Janata Party and the formation of India's first non-Congress central government. He proved to a watching nation that even the most formidable regime must bow before organized people's power (Jan Shakti) and moral leadership. Yet, his dream was never simply to oust a government; it was to cultivate a political culture in which power was synonymous with service. The philosophy of Total Revolution remains the supreme example of his visionary foresight. He inextricably linked political reform to comprehensive social reconstruction. His vision of Total Revolution encompassed seven distinct dimensions: political, economic, social, cultural, intellectual, educational, and spiritual. Its goal was not merely to alter administrative structures, but to transform human consciousness, conduct, and core life values. He recognized that corruption does not sprout in government offices alone—its roots feed on individual greed. Social inequality cannot be erased merely by enacting laws; it demands the awakening of empathy and egalitarian values within the collective conscience. Similarly, he saw that the purpose of education is not simply job preparation, but the cultivation of discerning, responsible, and ethical citizens.

Viewed through this lens, Total Revolution remains a vital, living framework today. Its first message is that system reform must begin with self-transformation. Until political leadership embraces integrity, transparency, and personal accountability in its daily conduct, anti-corruption campaigns will yield limited results. Its second message is that both the ruling party and the opposition must play constructive roles in a healthy democracy. While the duty of the ruling party is to ensure development, good governance, and public welfare, the duty of the opposition extends beyond exposing government failures—it must present better policies and a credible alternative vision. Blind opposition alone cannot serve as proof of a vibrant opposition. The opposition must clearly articulate its alternative blueprint for the nation's economy, education, healthcare, employment, agriculture, and social harmony. The greatest challenge facing today's opposition is to avoid limiting its purpose to the mere acquisition of power. When political discourse dissolves entirely into allegations, personal attacks, and obstructionism, it erodes rather than strengthens public trust. In a democracy, while the potential for a change in power is essential, it is equally essential that citizens have a credible, principled choice before them. Jayaprakash Narayan challenged the establishment of his era because he recognized a deep need for systemic renewal. At the heart of his movement were questions of corruption, civil rights, democratic norms, and the public good. Today, political parties that invoke his name and slogans must hold their own conduct against these very benchmarks. This standard applies not only to the opposition, but to ruling parties and the political class as a whole.

Another vital message from Loknayak concerns the decentralization of power and popular participation. He envisioned a democracy that did not remain confined to Parliament and State Assemblies, but maintained an active, living presence in Gram Sabhas, local bodies, and the everyday lives of ordinary citizens. Today, with vast advancements in technology, communication, and administrative tools, the scope for direct public participation is greater than ever. Rather than treating youth as mere campaign crowds or slogan-callers, they should be meaningfully integrated into policy formulation, social reform, and nation-building. That is what it truly means to put the spirit of Total Revolution into practice.

I also share a deeply personal, family bond with Jayaprakash Narayan's ideals. Though I did not have the opportunity to meet him in person, my late father, Shri Ramswaroopji Garg, was a devoted follower who stood at the forefront of the JP Movement in Rajasthan. My mother, Satyabhamaji Garg, personally looked after his meals and hospitality during his travels across Rajasthan. Their lives and values bore the profound imprint of their devotion to JP and his ideals. Growing up in this family environment taught me that true homage to a great soul lies in adopting their principles in one's own life. Later, when a climate of protest arose across the country regarding my spiritual master Acharya Shri Tulsi's widely discussed book Agnipariksha, Jayaprakash Narayan played a crucial role in steering the situation toward dialogue and harmony. His timely intervention and public appeal helped defuse tensions and restore peace. This incident highlights a defining dimension of his character: even amidst deep ideological differences, he placed the highest premium on dialogue, tolerance, and social harmony.

On Jayaprakash Narayan's birth anniversary, the truest tribute we can offer him is to treat Total Revolution not as a closed chapter of history, but as a living pledge for the reconstruction of modern India. Today, our nation stands in need of a political culture anchored in accountability of power, a clear alternative vision from the opposition, creative energy among the youth, and deep respect for ethics in public life.



LALIT GARGG
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# Nadda accuses Himachal government of stalling development projects

**Manali, October 11:** Union Health Minister JP Nadda on Sunday accused the Congress government led by Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu of misgovernance, administrative mismanagement and stalling development in Himachal Pradesh. He alleged that the state government was failing to cooperate with the Centre on major railway and highway projects. Addressing a BJP Manali Mandal party workers' convention, Nadda claimed that the Congress government's policies had disrupted administration and led to the closure of several schools and healthcare institutions across the state. "Congress rule in Himachal Pradesh has brought only misgovernance, mismanagement and administrative chaos. Their leaders have become a festering sore in state politics," Nadda said, alleging that the government's inefficiency had resulted in the closure of numerous educational and health institutions. The convention was attended by Himachal Pradesh Leader of Opposition Jai Ram Thakur, former state minister and BJP national executive member Govind Singh Thakur, and senior district office-bearers.

Responding to Sukhu's repeated allegations that the Centre was neglecting Himachal Pradesh, Nadda said Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government had extended substantial financial assistance to the hill state. He maintained that the Centre had provided funds beyond the state's rightful share and urged the state government to acknowledge the support. Highlighting railway infrastructure, Nadda said the Centre was making continuous efforts to expand rail connectivity despite the geographical challenges posed by the hilly terrain. He stated that Rs 2,911 crore had been allocated this year for extending the railway line towards Bilaspur. However, Nadda alleged that while the previous BJP government had disbursed compensation for land acquisition, the present Congress government was not cooperating adequately with the acquisition process for the Bilaspur-Beri stretch.

# Kumaraswamy Seeks Probe Into Stings Against Five Ministers



**Bengaluru, October 11**: Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy on Sunday alleged that Karnataka Chief Minister DK Shivakumar held a secret, hours-long meeting with a person linked to sting operations at a five-star hotel in Vasanth Nagar and later warned five Cabinet colleagues that they were being targeted. He demanded a probe into the alleged sting operations and sought clarification from the Chief Minister on the identity of the person, the purpose of the meeting and the ministers allegedly targeted.

Speaking to reporters after a programme marking Jayaprakash Narayan's birth anniversary at the JD(S) headquarters, JP Bhavan, Kumaraswamy said Shivakumar should disclose the details of the reported meeting. He also questioned the Chief Minister's claim that a sting operation had been attempted against him, saying all relevant facts should be made public. Kumaraswamy alleged that a person operating under the guise of media was being protected and used to target political opponents. Referring to reports that Shivakumar had warned five Cabinet colleagues about possible sting operations against them, he asked the government to order a proper investigation.

"If there is credible information about stings against these ministers, why are they still in the Cabinet? The CM must clarify instead of making statements that create suspicion," he said.

The Union Minister also questioned why the government had not initiated a probe despite having its own police machinery and a Special Investigation Team (SIT). He criticised the Home Minister's reported position that a formal complaint was necessary to initiate an investigation, arguing that authorities initiate investigations suo motu in other cases. Kumaraswamy alleged that the controversy had surfaced while he was raising concerns over alleged irregularities in the NICE project with supporting documents, and claimed that the sting-operation issue was intended to divert attention. He further alleged that the Chief Minister's personal staff had carried files relating to the alleged sting operations into a Cabinet meeting, suggesting that the issue had been prepared in advance.

Separately, Kumaraswamy questioned the conduct of the Hassan Deputy Commissioner over an alleged notice issued to a Superintendent of Police, who is a woman officer. He argued that the matter should have been brought to the notice of the Chief Secretary and questioned the Deputy Commissioner's authority to make public statements on the issue. He also raised questions about the officer's earlier tenure as Karnataka Public Service Commission (KPSC) Secretary and the government's decision to appoint him as Hassan Deputy Commissioner. MLC TA Sharavana, former MLC KA Thippeswamy and Greater Bengaluru JD(S) president HM Ramesh Gowda were present at the programme.

# Availability of Clean Drinking Water – A Priority for North Eastern Railway

**Gorakhpur, October 11**

With the objective of providing clean and safe drinking water to railway passengers and employees, the North Eastern Railway has accorded priority to the continuous monitoring and maintenance of water tanks, water coolers, taps, filters, water distribution points, and pipelines at railway stations, offices, and residential colonies. Residual chlorine tests, bacteriological culture tests, and chemical analyses are being conducted regularly by Chief Health Inspectors and Health Inspectors to ensure the safety of drinking water. Providing pure drinking water to railway passengers and employees is one of the top priorities of the Railway Administration, and these efforts will continue as an ongoing campaign.

In the Lucknow Division, Chief Medical Superintendent of the Divisional Hospital, Badshahnagar, Dr. Ramesh Chand, and Additional Divisional Railway Manager (Infrastructure), Mr. Bhuvnesh Singh, are jointly guiding the ongoing efforts. Under their direction, Chief Health Inspectors and Health Inspectors are continuously conducting residual chlorine tests and bacteriological culture tests at major railway stations and residential colonies. Similarly, Chief Health Inspectors and Health Inspectors in the Izzatnagar and Varanasi Divisions are regularly inspecting water tanks, water coolers, water filters, and pipelines at railway stations, residential colonies, coaching depots, hospitals and health centres, running rooms, crew lobbies, and offices.

This inspection campaign will continue across all stations, residential colonies, and offices of the North Eastern Railway to ensure the availability of clean drinking water. Health Inspectors are conducting regular tests to ensure that passengers and employees receive safe drinking water that meets the prescribed standards. Providing clean drinking water to railway passengers and employees remains a priority for the Railway Administration, and continuous monitoring of water quality will continue.

# NFR introduces enhanced On-Board Services in five trains



**Maligaon, October 11, 2026:** Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) has introduced enhanced On-Board Services in five identified trains, becoming the second Zonal Railway in Indian Railways to implement the initiative. The services were formally launched at Guwahati Railway Station on October 10, 2026, in the presence of the Principal Chief Mechanical Engineer (PCME) of N.F. Railway and other senior railway officials. The technology-enabled housekeeping services are being implemented by SMC Integrated Facility Management Solutions Limited, with dedicated teams deployed across the identified trains to ensure continuous cleanliness, improved sanitation and prompt redressal of passenger complaints throughout the journey. The enhanced services will cover five train services: the Kamakhya-SMVT Bengaluru Express (12552/12551), commencing on October 14, 2026; the Guwahati-Kolkata Garib Rath Express (12518/12517), commencing on October 10, 2026; the Dibrugarh-Mumbai LTT Express (15946/15945), commencing on October 11, 2026; the New Jalpaiguri-Patna Vande Bharat Express (22233/22234), commencing on October 10, 2026; and the New Jalpaiguri-Guwahati Vande Bharat Express (22227/22228), commencing on October 10, 2026.

The enhanced On-Board Services will ensure regular coach and AC window cleaning, improved washroom hygiene, efficient waste management, and timely linen distribution and collection. Dedicated teams will provide basic technical assistance, monitor water availability and address passenger complaints within a target of two hours, escalating unresolved issues to the concerned Railway authorities. To enhance service quality and accountability, the initiative incorporates digital monitoring, geo-tagged service verification, staff tracking and a centralised monitoring mechanism. Real-time passenger feedback, star ratings and AI-based cleaning assessments will further support performance evaluation, ensuring improved cleanliness, passenger comfort and a better overall travel experience.

In a step towards promoting local craftsmanship, uniforms for the on-board service staff have been made by local weavers with support from the NEDFi, under the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (MDoNER).

Through this initiative, Northeast Frontier Railway aims to strengthen on-board cleanliness, improve hygiene standards and enhance passenger satisfaction. The integration of technology-enabled housekeeping, digital monitoring and responsive services will ensure a cleaner, safer and more comfortable railway travel experience for passengers.

# Aaditya, Amit Thackeray protest against detention of Mumbai protesters

**MUMBAI OCT 11**



Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Aaditya Thackeray and Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) leader Amit Thackeray on Sunday staged a protest outside Shivaji Park Police Station against the detention of demonstrators in Mumbai during a protest against Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar. The leaders demanded the release of those detained.

The protesters had raised concerns over alleged irregularities in the electoral process and demanded Kumar's resignation. Aaditya Thackeray accused the BJP of being afraid of citizens protesting on the streets.

"The BJP government is scared of Indian people, Indian citizens. That is why you see them arresting every Indian who is a patriot and comes out on the streets," he said. He also questioned the whereabouts of Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and six MPs who had joined the BJP-led alliance.

Mumbai Police have registered an FIR against the organisers of a joint protest march held by the MNS and Shiv Sena (UBT) on October 4. The case was filed at Azad Maidan Police Station after the march allegedly proceeded without mandatory police permission and violated prohibitory orders in force in South Mumbai.

The protesters had marched towards the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) headquarters to oppose the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls and demand the resignation of the CEC.

Meanwhile, Delhi Police sources said around 1,000 protesters had been detained in the national capital while attempting to march towards Jantar Mantar for a protest organised by the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP).

# IGMC residents seek reduction in Rs 40 lakh bond, hike in PG stipends

**SHIMLA, OCTOBER 11**



The Resident Doctors Association (RDA) of Indira Gandhi Medical College (IGMC), Shimla, on Sunday urged the Himachal Pradesh government to revise its compulsory three-year service bond policy, reduce the financial penalty of Rs 40 lakh for non-compliance and increase postgraduate (PG) medical stipends.

In a press release, RDA president Maj Birsukhman Singh and other office-bearers expressed concern over the existing service bond requirements and what they described as one of the lowest postgraduate stipends in the country. The association warned that the combination of a lengthy mandatory service bond, a high financial penalty and inadequate remuneration could discourage meritorious candidates from choosing medical colleges in Himachal Pradesh during NEET-PG counselling.

According to the RDA, the situation could adversely affect postgraduate medical education in the state, potentially leaving seats vacant or resulting in seats being filled by lower-ranked candidates during subsequent counselling rounds.

The association also highlighted the non-payment of stipends to resident doctors working under the state's "No Stipend, No Bond" policy, claiming that hundreds of doctors were affected. It called for immediate government intervention to resolve the issue.

Emphasising the demanding nature of medical residency, the RDA said doctors working in hospital wards, emergency departments and intensive care units were required to shoulder round-the-clock responsibilities and should not be expected to perform such duties for extended periods without financial remuneration.

The association demanded that postgraduate stipends be increased in line with national benchmarks to ensure fair compensation and make Himachal Pradesh a more attractive destination for medical aspirants.

It also urged the government to implement the necessary policy reforms before the upcoming NEET-PG 2026 counselling process and consult resident doctors' associations before finalising policies affecting medical education and healthcare services.

The RDA said timely action was essential to protect the interests of resident doctors, strengthen medical education and maintain the quality of patient care in the state.

The association has submitted its demands to the Principal of IGMC Shimla, the Health Secretary, the Health Minister and the Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh, seeking their intervention.

# Traffic Police Challan 10 Vehicles on Yamunotri Route

**SUNIL THAPLIYAL**

Barkot (Uttarkashi) uttarakhand | The Yamunaghati Traffic Police has intensified its checking drive on the Yamunotri route to ensure road safety and compliance with traffic regulations during the Char Dham Yatra. During the drive, police issued challans to 10 vehicles for various traffic violations. These included a private vehicle registered in Punjab that was found carrying pilgrims from Gujarat. According to Yamunaghati Traffic In-charge Virendra Singh Panwar, the checking drive is being conducted periodically on the directions of the Superintendent of Police and Deputy Superintendent of Police. The initiative aims to improve traffic management, reduce the risk of road accidents and ensure a safe and hassle-free journey for pilgrims visiting Yamunotri Dham.

**Private Vehicle Found Carrying Gujarat Pilgrims**

During the checking operation, police found a Punjab-registered private vehicle transporting pilgrims from Gujarat. The police took challan action as per the applicable rules and advised the driver not to use a private vehicle for transporting passengers in this manner in the future. The driver was also instructed to comply with the relevant regulations to avoid inconvenience and ensure passenger safety.

**Action Against Multiple Traffic Violations**

Traffic In-charge Panwar said that, besides the above case, challans were issued to nine other vehicles for violations including overloading, overspeeding, riding two-wheelers without helmets and triple riding. Police personnel also briefed drivers and riders on the importance of following traffic rules.



Motorists were advised to maintain prescribed speed limits, avoid carrying passengers beyond the permitted capacity, wear helmets while riding two-wheelers and refrain from triple riding. Police emphasised that responsible driving and strict compliance with traffic regulations are essential to preventing road accidents, particularly on busy pilgrimage routes.

**Checking Drive to Continue**

The traffic police stated that checking drives would continue at regular intervals across the Yamunotri route and other areas of the Yamunaghati region.



# Annual Religious Conference to Be Held on Oct 18

**Chandigarh, October 11:** Ahead of the Punjab Assembly elections, the Sant Namdev community has intensified its preparations to demonstrate its strength and unity in Chandigarh. The community's annual religious conference, scheduled to be held on October 18 at Sant Namdev Bhawan in Sector 21, will serve as a platform to address social concerns and raise a collective voice on issues affecting the community.

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini will attend the conference as the chief guest. In preparation for the event, community representatives have been conducting outreach campaigns across various parts of Punjab.

As part of this initiative, a delegation invited Haryana Cabinet Minister Ranbir Gangwa to attend the conference. The delegation and community members also invited Sanjeev Gangwa, the minister's son, who is a member of the state executive committee of the BJP Yuva Morcha and the party's in-charge for Dabwali.

The annual religious conference is being organised jointly by the Tank Kshatriya Sabha (Regd.), Chandigarh, Sant Namdev Samaj, Haryana, and the Akhil Bharatiya Kshatriya Tank Pratinidhi Sabha. The event is expected to be a significant gathering. During the conference, ragi jathas (devotional music groups) and religious storytellers will convey the teachings and message of Sant Namdev Ji. Langar (community meal) will also be served at the conclusion of the programme.

Sant Namdev Samaj president Satbir Verma said community representatives had visited various parts of Punjab, including Bathinda, Sangrur, Patiala, Hoshiarpur and Jalandhar, to invite people to the conference. He said the visits had generated considerable enthusiasm among community members.

Verma added that people from the community now wanted to unite on a common platform and raise their issues more effectively. The conference in Chandigarh would provide an important opportunity to demonstrate unity and strengthen the community's collective voice.

He expressed confidence that a large number of people from Punjab and other regions would attend the conference and share their views on issues concerning the community's interests.

**"Community Unity Is Our Greatest Strength": President Satbir Verma**

Satbir Verma, Haryana president of Sant Namdev Samaj and former chairman, said that community unity should not be limited to a single conference. Instead, everyone should work together on issues related to social welfare and the future of young people. He said the teachings of Sant Namdev Ji promote brotherhood, service and equality. The Chandigarh conference would bring community members together on a common platform, encourage mutual dialogue and provide an opportunity to raise their collective voice.

He appealed to all community members to participate in the conference in large numbers.

**Social Challenges Are a Serious Concern: Sanjeev Gangwa**

Sanjeev Gangwa, son of Cabinet Minister Ranbir Gangwa, member of the state executive committee of the BJP Yuva Morcha and the party's in-charge for Dabwali, said the growing problem of drug abuse in Punjab and the associated social challenges were matters of serious concern. He stressed the need to create awareness among young people, expand educational and employment opportunities, and encourage them to participate in positive and constructive activities.

He said social organisations and families had an important role to play in addressing these challenges. Joint efforts by the government and society were essential to resolving public grievances and promoting public welfare.

# Zelensky backs Trump's energy ceasefire, awaits US details

**WASHINGTON**

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on Sunday said Kyiv supports the "energy ceasefire" announced by US President Donald Trump and was awaiting details from Washington, adding that Russia must also back the truce, which Moscow had yet to confirm.

"Ukraine supports the ceasefire, and it is important that Russia support it as well. We are awaiting details from the American side," Zelensky wrote on X after speaking with Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney, Finnish President Alexander Stubb and NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte.

"For our part, Ukraine always fully supports steps toward de-escalation, the protection of lives, and the decisions needed to end the war and guarantee lasting peace," he said.

Trump had announced the truce on Truth Social about 80 minutes earlier.

"Effective immediately, there is an energy ceasefire in the War between Russia and Ukraine. Both parties have agreed. Do not break it! Thank you for your attention to this matter," he wrote.

The White House repeated the announcement on X about 20 minutes later. "Effective Immediately: An energy ceasefire in the War between Russia and Ukraine," it posted.

Trump did not say when the truce was agreed, which facilities it covered, how long it would last or how it would be monitored.

The Kremlin had not publicly confirmed the arrangement by midday on Sunday.

Zelensky had initially said he had not been told. "The ceasefire announcement was news for me. But if Russians agree to an energy ceasefire, Ukraine will agree," he told Axios shortly after Trump's post.



A senior Ukrainian official told the Kyiv Independent that Kyiv had no information about the ceasefire and doubted that Russia had been informed.

Earlier on Sunday, Zelensky had offered a reciprocal halt. "Ukraine will be ready to stop striking Russian oil refineries if Russia stops striking our energy infrastructure," he said, according to the Associated Press. The announcement came two days after Trump unveiled an agreement with Russian President Vladimir Putin to release Russian diesel into American and global markets, a move criticised by Ukraine, European officials and US lawmakers from both parties.

On Saturday, Trump blamed Zelensky for continuing drone attacks on Russian refineries and said Ukraine should "get a new leader who can make a deal".

This is not the first such announcement. Last month, Trump said on Truth Social that Russia and Ukraine had agreed not to hit each other's energy targets. Axios reported that neither side confirmed a deal at the time, and both continued attacking energy infrastructure.

India has a direct stake in the outcome. New Delhi has proposed a three-part truce that would halt attacks on energy facilities and other infrastructure, keep grain and energy flowing through Black Sea ports and end strikes on commercial shipping, the Hindustan Times reported on October 7, citing people familiar with the proposal.

Black Sea ports account for almost 30 per cent of Russian energy flows to India, the newspaper said.

"India is trying to be helpful, starting with the Black Sea safety of shipping issue, addressing immediate concerns of Russia and Ukraine on grain and energy exports and non-attack possibilities," External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said on October 7.

There was no immediate reaction from New Delhi to Trump's announcement.

The diesel deal has also revived questions in the US over Washington's approach to India's purchases of Russian oil. It came less than a month after Trump signed legislation authorising tariffs of up to 100 per cent on major buyers of Russian oil and gas, including India. Russia and Ukraine have repeatedly struck each other's energy infrastructure since Moscow's full-scale invasion in February 2022.

# US frees 4 million oil barrels amid storm

**WASHINGTON**

The United States has authorised an emergency exchange of up to four million barrels of crude oil from its Strategic Petroleum Reserve to prevent fuel supply disruptions caused by severe weather in the Gulf region, the Department of Energy has announced.

The decision, announced on Saturday, allows energy giants ExxonMobil and BP America to obtain up to two million barrels each from the country's emergency oil stockpile.

The move is intended to keep American refineries operating and protect fuel supplies as hurricane-related disruptions affect the movement of crude oil. Under the arrangement, the two companies will return the borrowed oil in 2027, along with additional barrels as a premium.



Energy Secretary Chris Wright said the emergency action was necessary to maintain supplies and prevent disruptions from affecting American consumers and businesses.

"With this emergency exchange, the Energy Department is acting swiftly to help maintain refinery operations, limit disruptions to fuel supplies, and ensure American families and businesses continue to have access to affordable, reliable, and secure energy," Wright said.

The department said the arrangement would also strengthen the country's strategic oil reserves because the companies would be required to return more crude than they received. Wright said the government expected the additional barrels to generate savings for taxpayers.

The authorisation comes as the Trump administration seeks to maintain stable domestic energy supplies while responding to weather-related interruptions in the Gulf region, which is home to major American oil production, refining and transportation infrastructure.

The Energy Department said ExxonMobil's allocation would accelerate deliveries of crude oil already awarded to the company under an earlier Strategic Petroleum Reserve arrangement.

This would allow the company to address immediate supply requirements without waiting for the original delivery schedule. BP America has separately been authorised to receive up to two million barrels under the emergency arrangement. The Energy Department said it would continue coordinating with industry partners to maintain reliable fuel supplies and respond to further hurricane-related disruptions.

# Gates calls for taxing AI, reserving jobs for humans

**WASHINGTON**

Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates on Sunday said society would soon have to decide how to tax Artificial Intelligence (AI) and which jobs to reserve for humans, warning that AI "changes the world more than all previous technologies" as fears grow over its impact on employment.

Appearing on CNN's State of the Union, Gates was asked by host Jake Tapper about his earlier warning that the breadth of AI job losses across virtually all sectors would be "unprecedented", and his call to reserve some occupations in education and health care for humans.

Gates said he was looking at "how fast these models are improving and what the incentive is to use the AI in place of human labor". "In the years ahead, we really do need to make a decision as a society, how do we tax AI usage or robot usage? And where do we want to make sure the human jobs are preserved?" he said. "Until people get their mind around how powerful this is, and, therefore, what it's going to be doing to these jobs, the idea that you need to reserve things for humans may sound bizarre, but, in fact, we will get there," he added. Gates, who helped build the personal computer and internet era, said those were "a big deal, but nothing compared to this". He said the most immediate danger was "bad people using AI", particularly for cyberattacks, and predicted that "over the next year, we will move beyond self-governance" by AI companies, with government safety bodies like those for aviation and medicines. Gates said he had heard from "a number of politicians" and hoped "in time" to discuss his concerns with Trump and "his key people".




# Arthritis : Break the Silence for Early Detection

**(On the occasion of "World Arthritis Day" on 12 October)**

Arthritis is a broad term used for conditions that cause joint inflammation, stiffness, swelling, and pain, affecting mobility and daily functioning. It is not a single disease but includes over 100 different types, ranging from age related wear and tear to autoimmune forms that attack the body's own tissues. The most common types include osteoarthritis (joint wear and tear), rheumatoid arthritis (autoimmune disorder, gout (uric acid buildup), and lupus (systemic condition affecting joints). Arthritis can be triggered by genetics, autoimmune disorders, joint injuries, obesity, ageing, and poor lifestyle choices. A sedentary lifestyle, smoking, and a poor diet can increase the risk of arthritis at a younger age.

## World Arthritis Day

World Arthritis Day is celebrated on 12 October annually from 1996 to raise awareness about arthritis, musculoskeletal diseases, and rheumatic related diseases. The theme of World Arthritis Day-2026 is "#RMDreams" or "Achieve Your Dreams", focusing on the hopes, goals, aspirations of people with Rheumatic and Musculoskeletal Diseases or RMDs. Arthritis related conditions affect hundreds of millions - bringing pain, disability, and emotional strain. On this day government, NGOs, hospitals, and workplaces inform the public about arthritis. Awareness campaigns, health talks, free checkup camps, and community events are organised to educate public on early symptoms, risk factors, and importance of timely diagnosis. There is no specific treatment for the arthritis, so it is important to understand the signs and symptoms and get early diagnosis to avail appropriate treatment.

Arthritis is not just a condition of ageing - it affects people of all ages and backgrounds. Over 350 million people worldwide live with arthritis related diseases. Many suffer in silence, often undiagnosed and underserved. This disease can lead to severe pain, reduced mobility, and diminished quality of life, but that early diagnosis and proactive management can make a meaningful difference.

**- Capt Dr Madhusudhan Reddy Burra**
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# Indian Army Lieutenant General Kaushik begins Nepal visit

**KATHMANDU**

Lieutenant General Viresh Pratap Singh Kaushik of the Indian Army began his visit to Nepal on Sunday as he aims to interact with Indian Army ex-servicemen and review welfare schemes provided to veterans in the country, the Indian Embassy in Nepal said.

Kaushik, who holds the military honours PVSM, UYSM, YSM and SM, is scheduled to meet former Indian Army personnel during his visit and assess the implementation of various welfare initiatives aimed at supporting them in Nepal, the embassy said in a social media post.

Kaushik, who is also the Adjutant General of the Indian Army, is visiting Nepal to review the welfare of retired Indian Army personnel living in the country, including the benefits and support schemes available to them.

More than 122,000 Indian Army pensioners currently reside in Nepal, according to the Indian Embassy's website. The Indian government has made efforts to ensure the welfare of these pensioners, their families and dependents, with various branches of the Defence Wing working in coordination to address the needs and aspirations of Nepal-domiciled Gorkha ex-servicemen, according to the embassy.

The visit highlights India's continued focus on the welfare of its retired military personnel living in Nepal, particularly Gorkha veterans and their families who receive pensions and other support from the Indian government.

Under a tripartite agreement signed by representatives of the governments of India, Nepal and the United Kingdom on November 9, 1947, the tradition of recruiting Nepali nationals into the Indian and British armies continued after India gained independence.

However, the recruitment of Nepali youths into the Indian Army has remained suspended since 2019, initially due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Nepal subsequently suspended the recruitment process after India introduced the Agnipath scheme in 2022. The Nepali government has argued that the scheme is inconsistent with the provisions of the 1947 Tripartite Agreement between India, Nepal and the United Kingdom.

# US buys Russian diesel as Graham Act deadline nears

**WASHINGTON**

US President Donald Trump's deal to buy Russian diesel drew sharp scrutiny on American Sunday television, with anchors saying it clashed with a sanctions law he signed last month, a week before that law's deadline for tariffs that could hit India and other major buyers of Russian crude.

CNN's State of the Union host Jake Tapper said Trump hoped to reverse "skyrocketing fuel costs" by buying six million barrels of diesel, "barely enough to cover a day-and-a-half of U.S. demand".

He said Trump was "purchasing it from Vladimir Putin, despite signing a bill three weeks ago by the late Senator Lindsey Graham sanctioning countries that buy Russian oil". On ABC's This Week, co-anchor Jonathan Karl said the deal "appears to violate a law Congress passed shortly after the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022". He did not name the law.

ABC also replayed part of Trump's September 2025 address to the UN General Assembly, in which he criticised European countries for buying Russian energy.

"They're buying oil and gas from Russia, while they're fighting Russia. It's embarrassing to them," Trump said in the clip.

"Of course, the president announced on Friday that the US now plans to do exactly the same thing," Karl said. The law Tapper referred to, the Lindsey O. Graham Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act of 2026, was signed on September 18.

Section 113 of the Act requires the President, within 30 days of enactment, to raise duties to "up to 100 per cent" on all goods from countries that were among the five largest importers of Russian crude oil or natural gas in the preceding 12 months.

# Graham law doesn't bar Russian diesel buys: Bessent

**WASHINGTON**

US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent on Sunday rejected claims that the new Russia sanctions law named after the late Senator Lindsey Graham bars Washington from buying Russian diesel, a week before the same law's deadline for tariffs that could hit India and other major buyers of Russian crude.

Bessent also accused Europe of hypocrisy for criticising the deal, saying Europeans had given Russia more money since the war began than they had given Ukraine.

"Well, first of all, we are going to do it with all the legal authorities we have," Bessent told Fox News' Fox and Friends Weekend when asked about objections in Congress.

"So, you know, anyone in Congress who says whether it's an old bill or the current Lindsey Graham bill prohibits us from doing it is wrong," he said. "This is good for the American people," he added, pointing to the aim of "bringing these diesel prices down".



Turning to Europe, Bessent said European countries "cannot wean themselves off Russian energy".

"They had a failed energy policy and Vladimir Putin, they continue to fund him. So for them to say that we cannot have a respite in diesel pricing is completely hypocritical," he said.

Bessent did not say which legal authorities the administration was relying on, or how it would handle the law's tariff provisions that fall due next week. The Treasury Department posted the full interview on X. President Donald Trump announced on Friday that Russia would initially supply more than 300,000 tonnes of diesel to American and global markets.

The Lindsey O. Graham Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act of 2026 was signed into law on September 18.

Section 112 of the Act requires the President, within 30 days, to raise duties to "up to 500 per cent" on all goods imported into the United States from Russia, including "petroleum products".

Section 113 requires duties of "up to 100 per cent" on all goods from countries that were among the five largest importers of Russian crude oil or natural gas in the 12 months before enactment and that knowingly make new purchases on or after the 30-day mark. Both deadlines fall on October 18. India has a direct stake in the outcome. It has been among the largest buyers of Russian crude since 2022, and Trump imposed an additional 25 per cent tariff on Indian goods in August 2025 over those purchases.

Bessent has previously put India at the centre of his criticism of Europe's energy trade with Russia.

"The Russian oil goes into India, the refined products come out, and the Europeans buy the refined products. They are financing the war against themselves," he told CNBC in January, after the European Union concluded a free trade agreement with India.

# *A DAUGHTER WORTHY OF HER FATHER*



**Following Her Father's Footsteps in Service... Raising the Flag of Victory in Sports!**

**Peruka Vrunda Excels in Academics, Sports, NCC and Cultural Activities**

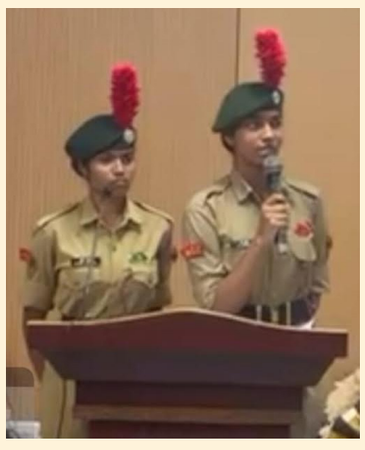
**HYDERABAD**

The greatest legacy parents can pass on to their children is not wealth or property, but values, character and compassion. Embodying these ideals, Peruka Vrunda is carving a distinctive identity through her achievements in academics, sports, adventure activities, the National Cadet Corps (NCC) and cultural pursuits, while drawing inspiration from her father's exemplary life.

Her father, Dr. Peruka Raju, a renowned poet, author, literary critic, multilingual scholar and Junior Commissioned Officer in the Indian Army, is a shining example of humanity and selfless service. As the founder of My Gift, a voluntary service organisation guided by the motto "Encouragement is the Greatest Gift," he believes in serving humanity wherever duty takes him.

For him, the entire nation is his home and humanity is his extended family. Leading a simple and disciplined life, he abstains from alcohol and non-vegetarian food. He firmly believes that the poverty and hardships of his childhood shaped his character and transformed life's challenges into stepping stones towards success.

Having actively participated in NSS, Akshara Ujjwala and NCC activities during his student days, Dr. Raju has instilled the same spirit of discipline, determination and service in his children. His daughter Vrunda is carrying forward these values through her remarkable accomplishments.



Vrunda's sporting journey began at an early age. In 2013, she won a medal in the Inter-School Sub-Junior Athletics Competition held in Delhi. In 2017, she secured first place and received the Best Athlete medal at an inter-school athletics competition in Tamil Nadu. Demonstrating courage and determination beyond the athletics track, she secured first place at the Rock Climbing Summer Camp held in Wellington in 2019. Continuing her successful sporting journey, she won several medals in inter-college sports competitions held at Ferozepur, Punjab, during 2022–23.

Currently pursuing her third year of Biotechnology at GITAM University, Vrunda has been an active NCC cadet since 2025. She has attended four NCC camps and earned several certificates of appreciation for her performance, discipline and dedication. She also actively participates in university-level events and cultural programmes, demonstrating her versatility and creative abilities. Having accompanied her father to different parts of India during his military postings, Vrunda has developed an appreciation of diverse languages, traditions and cultures. Inspired by her father's multilingual literary accomplishments, she has also cultivated an interest in learning different languages.

Despite her achievements, Vrunda remains humble, respectful and deeply rooted in family values. Her disciplined approach, perseverance and modesty reflect the ideals she has inherited from her father.

While the father wins hearts through his writings, the daughter wins medals through her talent. While the father earns admiration through selfless service, the daughter receives recognition through dedication and achievement.

Her father's ideals form the foundation of her character, while her own hard work builds the ladder to success.

Her true inheritance is not material wealth, but a legacy of values, discipline and humanity. Following her father's footsteps while creating a path of her own, Peruka Vrunda truly stands as a daughter worthy of her father.

# The Link Between TCS, SIR's Digital Stack, and the Noel Tata-N. Chandrasekaran Tussle

***When a private company's software effectively overrides statutory authority and results in the mass exclusion of citizens from the electoral roll, that company – in this case, TCS – owes the country answers.***

Somebody – we don't know who – decided that a Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of voters had to be conducted. The Election Commission of India (ECI) told RTI activist Anjali Bharadwaj that it did not have minutes of any meeting that decided upon the SIR. Somebody – we are now piecing this together – decided that Form 6 would be given to new voters to register during SIR but it would be altered so that they cannot do so without proving that their grandfather was also on the voter list decades ago.

Somebody – and we don't know who – invented a tool called 'logical discrepancy' and wrote algorithms to eliminate voters for 11 different reasons. More than 13 crore names were deleted from India's electoral rolls thus. But we do know who built the digital system which helped that somebody do all this. It's not a government department or company. It is a private company – Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) – whose parent group had, in the very years that it was building that system, become the single largest identifiable funder of the party running the government the system serves.

None of that, by itself, proves wrongdoing. Companies build government software everywhere. In fact, TCS itself has done a tremendous job of building and running India's passport system. Companies donate to ruling parties everywhere the law permits it. What is unusual is the scale of the overlap, the choices made by TCS – or thrust upon it – in building the system, and how little of it has been publicly examined.

**The corporate engine behind the curtain**

The integrity of India's electoral rolls has rested on a simple statutory design: decentralisation. The law gives Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) – usually local sub-divisional magistrates – the power to prepare, revise and verify rolls constituency by constituency, precisely so that no single office or official at Nirvachan Sadan, the Central Election Commission in Delhi, could have control of the national electorate and tamper with it.

That design changed with ERONet, and later its successor platform, ECINet. Both were built not in-house, nor by any of the government's own agencies, but by TCS. TCS's own 2024-25 annual report describes ERONet 2.0 as a system that "revolutionised electoral roll management in India," built around what the company calls a centralised database serving as the single source of truth for the election body.

The EC presents this as modernisation – a "decision-support system" for local officers. In practice, the software has come to decide what those officers may or may not do, overriding the constitutional or statutory mandate on many matters.

The 'Goa 97' case shows exactly how. Local EROs heard the cases of 97 voters flagged during the SIR, examined their documents, and found them eligible – a finding the Supreme Court itself had directed be honoured. The software apparently had no function to record that decision. Between February 11 and 17, Goa's state IT agency wrote eight times – not only to the EC but directly to TCS, the vendor – asking that a rollback feature be switched on so that the court's order could be carried out before the SIR process in the state ended. The requests went unanswered. The final roll was published. The 97 voters were not allowed back onto the rolls.

The law gives an ERO the power to enrol a voter. Now, under Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar's system, the ERO has to depend on a private company to enable a checkbox so that he can perform his constitutional duty. In Goa, neither the EC's central office in Delhi nor TCS, the private company involved, enabled the ERO to do his duty – despite several requests and reminders for access.

**Algorithmic deletion**

The mechanism behind this is an algorithm the EC uses for "progeny-mapping" – matching a citizen's family details against a baseline roll from 2002 and flagging anything that doesn't fit as a "logical discrepancy." The flagged categories include age gaps between parent and child that the software judges as too small, similar gaps with grandparents, siblings recorded as too close in age, more than six children mapped to one father, and names that were spelled differently by clerks two decades apart.

The algorithm came close to striking Amartya Sen off the rolls. The 92-year-old Nobel laureate was summoned to prove himself after the software recorded the age gap between him and his late mother as under 15 years; a member of his household staff said her birth year in the records had been altered. When the opposition raised a stink that even Amartya Sen was being targeted, officials rushed to his home to redeem the situation. If a system can misfile a Nobel laureate's mother, it is worth asking what it is doing, unwatched, to millions of ordinary families with no one to notice on their behalf.

Uttar Pradesh offers a second look inside the machine. The Reporters' Collective analysed the Form 7 deletion objections the state's chief electoral officer (CEO) posted online. Of 87,127 filed by the commission's own registration officers and their assistants, 85,854 – 98.5% – carry no reason at all; sixty-two contain only letters.

Four officers told the Collective that when they declined to approve a voter after a hearing, ERONet generated the deletion form under their name and digital signature anyway. The law makes the ERO a quasi-judicial authority. The software made him the prosecutor, too. In Goa, the software would not let an officer enrol voters. In Uttar Pradesh, it made him sign off on deleting voters.

**The financial pipeline**

The embedding of TCS inside the EC's digital infrastructure must be seen alongside a second fact: since N. Chandrasekaran became Tata Sons' chairman in February 2017, the Tata Group has become one of the ruling party's largest financial benefactors, routing more than



Rs 1,000 crore so far to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) through the Tatas' Progressive Electoral Trust (PET).

Hundreds of crores were donated to the BJP right before crucial elections. In the 2018-19 cycle, PET disbursed Rs 454 crore, of which Rs 356 crore, about 75%, went to the BJP. In 2024-25, after the Supreme Court struck down Electoral Bonds, the numbers surged: PET disbursed Rs 915 crore, and the BJP received Rs 757.6 crore of it – 83%, and by a wide margin the single largest sum from any donor to any party that year. The Congress received Rs 77.3 crore.

Tata Sons contributed Rs 308 crore to PET that year, and TCS itself Rs 217 crore. The April 2024 donation came only a couple of weeks after the Union government approved roughly Rs 44,000 crore in subsidies for two of the group's semiconductor units, and just in time for the Lok Sabha elections.

None of this proves that the donations and the semiconductor subsidies, or the donations and the EC software contracts, are connected. But the group whose subsidiary holds the keys to the country's voter database is, simultaneously, the ruling party's single biggest funder. That is a fact worth stating plainly and pondering over, independent of any theory about why.

**The boardroom at Bombay House**

These facts sit against the backdrop of a reversal that has not been adequately explained. On August 12, Chandrasekaran told Tata Sons board he would not seek a third term when his tenure ended in February 2027 – a decision Tata Trusts formally accepted, triggering the start of a search for his successor. Three weeks later, on September 3, the company's Nomination and Remuneration Committee asked him to reconsider.

On September 17, he did: the board voted 4-to-1 to reappoint him for another five years, a stalemate between the Tata Trusts' two nominee-directors broken by a casting vote that Chandrasekaran, chairing the meeting, cast for himself. Reuters reported that the reasons for the reversal were "not immediately clear." Tata Trusts called the resolution "illegal" and "a legal nullity" the same day.

Why a man announces his own departure and is, within three weeks, persuaded to reverse it – and why he then casts the deciding vote for his own continuation rather than recusing himself – is a fair question. There is no public evidence that the September reversal was directed by anyone outside Tata Sons' own board and trust structure. But it is documented that the government has, earlier, taken a direct interest in exactly this question.

In October 2025, during an earlier round of the same Tata Trusts-versus-Tata Sons rift, Noel Tata and Chandrasekaran met Union home minister Amit Shah at his residence in Delhi, where finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman also joined them. A source quoted by PTI put the underlying concern plainly: whether the government could "let an individual take control" of a conglomerate this size. That meeting establishes that New Delhi has a channel into this dispute and an acknowledged interest in its outcome. Whether that channel was used again in September 2026 to ensure that Chandrasekaran stays at the helm is a matter that needs to be settled.

What is established, without needing anyone's help to explain it: whoever ends up running Tata Sons will run a company that builds India's election software and funds its ruling party more heavily than any other donor, and may have to answer questions that will inevitably arise about ERONet. On a question with those stakes, a reversal nobody involved has explained, decided by a vote the chairman cast for himself, deserves more scrutiny than it has so far attracted.

**Questions TCS must answer**

When a private company's software effectively overrides statutory authority and results in the mass exclusion of citizens from the electoral roll, that company – in this case, TCS – owes the country plain answers to plain questions:

Who actually holds the power? Could the EC's central IT office – and, by extension, TCS's own system administrators – override, freeze or delete a decision made by a locally empowered officer without that officer's sign-off? If so, wasn't the officer's legal authority reduced to a farce the moment the software went live? In Uttar Pradesh, who decided that an officer's refusal to approve a voter would auto-generate a deletion form in his name and digital signature?

Who wrote the family-tree rules? Were the specific thresholds used to flag a family – an age gap under 15 years with a parent, under 40 with a grandparent, under nine months between siblings, more than six children mapped to one father – devised by TCS's own engineers, or handed to the company as a fixed specification by the EC? Either answer must name the EC official or TCS person who authored the specific thresholds.

Was it ever tested for bias? Before this was rolled out across 30 states and Union Territories and flagged millions of families, was the algorithm ever checked for whether it disproportionately caught migrant workers, the poor, or people whose names get transliterated differently by different clerks over 20 years? If that bias testing exists, TCS should publish it.

Who ordered the change to Form 6? Two of the EC's own three members recorded in writing that altering Form 6 required the Union government to first amend the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960 – and that this hadn't happened. TCS pushed the change to the live portal anyway. Who submitted that request, and did anyone check its legality first?

Why couldn't Goa be fixed? When a state's CEO and its IT agency spent a week writing directly to both the Central Election Commission and to TCS asking for one missing feature so that 97 citizens the Supreme Court wanted restored could be restored, why did nothing happen? Did TCS fail to deliver, or was TCS told not to?

Does anyone keep a record? Reputable technology companies keep logs of who changed what, and when. TCS must release its logs from the SIR period to an independent, public audit so that the country can judge whether what happened was incompetence or by instruction.

**The machine writing the code**

I wrote recently that the SIR was part of a decade-long project, "The Inversion of Democracy," arguing that the government had pulled almost every lever of the electoral machine into its own hands – the money, the umpire, the register of who may vote. Now, it seems that the digital tool used to capture the voter roll was built by a private company which, in those same years, was also the ruling party's largest identifiable financier.

India's citizens are not simply being told who gets to choose their government. They are being sorted, flagged, included or excluded by machinery that neither they, nor in important respects parliament itself, can see inside. We are entitled to know who is writing the code, who is making the decisions on what that code should and shouldn't be able to do. The Supreme Court must ensure that TCS answers these questions.

**S. RAGHOTHAM IS A SENIOR JOURNALIST AND RESEARCHER BASED IN BENGALURU.**



## Banks Expect Loan Demand to Rise Across Sectors in Q3FY27: RBI Survey

**NEW DELHI, October 11:** Banks expect loan demand to strengthen across most sectors of the Indian economy during the third quarter of FY2026-27, with agriculture being the exception, according to the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) latest Bank Lending Survey.

The 37th round of the survey found that bankers' expectations for credit demand improved across sectors for Q3FY27, largely driven by seasonal requirements. However, overall loan terms and conditions are expected to remain broadly unchanged compared with the previous quarter. "Bankers' expectations on loan demand improved across sectors (except for the agriculture sector) in Q3:2026-27, majorly driven by seasonal demand," the RBI said. The survey, conducted during Q2FY27, collected responses from senior loan officers of major scheduled commercial banks to assess credit demand and lending conditions. It also captured banks' expectations for the third and fourth quarters of FY2026-27 and the first quarter of FY2027-28. Bankers reported improved optimism about credit demand across major economic sectors during Q2FY27, reflecting positive sentiment towards lending activity. The survey also indicated some easing in loan terms and conditions at the aggregate level during the quarter. Looking ahead, banks remain optimistic about credit demand in Q4FY27 and Q1FY28, pointing to expectations of sustained borrowing activity in the coming quarters.

The RBI's Bank Lending Survey provides insights into banks' assessment of credit demand and lending conditions across key sectors, helping gauge emerging trends in economic activity and borrowing.

## NSE Signs MoUs to Promote Financial Literacy Among Students, Transport Workers

**NEW DELHI, October 11:** The National Stock Exchange (NSE) has signed two memoranda of understanding (MoUs) to promote financial literacy and investor awareness among college students and transport sector workers, including truck drivers, under the Project Jagrook campaign during World Investor Week 2026. The initiatives, undertaken under the aegis of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), seek to encourage informed investment decisions, promote safe investing practices and protect people against financial fraud. As part of the initiative, NSE signed an MoU with Vignan's Foundation for Science, Technology and Research to train and develop partner trainers for financial literacy and securities market awareness programmes. The collaboration will be implemented under the Mentoring of University/College Students by Trainers (MUST) initiative. In a separate agreement, NSE partnered with the All India Transporters Welfare Association (AITWA), with the exchange serving as its knowledge partner. Under the arrangement, NSE will provide financial literacy and investor awareness training to the association's members, employees and nominated personnel. The 10th edition of World Investor Week, organised under the aegis of the International Organization of Securities Commissions (IOSCO), is being observed in India from October 5 to 11. This year's campaign carries the theme 'Samajh Se Investing Simple'. Launched by SEBI in collaboration with securities market partners, the campaign aims to simplify investing and help individuals make informed and responsible financial decisions.

NSE highlighted the need for sustained investor education and fraud prevention, noting that India has approximately 13.66 crore unique registered PAN counts against a population of around 147 crore.The exchange conducts Investor Awareness Programmes across the country through physical, hybrid and digital platforms to educate new and existing investors on financial products, investment fundamentals and safe investing practices. According to NSE, it conducted 14,679 such programmes in FY2024-25. More than 24,500 programmes were organised across all 36 states and Union Territories during FY2025-26 and the first half of FY2026-27 combined.

# Indian Economic Policy Is Flailing in the Wind

***Cronyism is at the root of the bias in policies that has weakened India's capacity to deal with the internal and external challenges coming thick and fast***

The economy is facing headwinds. The Union external affairs minister recently warned the nation of an impending crisis. The blame for this lies squarely on faulty policy-making that has led to both short-term and long-term challenges. And, when challenges come rapidly, fire-fighting responses do not resolve the underlying cause. That requires a drastic shift in policy.

**Cronyism**

Elon Musk has accused policy makers of being subservient to oligarchs. Critics have been pointing out that India is practicing crony capitalism, which results in investors not getting a level playing field. As a consequence, not only do they not invest enough in India, but they have also been leaving the country in droves to settle down abroad.

Monopolies and oligopolies are present in key sectors like telecom, ports, airports and airlines. The public sector is being asked to vacate the market for the private sector – even in critical sectors like space and defence. ISRO and HAL are being sidelined to favour cronies who are dictating policies. They tried to capture trade in agriculture commodities in 2019 by getting three contentious Bills bulldozed through parliament, which the government was later forced to repeal.

Recent major policy announcements point to the helplessness in tackling the challenges. The GST Council has suggested major reforms in the structurally faulty GST – a patchwork at best. The RBI has announced an increase in repo rate by 0.25% and change in Monetary Policy Stance to signal tough steps ahead. Do these steps meet the current challenges facing the economy?

**Myopic view**

India is unable to place the economy on a firm footing which would enable it to meet challenges in the short run. The most populous nation is buffeted by external factors – Ukraine war, wars in West Asia, US policies, trade with China, shortages of petro goods and fertilisers. Add to that the threat of Super El Nino and AI.

The blame lies squarely with the subservience of policy makers to the




crony capitalists whose focus is the organised sector and external markets instead of the internal market. This situation has worsened over time because of the vicious cycle it creates between growing inequality and marginalization of the poor who constitute 94% of the workers in the country. If only the market of 6% is catered to, dependence on the external markets rises and India becomes open to external pressures. India has been lured and pushed by International Finance Capital into a vicious cycle of growing inequality and dependence on a narrow market.

To overcome the US trade challenge, India is entering into FTAs with the UK and EU in a hurry. Negotiations were going on with the EU for 23 years and suddenly an FTA was agreed to. But, India's experience with FTAs in the last decade has been negative given our technological lag. The FTA partners have been able to increase their exports to us more than we have been able to export to them, thereby enlarging our trade deficit and undermining internal production. This is also likely to happen with the EU because it is a short term fix.

**GST Fix**

The GST council has announced process reforms, calling it GST 2.0. This has come nine years after the GST was introduced in July 2017. Last September, GST rates were rationalised and reduced. Why so late? Since GST was launched, it is common knowledge that it is complex and businesses have found it difficult to cope with it, which has hurt the unorganised sector. There have been innumerable court cases, harassment, fake companies for claiming input credit and corruption. It was stated in the parliament that Rs 70,000 crore of evasion was detected and later a figure of Rs 2 lakh crore was mentioned. What is detected is usually a fraction of the actual occurrence. GST was supposed to check the massive tax evasion in indirect taxes. But tax evasion is a joint product of the triad of corrupt businessmen, politicians and the executive (consisting of the bureaucracy and the police). Unless this triad is dismantled the black economy will continue to thrive. Post 1991, so many controls were removed and the tax rates reduced but the black economy continued to thrive. A political consensus is required to keep black economy under check. Without it, process reforms will not achieve much.

GST is both structurally faulty and a half-way house compared to the ideal GST. It was brought in under pressure from big business and MNCs. Introduction of VAT in India was a conditionality of World Bank in 1993. It was to help the large and medium scale businesses at the expense of the small and micro sectors. But to make it politically acceptable, features that were pro-poor and pro-backward states were introduced. That made the GST complex. Now it is being simplified without addressing its half-way house characteristic.

RBI raising the repo rate will not lower inflation which is due to supply bottlenecks in food and energy, not demand problems. That is in the domain of fiscal policy and not of monetary policy. But, because the government is not willing to collect more direct taxes from the corporate sector and the well-off, it is forced to depend on indirect taxes, which are stagflationary. Since the RBI is mandated to control inflation, all it can do is to squeeze demand which will further slowdown the already stressed economy whose actual growth rate is over stated officially.

In brief, cronyism is at the root of the bias in policies that has weakened India's capacity to deal with the internal and external challenges coming thick and fast. The bias results in hurdles that are lowered piece by piece without denting the problem – like flailing in the wind. That is visible when level playing field is not provided to businesses, especially the unorganised sector, in RBI policy for controlling inflation and in a structurally faulty GST damaging the economy.

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# Costly Career Path

# US Proposes Hefty OPT Fees

**The United States has proposed a significant increase in the cost of temporary employment authorisation for international students, a move that could affect thousands of Indian students planning to study, gain work experience and build careers in the country. Under the proposal announced by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), educational institutions would have to pay $70,000 (approximately Rs 67 lakh) for a student's initial participation in Optional Practical Training (OPT) and $30,000 (approximately Rs 29 lakh) for any subsequent participation.**

**Published in the Federal Register on October 8, 2026, the proposed rule is intended to address alleged fraud and abuse in the OPT programme, strengthen immigration enforcement and protect American workers. The proposal has opened a debate over whether imposing such a substantial financial burden will achieve those objectives or discourage international students who contribute to American universities, businesses and research institutions.**

**The proposal is particularly significant for Indian students, who form a major part of the international student community in the United States and frequently pursue degrees in computer science, engineering, information technology, business analytics and other specialised fields. For many, the opportunity to work in America after graduation is an important factor in deciding where to study.**

**However, the proposed fees are not yet final. The DHS has invited public comments until November 9, 2026, and the final decision could change following the review of submissions.**

## What Is Optional Practical Training?

Optional Practical Training is a temporary employment authorisation programme available to eligible international students holding F-1 nonimmigrant status. It allows students to gain practical experience in jobs directly related to their academic qualifications. For many international students, OPT serves as a bridge between higher education and professional employment. It provides an opportunity to apply classroom learning in real workplaces, develop industry-specific skills and gain experience with American employers. Under existing rules, eligible students can generally receive up to 12 months of OPT at each qualifying educational level. Students graduating in eligible science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields may qualify for an additional 24-month extension, subject to applicable requirements. Students may participate in pre-completion OPT while pursuing their studies or post-completion OPT after finishing their academic programmes. They must obtain the required recommendation from their designated school official and secure employment authorisation from US Citizenship and Immigration Services. For an Indian student completing a master's degree in computer science, for example, OPT could provide an opportunity to work as a software developer, data analyst, cybersecurity specialist or artificial intelligence engineer. A STEM extension may allow eligible graduates to continue gaining professional experience for a longer period. The programme is also important for American employers seeking graduates with specialised knowledge. Technology companies, financial institutions, research laboratories and other organisations recruit international graduates for roles requiring technical and analytical expertise.

## Proposed Fee Structure: What Students and Universities Need to Know

The DHS proposal introduces substantial fees connected to a school's recommendation of an international student for OPT. The proposed payment obligations would fall on eligible educational institutions rather than being directly imposed on students through the OPT application process.

## The principal provisions include:

- **Initial OPT participation:** A proposed fee of $70,000 per student, equivalent to approximately Rs 67 lakh at the conversion stated in the report.
- **Subsequent OPT participation:** A proposed fee of $30,000, or approximately Rs 29 lakh, for each subsequent OPT recommendation covered by the rule.
- **Who pays:** The fee would have to be paid by the SEVP-certified educational institution before its designated school official recommends the student for OPT.
- **Employment authorisation:** Under the proposal, USCIS would not grant the relevant employment authorisation if the required institutional fee had not been paid.
- **Employer changes:** The fee would not be linked to a particular employer. Instead, it would be triggered by the school's recommendation for the student's initial or subsequent OPT participation.
- **Implementation:** If finalised, the rule is proposed to take effect 60 days after publication of the final rule.

The distinction between the proposed payer and the person affected is important. The proposal does not directly require every student to hand over $70,000 to the government. Instead, the university or other eligible institution would bear the formal payment obligation. Nevertheless, students could face indirect consequences if institutions respond by restricting OPT recommendations, increasing other charges, reducing services or becoming more selective about which students they support. Whether and how universities would respond remains uncertain. The proposal also distinguishes between initial and subsequent participation. A student who uses pre-completion OPT and later seeks post-completion OPT could trigger separate fees under the proposed framework. A later STEM OPT extension could also attract the subsequent fee. The financial implications could therefore extend beyond a single application.

## Why Is the US Government Proposing the Change?

The DHS has argued that the OPT programme has been exploited through arrangements involving questionable workplaces, fraudulent employment documentation and schemes in which students pay to maintain their immigration status without undertaking legitimate educationally related work.

According to the department, the Student and Exchange Visitor Program has encountered cases involving schools, designated school officials, employers and students allegedly exploiting weaknesses in the existing system.

The government says the proposed fees would encourage educational institutions to exercise stronger oversight before recommending students for practical training. By requiring institutions to consider the financial consequences of each recommendation, officials expect schools to scrutinise applications more carefully and discourage fraudulent participation.

The administration has also framed the proposal as part of a wider effort to protect American workers and ensure that employment-related immigration programmes operate according to their intended purposes.

A DHS spokesperson said OPT was not intended to serve as a route for cheap labour or as a backdoor into the American workforce. The department argues that foreign graduates should demonstrate their value to employers rather than benefit from arrangements that disadvantage domestic workers.

However, critics are likely to question whether a fee running into tens of thousands of dollars is the most effective way to identify fraudulent employers and students. Stronger inspections, targeted investigations and improved enforcement could address misconduct without necessarily making legitimate participation prohibitively expensive.



## Technology and STEM Graduates Could Be Particularly Affected

The proposed rule could have implications for sectors that depend on specialised technical skills. Indian students frequently pursue degrees in software engineering, artificial intelligence, machine learning, cybersecurity, electrical engineering, biotechnology and other STEM disciplines.

The additional 24-month STEM OPT extension is especially valuable because it can give eligible graduates more time to develop professional experience and allow employers to assess their capabilities.

Technology companies often use this period to recruit graduates, provide training and determine whether longer-term employment is appropriate. International graduates can contribute to software development, product design, data analysis, scientific research and engineering projects.

A steep institutional fee could make universities more cautious about recommending students for training, potentially affecting recruitment and workforce planning.

Smaller universities and institutions with limited financial resources could face particular challenges if they cannot absorb the proposed charges. Larger institutions might have greater financial capacity, but the scale of the fees could still influence their policies.

Employers may also need to adjust their recruitment strategies. Some could focus more heavily on candidates who already possess unrestricted work authorisation, while others may explore hiring arrangements in different countries.

For students, this could mean that academic qualifications alone are no longer sufficient to secure the desired career pathway. The availability of practical training, employer sponsorship and the institution's willingness to support employment authorisation could become increasingly important considerations.

## Indian Students Could Face Difficult Career Decisions

For Indian students, the proposal introduces another source of uncertainty into an already complicated study-abroad decision. The cost of an American degree can include tuition, accommodation, insurance, travel and living expenses. Many students and their families invest substantial savings or take education loans in anticipation of better employment prospects after graduation.

The opportunity to work after completing a degree often helps students recover part of their investment while gaining international experience. If universities become reluctant to recommend graduates for OPT because of the proposed fees, that employment pathway could become more difficult to access.

Consider an Indian student who completes a master's programme in data science after spending several years financing education in the United States. The student's career plan may depend on securing a job with a technology company and using OPT to gain practical experience.

If the university faces a $70,000 payment obligation before recommending the student for initial OPT, it may reassess the financial and administrative implications of supporting that application. Even though the student is not formally required to pay the fee, the availability of the opportunity could be affected.

## The uncertainty could influence students at several stages:

- **Before applying:** Prospective students may reconsider the financial risks of choosing an American university.
- **While studying:**Current students may become more concerned about whether they can obtain practical training after graduation.
- **During recruitment:** Employers may need to consider whether graduates can secure the required work authorisation.
- **After graduation:**Students may explore opportunities in India or other countries if the US employment pathway becomes less accessible.

These are potential consequences rather than confirmed outcomes. The final impact will depend on whether the proposal is adopted, how institutions respond and whether alternative arrangements emerge.

## OPT and the H-1B Visa: Understanding the Difference

OPT and the H-1B visa are related in many graduates' career plans, but they serve different purposes.

OPT allows eligible F-1 students to undertake temporary employment related to their studies under the applicable student immigration rules. The H-1B programme, by contrast, allows qualifying US employers to employ foreign professionals in speciality occupations, subject to the programme's requirements and applicable numerical limits.

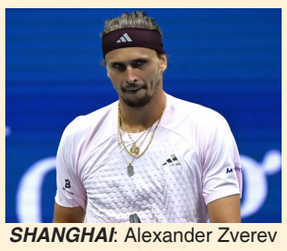
## Could American Universities Lose International Talent?

International students contribute to the US economy through tuition payments, accommodation, transportation, consumer spending and participation in research and innovation. Universities also rely on international enrolments to sustain specialised programmes, research activity and academic diversity. A policy that makes post-study employment more difficult could influence how prospective students compare destinations. If students believe they have limited opportunities to gain professional experience after graduation, some may choose universities in countries offering more predictable employment pathways. This could affect American institutions competing for international enrolments, particularly in graduate programmes linked to technology, engineering and scientific research. The financial impact would not necessarily be limited to universities. Local businesses, housing providers, employers and research organisations also benefit from international student communities. At the same time, the administration argues that educational institutions should take greater responsibility for ensuring that practical training is legitimate. The policy debate therefore involves balancing enforcement against the economic and academic benefits of attracting international talent. The central question is whether the proposed fee would improve oversight sufficiently to justify its potential effects on legitimate students and institutions.

SHORT NEWS

**Shanghai Masters**

## Alexander Zverev overcomes Halys' challenge in R3 to secure 60th win of 2026



***SHANGHAI***: Alexander Zverev overcame a spirited challenge from Quentin Halys in the third round at the Shanghai Masters 6-4, 6-7(8), 6-3 to secure his 60th win of 2026 here on Sunday. The top-seeded German was tested by his French opponent, who had earlier pushed him to five sets during Zverev's 2026 US Open title run. Zverev missed two match points in the second-set tiebreak, which was bagged by Halys. However, the World No.2 broke his opponent twice early in the first and third sets to secure a win, which is his 60th tour-level victory of 2026. This marked the third time he went past 60 wins in a season, having won 60 matches in 2018 and 69 in 2024. "I feel like this year I've been picking my places where I want to peak, and I feel like I did that quite well," Zverev, the reigning French Open and US Open champion, said. "I didn't do that in the early stages of my career. I wanted to play well every single tournament, and I feel like this year I've been working through a lot of tournaments.

# 'Sania Mirza is a legend, an idol', says Maaya Rajeshwaran after W35 Lagos title win

**NEW DELHI**



India's teenage tennis player Maaya Rajeshwaran Revathi believes her maiden professional singles title is only the beginning of her journey on the senior circuit, while maintaining that there can be no question of surpassing former world No. 1 doubles player Sania Mirza, whom she continues to idolise.

The 17-year-old announced her arrival on the professional circuit with a remarkable double-title triumph at the W35 Lagos tournament in Nigeria, winning the singles crown without dropping a set in the main draw after partnering Ukraine's Yelyzaveta Kotliar to the doubles title.

The 17-year-old beat Spain's Celia Cervino Ruiz 6-4, 6-2 in the final to become the youngest Indian woman to win a W35 singles title, breaking a record held by Sania Mirza for 22 years.

Asked about surpassing Sania, one of India's most accomplished tennis players, Maaya was quick to dismiss the comparison, emphasising the legacy the former Grand Slam champion has left behind for the next generation.

"Well, I don't think you can actually surpass her, you know, because she's a legend and she'll always remain a legend," Maaya told IANS during a virtual interaction with the media. "So I think it's just that I still do look up to her in a lot of ways because I think she was the idol when I was growing up in the country and she's someone who's made tennis visible in the country after so many years," she added.

Maaya, who has followed Sania's journey through interviews and podcasts, said she had not interacted with the tennis icon extensively but hoped to learn from her experience.

"But I haven't really spoken to her that much. But I wish I could. But otherwise, yeah, I still look up to her, hear all her podcasts, hear all her interviews. And yeah, I think with Sania, she'll remain a legend and she'll forever be my idol," she said.

It was a huge step for the teenager as she navigated her way up through the ranks of the game. Ranked as world no. 1038 prior to the tournament, Maaya qualified for the main draw, then earned a win against number one seed, Justina Mikulskyte in the first round before further success over higher-ranked players.

She completed her fairy-tale run when she defeated Spain's Celia Cervino Ruiz 6-4, 6-2 in the summit clash to win the maiden title on the pro circuit. The Indian, who had also partnered Kotliar to win the doubles title after a 0-6, 6-2, 10-7 win over China's Min Liu and Italy's Carlotta Moccia.

Even with the breakthrough, Maaya downplayed the magnitude of what she had achieved, noting it was a confidence-building experience.

"I think this is just sort of a start because it's the first title. And it's a good sign to start off the pro career. It's a good start for sure," she said.

"But I don't think this is going to make that big of a deal, you know, because it's just a start. And now it's just a confidence that, you know, a confidence that I've given myself that I can compete better. So, you know, probably I'll carry the confidence into the tournament that I'm going after. But it just starts here," she added.

The teenager said she entered the Lagos tournament without expectations, an approach that helped her focus on her game rather than the rankings or the quality of her opponents. "Well, yeah, first of all, just like you mentioned, first one's always special and lots of sweet memories this week. Yeah, I just, you know, for me, it just felt like another tournament, to be honest, because I've been competing for a while now," she said.

"As a qualifier, I just tried to do as much as I could and went my way."

Reflecting on her unbeaten run in the main draw, Maaya said the experience reinforced her belief that results at the professional level often depend on who performs better on a particular day.

"I think, first of all, I came in with no expectations. Won a round in the qualifiers and I was set up to play the top seed in the first round. And, yeah, I think I just went out there, tried to play as good as I can because I think I was the underdog in this tournament," she said.

"So I just tried to play as good as I can and watched a few matches. You know, everyone plays good over a certain point. If you're playing pro tournaments, I think everyone plays a decent level. And I think when you step on the court, it really matters who plays better that day."

Maaya's opening-round victory over Mikulskyte was particularly memorable, as she recovered from a 0-5 deficit in the first set to win it 7-5 before taking the second 6-1.

Recalling the comeback, the Indian revealed that a glance at the clock prompted an unusual thought that helped her stay in the contest.

"No, it's going to be super funny because I didn't start very well. And she's definitely a really good player. And a lot of things were going on. And 0-5 changed how I looked at the clock. There's a clock on court," she said. "So I looked at the clock and it was, I think, 25 minutes into the match. And the first thing that came into my mind is I'm not losing a set in 25 minutes. So I just tried to stay. I just tried to play at one point at a time. And just stay alive in the set as long as I could."



# Arshdeep, Dhir star as India beat West Indies by 14 runs, take 2-1 lead

**INDORE**

India's bowlers defended 223 on a dew-free night to beat West Indies by 14 runs in the T20I at the Holkar Stadium here on Sunday, and take a 2-1 lead in the five-match series.

Arshdeep Singh returned with figures of 3-44, while Naman Dhir took two scalps. Arshdeep, who took out in-form Shai Hope, along with others ensured that the West Indies big-hitters couldn't ace a second chase on the trot. Shamar Springer's 11-ball 35 not out gave the visitors a late push, but it went in vain, as the West Indies finished on 209/7. The win is also the first victory for a team batting first in the white-ball series so far. It came despite India's second-half slide, with soft dismissals, had made 223 look below par at one stage, after Abhishek Sharma's 30-ball 69 had laid the foundation for a big total.

India's defence began with Mayank Yadav opening with a one-run over, while Arshdeep struck when Hope went for a wild slog, but was castled for one. Shimron Hetmyer then took the attack to the bowlers. After a quiet start, he broke free with a boundary off Mayank in the third over, and was given a life on five when Abhishek Sharma dropped a simple chance of him at short third man.

Hetmyer made the most of it by hitting a six and two fours off Arshdeep in the fourth over, as 19 runs came off it. With Mayank and Prince Yadav leaking runs, West Indies reached 54/1 at the end of the Powerplay, 33 runs behind India's 87/1 at the same stage.

Hetmyer carted Naman Dhir for four and six, before being bowled for 43 by a slower delivery from the off-spinner which skidded as well. With Kamil Pooran struggling for timing, West Indies were under pressure and that led to Rovman Powell holing out to deep cover for five, as he went for a loft on a quicker delivery from Axar without reaching to the pitch of the ball.

Pooran launched a late assault on Dhir by hitting three sixes over cow corner, wide long-off and square leg. But Dhir had the last laugh as Pooran tried the same pick-up shot, but couldn't get under the ball and holed out in the deep for 42.



# Mighty Marathas continue their resurgence as they made it back-to-back wins in thrilling faceoff against Rajputana Royals

**HYDERABAD**

Chero Archers and Prithviraaj Yodhas registered their third wins to move clear at the top of the standings in the second season of Archery Premier League, while defending champions Rajputana Royals slumped to their third straight defeat here on Sunday.

Inspired by Atanu Das' good form, Chero Archers have arguably been the most consistent team of the season so far and they began the day by beating local franchise Kakatiya Knights 6-0. The Yodhas then made it a hat-trick of wins by defeating Chola Chiefs 6-2. In the best match of the day, Marathas clinched a 5-3 thriller against Royals. Chero and Yodhas are at six points each after four matches, while Chiefs and Royals are at the bottom of the standings with just one win so far.

The world's first franchise-based archery league, APL is initiated by the Archery Association of India and comprises six teams and a total of 48 archers, with 36 Indians and 12 elite international stars. The league, taking place at People's Plaza in Hyderabad, will culminate on October 18 with the grand finale featuring the top four teams in the semifinals, followed by the title clash.

After losing by the barest of margins a day earlier, Chero bounced back in some style. Atanu emerged as the best male recurve archer of the day with an average score of 9.67.

The Knights made a significant change to their starting lineup with Austrian compound star Nico Wiener making way for Shivshankar Landkar and he was in good form along with Jyothi Surekha Vennam. But Chero have Das in terrific rhythm and have a strong compound squad to lead them with world No 1 Mathias Fullerton shooting ahead of Sahil Rajesh Jadhav. The Danish archer was the highest scorer of the match with 59 out of six arrows.

In the first set, a low 6 by Casey Kaufhold with the final arrow didn't hurt Chero Archers as their first seven arrows were superb for 69 out of 70. In the second set, Atanu's incredible arrow into the middle of the target face for an X was the highlight as Chero Archers stayed ahead comfortably. The third set was an absolute thriller with both teams tied 38-38 after four arrows each. But the Knights felt the pressure as they needed to win this set to stay alive. Atanu hit another 10 to make it 67-67, and then Kaufhold stepped up to hit another to close out a high-quality set and ultimately secure a comfortable win.

In the second match, 16-year-old recurve archer Gatha Khadake came up with some clutch arrows under pressure for Yodhas. Her 10 to close out the third set was crucial to give her side a 77-76 scoreline. The Chiefs continued to go with compound archers back-to-back at the start of sets but consistency eluded them on the day. In a thriller late in the day, Royals once again started well with compound archer Kushal Dalal, picked ahead of Ojas Deotale, setting the tone and Tokyo Olympics champion Mete Gazoz anchoring them with a high-pressure 10.

# Young India Police School Students Excel in District-Level Athletics Competitions

- **Impressive achievement: Nine medals won**
- **Athletes secure 3 gold, 3 silver and 3 bronze medals**

**HYDERABAD**





Students of Young India Police School, Hyderabad, showcased outstanding talent at the Ranga Reddy District-Level Athletics Championship, bringing laurels to their school. Demonstrating determination and sportsmanship, the students excelled in track and field events, winning a total of nine medals, comprising three gold, three silver and three bronze medals. In the Girls' Under-10 category, C.H. Lasya Sri delivered an outstanding performance, winning gold medals in both the 60-metre and 200-metre races to emerge as a star performer. In the same category, Lanka Parvathi displayed consistent performance, securing silver medals in both events.

In the field events, Sanvika Goud won a bronze medal in the Girls' Under-10 long jump, while M. Ashwini secured silver in the Under-12 long jump. Sindham Vajra Varunavi won a bronze medal in the Girls' Under-14 60-metre race. The boys also made their mark in the competition. In the Boys' Under-12 300-metre race, C.H. Ritesh secured the silver medal, while C.H. Jeevan won bronze.

School representatives stated that the achievement was the result of the students' rigorous training and discipline, coupled with the encouragement and support of their parents, coaches and school management.

The management of Young India Police School specially congratulated the medal winners as well as all the students who participated in the competition. It stated that the school would continue its efforts to nurture students' sporting abilities while promoting physical fitness, sportsmanship and self-confidence.

The school expressed pride in the achievement, describing it as a moment of honour for the entire Young India Police School team.

# *Zheng Qinwen claims maiden WTA 1000 title at China Open*

**BEIJING**



China's Zheng Qinwen captured the women's singles title at the 2026 China Open on Sunday, defeating fourth-seeded Russian Mirra Andreeva 7-5, 6-4 in the final to claim her maiden WTA 1000 crown before breaking down in tears during an emotional celebration on home soil.

"The feeling is incredible. Winning here in Beijing, in front of my home crowd, has always been one of my dreams," Zheng said after the match. The victory also made Zheng the first Chinese player to win the singles title at the China Open, reported Xinhua.

"Today's match was extremely tough. Mirra is a great player, and she broke my serve right at the start," Zheng said. "I just had to take it one point at a time and keep telling myself to hang in there and never give up. After playing so many matches, I was physically and mentally exhausted. But playing in front of my home crowd gave me that extra strength to keep pushing through."

"I want to congratulate Mirra on her outstanding achievement at Roland Garros this year. I never had a chance to congratulate you in person, so I want to do that now. Congratulations on reaching the final this week as well. You are such a young and talented player, and congratulations to you and your team on everything you've achieved," she added.

Since winning Olympic gold at the Paris 2024 Games, a persistent right elbow injury has disrupted Zheng's career and required surgery in July 2025. Her ranking subsequently fell from a career-high No. 4 in 2024 to as low as No. 160 in mid-June 2026.

"I want to thank my team for supporting me throughout this journey. I've been through a very tough year, and I couldn't have done this without you. Last but not least, I want to thank all the sponsors, the referees, and all the staff who have worked so hard throughout the week. And thank you to all the fans for your incredible support. This title belongs to all of you, too!" The victory earned Zheng 1,000 ranking points and 1,151,380 U.S. dollars in prize money, lifting her to No. 23 in the live WTA rankings.

# Verstappen wins first Singapore GP in perfect week, Antonelli takes P3

**MARINA BAY (SINGAPORE)**

Red Bull's Max Verstappen capped off his perfect weekend in Singapore with his first-ever Grand Prix victory at the Marina Bay Street Circuit as title leader Kimi Antonelli secured the third-place finish to have the F1 championship in sight.

Verstappen started on pole and clinched the victory on his 250th Grand Prix start with a masterclass at the 62-lap circuit to bag his second-straight win after having won the Bahrain GP in Malaysia last week.

It was a perfect week for him as he qualified on P1 for the Sprint race, then won the Sprint and also qualified on P1 for the Sunday race. Ferrari's Charles Leclerc started second and finished second despite being on a two-stop strategy, while Mercedes driver Antonelli was third and now has a sizeable lead over his teammate and nearest title rival George Russell, who finished P9 after starting the race from P19 for taking new power unit components and exceeding his seasonal allocations.

Antonelli, with 340 points, now has a lead of 102 points over Russell, who has 238 points following cashing in two points for the ninth-placed finish. Antonelli now has the mathematical chance of winning the title at the United States GP in Austin in the next race, and with five more races scheduled after Austin, the writing seems to be on the wall.

Meanwhile, it wasn't a happy race for Lewis Hamilton as he dropped from P3 to P6 in the final few laps. He opted to stay on a one-stop strategy as he boxed early to change his medium compound tyres for softs. Hamilton was already one of the handful of drivers to start on the medium tyres among the top 10 on the grid. Lando Norris tried moving past Hamilton from P4 to take P3 in lap 54 but his tyres got dirty as Antonelli went past the reigning champion. Antonelli then moved past Hamilton to take P3 as Norris also went ahead of the Ferrariman to settle for P4. Norris' teammate Oscar Piastri took P5 after overtaking Hamilton in the closing stages of the race.

Racing Bulls' Liam Lawson came seventh ahead of Audi's Nico Hulkenberg as Isack Hadjar took the final place after starting the race from the pit lane.

# Ashika Slays in Oversized Chic



Ashika Ranganath is known for her expressive screen presence and effortless charm across Kannada, Telugu and Tamil cinema. She won hearts with hits like Raambo 2 and Naa Saami Ranga, and fans adore her girl-next-door appeal. Her Tamil outing Sardar 2 did not work at the box office this year, but her looks keep winning. Her latest shoot is all about cool denim. She first sits pretty in an oversized denim jacket worn like a dress, with slouchy beige suede heeled boots and soft wavy hair. Next, she pairs the jacket with a black leather mini skirt for a sharp street style moment. A black and white frame with a glowing smile completes the set. Next, she will be seen in Chiranjeevi's Vishwambhara, which could be her big comeback.

# Sai Pallavi Finally Set To Join Kalki 2 Shoot?



The buzz around Prabhas' Kalki 2898 AD sequel continues to grow as the makers move forward with the shooting after Deepika Padukone's exit. The latest reports suggest that Sai Pallavi is expected to join the sets around October 17 or 18, adding fresh excitement among fans. Although the makers have not officially confirmed her shooting schedule, the reported update has created curiosity about her role in this much-awaited project. Sai Pallavi is known for her natural acting and strong screen presence, and her reported involvement has become an interesting talking point among movie lovers. Details about her character and the scenes she will be shooting are currently being kept under wraps. It remains to be seen how her role will fit into the larger story following the success of its first part where Deepika played a key role. While it was reported that she would play Sum-80, Deepika's character in the first part, a few reports suggest that her role in the sequel is still unclear. Meanwhile, reports about the shooting schedules of other key cast members, including Prabhas and Amitabh Bachchan, have also started emerging. The team is reportedly planning its upcoming schedules as production progresses. Directed by Nag Ashwin, Kalki 2898 AD featured a star-studded cast of Prabhas and Kamal Haasan, and ended up becoming a major box-office success. Naturally, expectations are high for the sequel, with fans eager to know more about its cast, story and scale. However, the latest update regarding Sai Pallavi remains unconfirmed by the makers. An official announcement is awaited, and more clarity about the shooting schedule and her role is expected in the coming days.

# RC 17 Title Buzz Gets Bigger

Ram Charan's upcoming film with director Sukumar has been creating considerable buzz. However, the frequent changes in reports about its music director have left fans confused, with several names being linked to the project. Initially, Devi Sri Prasad was named as the music director. Later, reports suggested that young music composer Sai Abhyankkar had been brought on board. After that, Dhurandhar fame Shashwat Sachdev's name started doing the rounds. Now, the latest reports suggest that Anirudh Ravichander could be composing the music for the much-awaited film. With so many names emerging one after another, fans are struggling to understand who is actually working on the project. Some fans have even expressed their frustration with Sukumar and his team, as they are eagerly waiting for the film's shoot to begin. While experimenting with different musical talents is not unusual in the film industry, the constant speculation has created unnecessary confusion among fans. An official announcement from the makers confirming the final music director would put an end to these rumours. RC 17 is expected to be launched with a traditional pooja ceremony during the ongoing Navratri period. With the launch approaching, it remains to be seen whether Sukumar and the team will finally reveal the name of the music director. Until then, fans will have to wait for an official confirmation instead of relying on one report after another.



# Dulquer Sparks Fan Frenzy in Vizag



The shooting of Dulquer Salmaan and Pooja Hegde's upcoming film 'Sri Sri' is currently progressing along the picturesque coastline of Visakhapatnam. However, the presence of the popular Malayalam star on the sets has led to a huge gathering of fans, creating a chaotic situation during filming. Dulquer arrived at the shooting location in his Land Rover Defender, attracting the attention of several fans who had gathered to catch a glimpse of him and take photographs. As soon as his vehicle reached the spot, a group of female fans rushed towards him, prompting security personnel to step in and control the crowd. Despite the security team's efforts, some fans reportedly attempted to cross the barricades to get closer to the actor, repeatedly requesting photographs. The sudden rush left Dulquer's personal team and security personnel struggling to manage the situation. To prevent the crowd from getting out of control, security staff formed a protective cordon around the actor and escorted him towards his vanity van. Even as he was being escorted away, fans continued calling out to him and requesting selfies. Although Dulquer initially moved away from the crowd, he later greeted his fans warmly near his vanity van. The actor patiently posed for selfies and interacted with them, winning appreciation for his friendly gesture. One fan also honoured him with a traditional Andhra-style shawl as a mark of admiration. Meanwhile, the film's team is shooting important sequences featuring Dulquer and Pooja Hegde along the Vizag coastline. Videos and photographs from the sets have surfaced on social media and are attracting considerable attention. The visuals of the lead actors filming scenes against the backdrop of the beach have further raised curiosity about the project. The cast reportedly arrived in Visakhapatnam earlier this week, and filming is expected to continue there for a few more days. Directed by Ravi Nelakuditi, 'Sri Sri' is being produced by Sudhakar Cherukuri under the SLV Cinemas banner. The film also features Ramya Krishnan, Jagapathi Babu, Deekshith Shetty, Rao Ramesh and Sachin Khedekar in important roles. With its intriguing premise and ensemble cast, the project has generated interest among Telugu cinema audiences. Apart from 'Sri Sri', Dulquer is also part of another Telugu film titled 'Aakasamlo Oka Tara', directed by Pavan Sadineni. The film has completed shooting and is currently in post-production. Produced by Sandeep Gunnan and Ramya Gunnan under Lightbox Media, the makers are planning a November release after completing the remaining formalities. With multiple Telugu projects in the pipeline, Dulquer continues to strengthen his presence in the Telugu film industry, while his popularity among fans was clearly evident during the recent Vizag shooting schedule.

# Srinidhi Opens Up on HEROINE ROLES



Actress Srinidhi Shetty, who gained nationwide recognition with the blockbuster 'KGF' franchise, has shared her views on the portrayal of female characters in South Indian cinema. Her comments on the importance given to heroines in hero-centric films have sparked discussions on social media. During an interview with Siddharth Kannan, Srinidhi explained how the prominence of the lead hero often influences the treatment of other characters in a film. According to the actress, when a story revolves entirely around its male protagonist, the remaining characters tend to become supporting elements in his journey. As a result, female characters often receive less attention and screen space. However, Srinidhi clarified that this is not the case with every film. She noted that several movies give women central roles, allowing actresses to showcase their acting abilities and carry the narrative forward. She believes that the importance given to female characters largely depends on the story and the director's vision. Reflecting on her role as Reena Desai in the 'KGF' franchise, Srinidhi acknowledged that she understood the limitations of her character in a film dominated by its male protagonist. She observed that large-scale commercial entertainers often focus heavily on the hero's larger-than-life image, action sequences and mass appeal. For her, however, being part of such a massive cinematic project and leaving a lasting impression on audiences mattered more than screen time or the length of her role. She believes that every character has its own place in a film, depending on the kind of story being told. Srinidhi also welcomed the changing trends in the film industry, pointing out that actresses are increasingly moving beyond glamour-oriented roles and taking on performance-driven characters. Even established stars are experimenting with de-glamorous appearances and diverse roles that allow them to demonstrate their versatility. The actress believes this shift is a positive sign for women in cinema, as female-led stories are creating more opportunities for actresses to take centre stage. Ultimately, Srinidhi expressed her desire to explore all kinds of roles, from commercial entertainers built around male superstars to female-centric films that offer substantial scope for performance. She believes that as long as actors get the opportunity to be part of compelling stories and memorable characters, their future in the industry will remain promising.

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